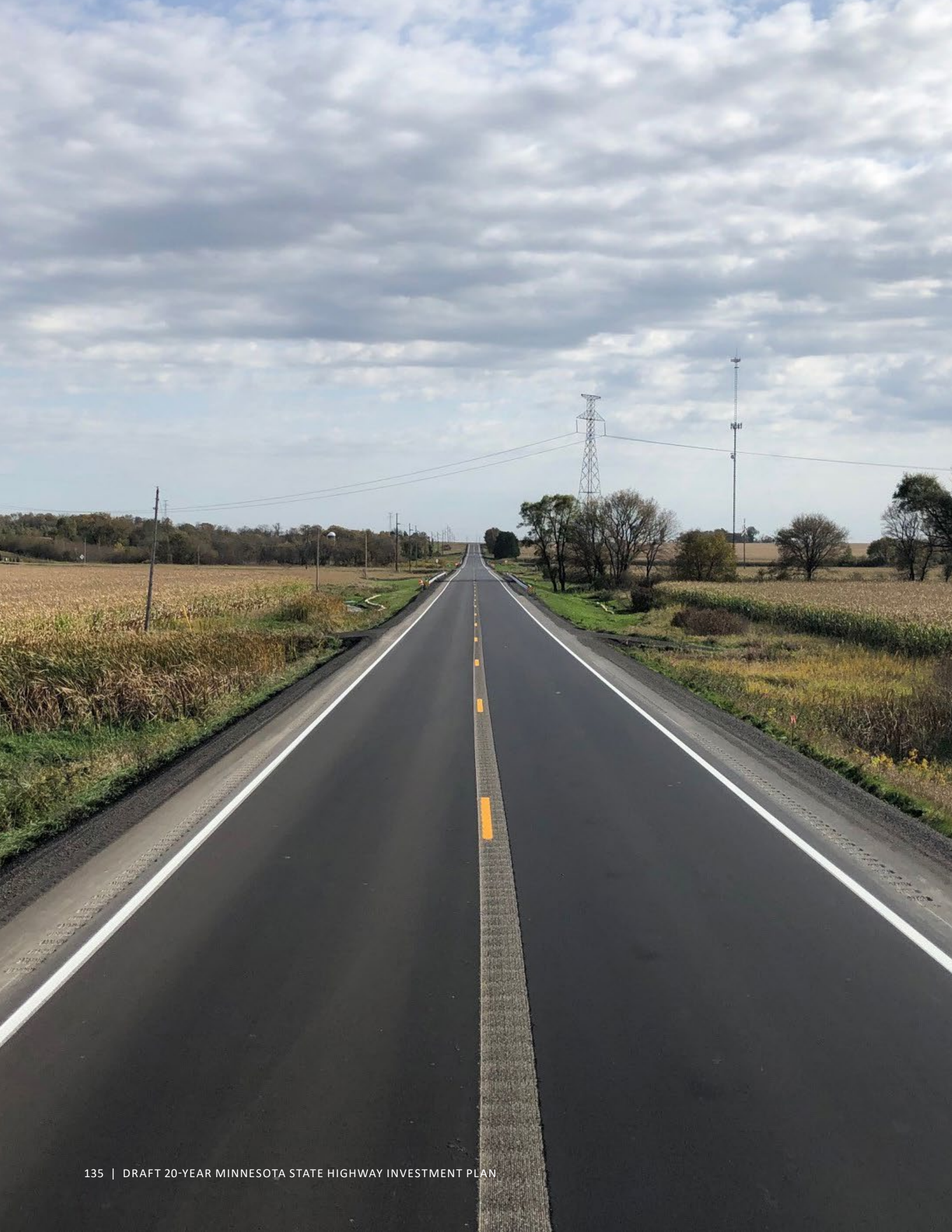


CHAPTER 8

MOVING FORWARD

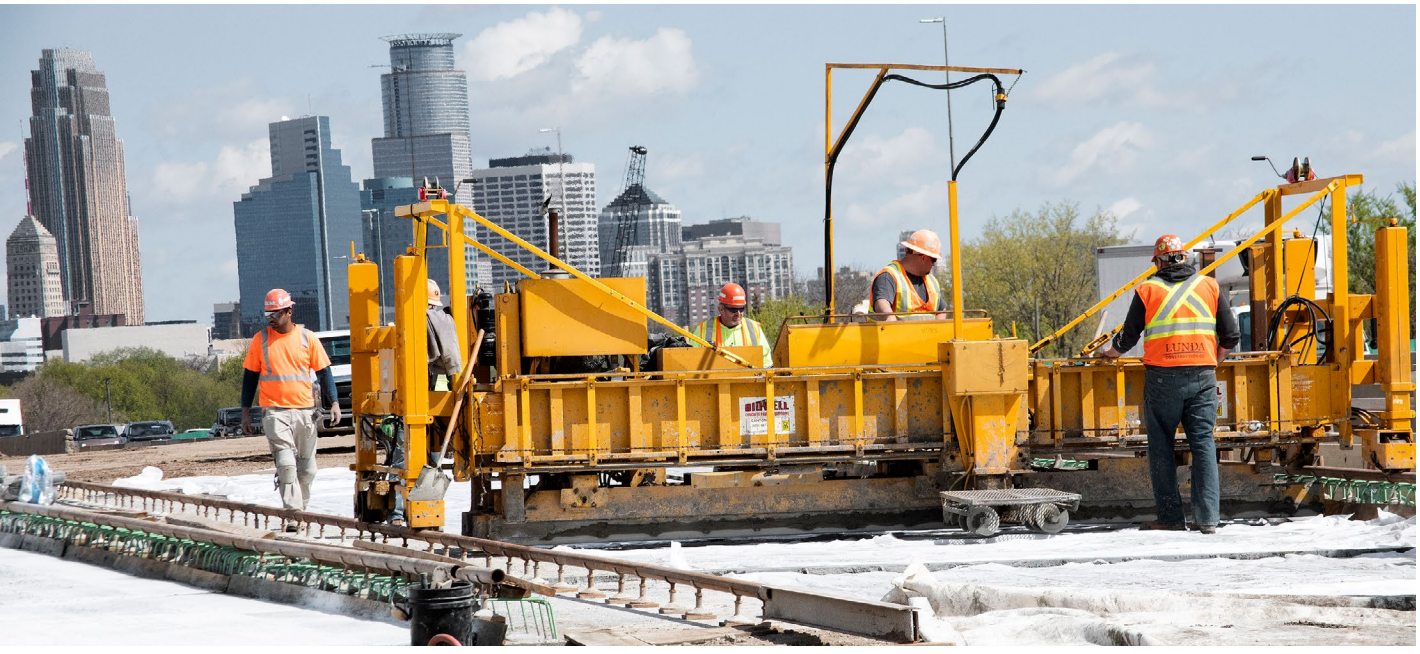
Despite recent increases in funding, MnDOT does not have enough funding to meet all of its capital highway needs. MnDOT will use strategies and process improvements to ensure that the state achieves the maximum positive impact from all of the investments on state highways. These strategies will help close the gap between desired outcomes and the projected outcomes in MnSHIP. Several new planning processes are also underway and will be completed between now and the next MnSHIP update, including completing the Resilience Improvement Plan, State Freight Plan and the Strategic Highway Safety Plan. MnDOT also plans to make process improvements that will help the agency and stakeholders make more informed decisions on projects and investments.

