



• Statewide
Multimodal
Transportation Plan

Chapter 6

WHAT IS NEXT FOR MNDOT?

NEXT STEPS

The Minnesota GO Vision, guiding principles and the objectives and strategies laid out in **Chapter 5** provide direction for all transportation partners. This direction outlines how partners should work together to develop, maintain and operate Minnesota's transportation system. This chapter outlines how MnDOT, specifically, will move forward. The next steps for MnDOT include identifying near-term work activities, continued planning efforts as well as monitoring and reporting.

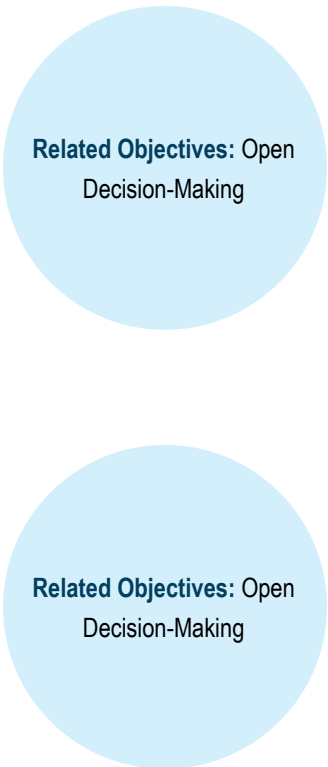
WORK PLAN 2017-2020

MnDOT will do the activities listed below before the Statewide Multimodal Transportation Plan is updated again in four 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 do in the upcoming years to help move this plan forward.

Work Plan Activities

ENGAGEMENT, COMMUNICATIONS & EDUCATION

- **Increase the transparency of MnDOT's project selection processes.**
How MnDOT selects construction projects is a regular topic of interest. Recently, the Office of the Legislative Auditor reviewed MnDOT's project selection process and made several recommendations. There are several actions MnDOT will undertake to improve transparency. These actions include implementing best practices to improve transparency of the project selection process and local agency involvement, establishing a method to track spending of local dollars on the trunk highway system, and identifying the most important future expansion projects if new funding becomes available.
- **Provide more continuous engagement with partners and the public.**
Currently, engagement at MnDOT is very project-focused. MnDOT has a large presence within a community during planning and construction activities but is less present and involved if no work is currently underway. Expanding MnDOT's engagement efforts to include more ongoing communication and relationship-building at the district level would allow for better understanding of broader local and regional priorities. Additionally, this would create opportunities for increased education about key transportation topics and issues. It would likely also improve coordination and engagement on specific projects when they do occur.



Related Objectives: Open
Decision-Making

Related Objectives: Open
Decision-Making

- **Develop and update new, more inclusive public engagement resources.** MnDOT is regularly trying different and new engagement tools and tactics through the agency's various planning processes, and learning important lessons along the way. As follow-up to this plan, MnDOT will compile a resource library of different tools and tactics for public engagement and make them easily available to internal and external audiences. The resources will include key information about how to implement the tool / tactic, its effectiveness and the costs associated with implementation. This will help develop