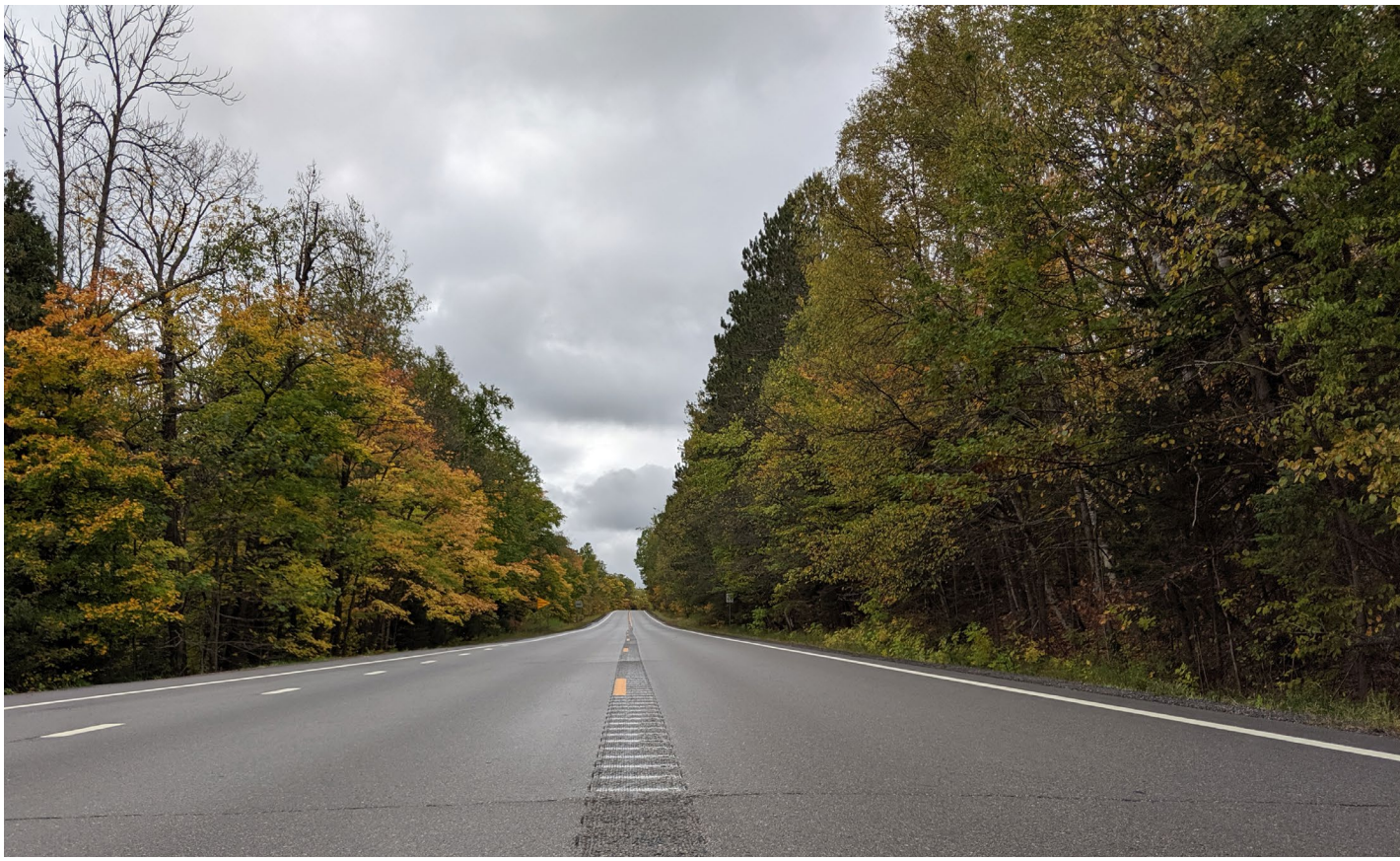
CHAPTER 8

STRATEGIES TO STRETCH PROJECTED REVENUE

MnDOT will pursue a mix of strategies that will stretch existing revenue to accomplish additional priorities beyond those identified in MnSHIP. In some cases, these strategies will require further study prior to implementation and support from MnDOT's transportation stakeholders. These strategies can be a means for achieving more desirable outcomes on the state highway system.

- **Explore state and federal funding opportunities.** In addition to the funding identified in MnSHIP, there are potential state and federal funding opportunities. The current federal transportation reauthorization bill contains an unprecedented number of competitive solicitation programs. MnDOT is aggressively pursuing these programs and coordinates with local partners on their applications for state highway projects. State funding opportunities include the Corridors of Commerce program and additional state bonding.
- **Implement asset management principles from the Transportation Asset Management Plan (TAMP).** The TAMP includes best practices for asset management and life-cycle planning to model the costs of different management approaches. MnDOT will use this information to better manage its state highway assets.
- **Continue to employ high return-on-investment strategies that deliver the majority of benefits at a reduced cost.** MnDOT has increased its use of performance-based designs. These designs help ensure MnDOT does not deliver projects beyond what is needed to meet agency performance targets or other key agency objectives. By continuing to expand the use of this design flexibility, MnDOT will increase its ability to help manage project costs and ensure that the most efficient investment is made to try to meet performance-based designs.





- **Manage investments to achieve multiple objectives such as improving economic competitiveness, public health, equity and climate resilience.** Early coordination and participation in the planning process help MnDOT combine resources and leverage investments to achieve improved outcomes. For example, in most cases, it is far more cost-effective to include a bicycle element or a freight accommodation during construction of a larger bridge or highway project than as an independent project.
- **Continue evaluating the jurisdictional alignment of the state highway system to ensure transportation decisions occur at the right level of government.** MnDOT, in conjunction with local governments across the state, completed a study that explored potential roadways for jurisdictional transfer. An additional assessment of state law and other policy considerations are necessary to determine how this type of system refinement will increase long-term system sustainability and place transportation decisions at the right level of government.
- **Coordinate with local units of government and other state agencies to achieve better transportation outcomes for the public, transportation stakeholders and partners.** By improving local participation, MnDOT will be better positioned to engage in collaborative planning efforts with stakeholders and to pursue outcomes that achieve multiple purposes. This includes coordination on regional and federal grant applications and project development.
- **Pursue research and innovation to improve efficiency and minimize impacts to the traveling public.** With all the challenges facing Minnesota's transportation system, innovation is a key strategy. Creativity and innovation need to permeate every aspect of transportation service delivery, from how revenues are generated to how projects are constructed.

CHAPTER 8

WORK PLAN

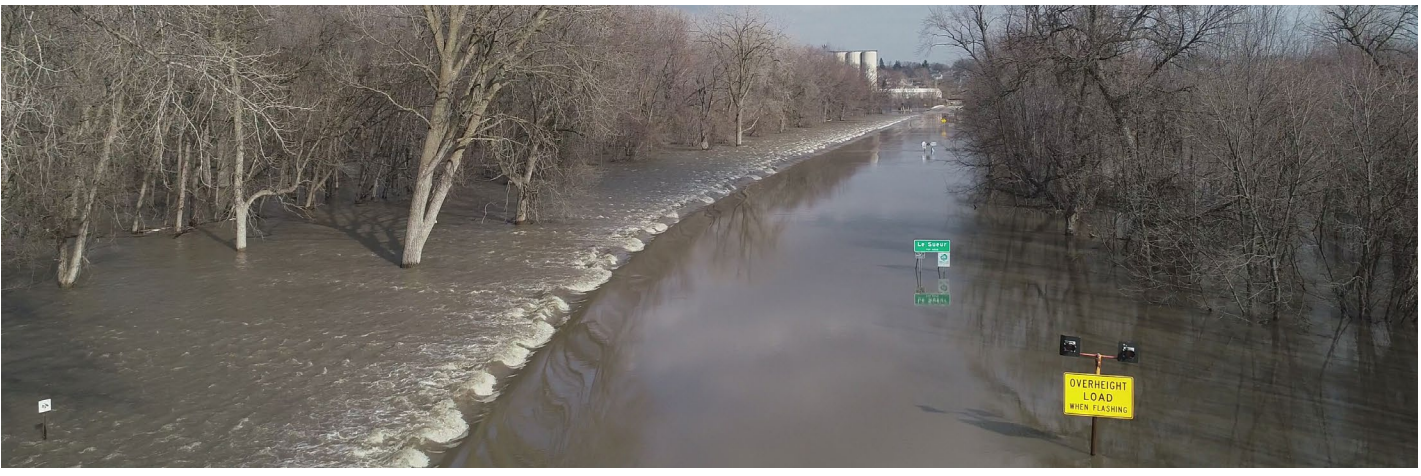
MnSHIP covers the 20-year period between 2023 and 2042. It is updated every five years to reflect changes in federal and state policy, system conditions and revenue projections. The current MnSHIP update refined MnDOT's planning and programming process to address these changes.

MnDOT will initiate the activities listed below before MnSHIP is updated in five years. These activities are not necessarily specific to any one objective or strategy but represent key areas for MnDOT to advance. Taken together, these activities will help realize the overall policy direction laid out in this plan. The list is not meant to be all inclusive. There are many other activities in each of these areas and other areas that MnDOT will advance in the upcoming years to help move this plan forward.

PLANNING ACTIVITIES

- **Complete and implement the Resilience Improvement Plan and Carbon Reduction Strategy.** As part of the Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-Saving Transportation (PROTECT) and Carbon Reduction Program, MnDOT is required to complete a Resilience Improvement Plan (RIP) and Carbon Reduction Strategy.
  - The RIP will document how Minnesota identified climate vulnerabilities and best practices for addressing those vulnerabilities. The RIP will also document the process for prioritizing and programming how to invest PROTECT funds. The RIP is anticipated to be completed and adopted by spring 2024.
  - The Carbon Reduction Strategy builds off the existing 2022 Minnesota Climate Action Framework, 2022 Statewide Multimodal Transportation Plan and 2019 Pathways to Decarbonizing Transportation to identify three high-level categories to reduce carbon emissions from surface transportation. Each category will identify strategies and subsequent implementable project types to achieve the goal of reducing carbon emissions in Minnesota. The CRS will identify how to prioritize and select projects that support the reduction of carbon emissions bringing policies into implementation.

Related Objectives: System Stewardship, Climate Action



- **Complete Corridor Plans.** MnDOT is initiating a corridor planning effort to better coordinate with local partners and achieve the MinnesotaGO goals and guiding principles.

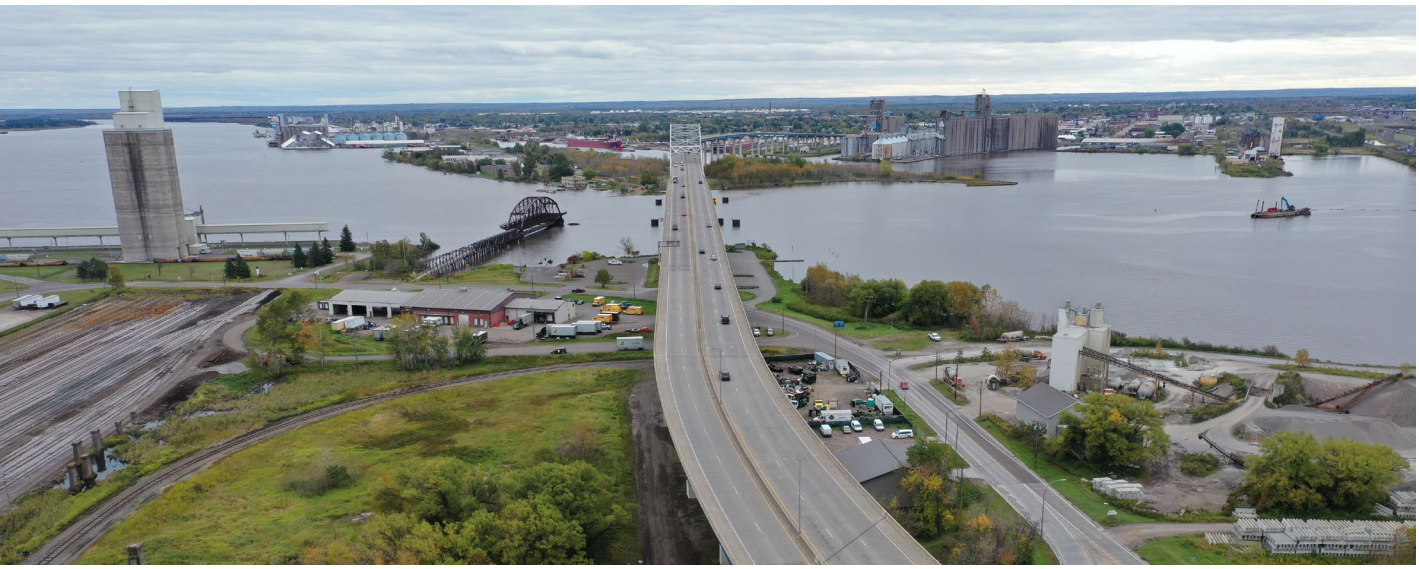
Related Objectives: Healthy Equitable Communities, Open Decision Making

- **Update the Strategic Highway Safety Plan.** Last updated in 2020, the SHSP will be updated starting in 2024. The plan is updated in collaboration with the Minnesota Department of Public Safety and the Minnesota Department of Health. The SHSP is Minnesota's plan to reduce fatal and serious injury crashes and, over time, eliminate the loss of life on Minnesota roads.

Related Objectives: Transportation Safety

- **Update the Statewide Bicycle System Plan.** Last updated in 2016, the Statewide Bicycle System Plan will be updated starting in 2024. The Bike Plan will look to advance MnDOT's commitment to safe, comfortable, and convenient bicycling in alignment with existing state transportation policy. The plan will be developed at a statewide level, though recommendations will be targeted to local-level impacts that provide benefits at the community level. Building on the 2021 Pedestrian System Plan, the plan will include themes of climate, equity, and an evaluation of MnDOT processes to identify barriers and opportunities for collaboration.

Related Objectives: Transportation Safety, Critical Connections, Healthy Equitable Communities



PROCESS IMPROVEMENTS

- **Improve pavement the bridge performance models.** The Bridge Office and Materials Office will be developing and implementing new performance models to better forecast and prioritize investments in MnDOT's most expensive and extensive assets. The new bridge model will allow MnDOT to understand how bridges deteriorate according to the National Bridge Elements and how this data can be used to extend bridge life in the most cost-effective manner.

Related Objectives: System Stewardship

- **Better plan for and track preventive maintenance and preservation activities**. Preventive maintenance and preservation of infrastructure prolongs its life and lowers long-term costs. This task includes the development and tracking of preventive maintenance performance measures for major state highway assets.

Related Objectives: System Stewardship

- **Quantify the impact capital investments have on maintenance and operations needs and expenditures.** Reduced capital investment can often result in increased operations and maintenance needs. MnDOT will examine the relationship between capital investments and operations and maintenance since preventive maintenance is often seen as helping to extend the life of the facility or asset.

Related Objectives: System Stewardship, Open Decision-Making

- **Investigate pedestrian and bicycle facility maintenance.** The 2021 Pedestrian System Plan identified inconsistent maintenance as a barrier to walking and directed MnDOT to investigate process improvements related to maintaining these facilities. MnDOT will continue to work internally and with local partners to determine best practices and identify the needs and costs associated with maintaining bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. Planning work will be completed to understand the potential costs of seasonal maintenance on facilities that are likely to be constructed within the next ten years.

Related Objectives: System Stewardship, Critical Connections, Healthy Equitable Communities

- **Build internal planning and design capacity for walking and biking infrastructure.** MnDOT's primary design documents for walking and biking will be updated starting in 2024. The Bicycle Facility Design Manual will be updated to incorporate changes in the anticipated 5th edition of the AASHTO Guide for Development of Bicycle Facilities. Similarly, Chapter 8 of the Facility Design Guide will be updated to incorporate new guidance. Staff trainings on the Statewide System Plans and these guides will be conducted.

Related Objectives: Critical Connections, Healthy Equitable Communities

- **Implement Greenhouse Gas emissions and vehicle miles traveled legislative requirements.**

Related Objectives: Climate Action, Critical Connections

- **Continue to coordinate improvements with local partners to reduce burdens.** Early engagement with local partners on projects in Years 5-10 of the CHIP will allow for coordinated construction activities and to ensure that funds leverage the highest possible outcomes and communities are not overly burdened by construction.

Related Objectives: Healthy Equitable Communities, Open Decision Making

- **Leverage MnSHIP funding to address equity in local communities.** MnDOT has a large construction program that touches all parts of the state. The MnSHIP construction program can leverage funding from local partners, regional and federal grant programs to achieve more equitable outcomes and address local priorities.

Related Objectives: Healthy Equitable Communities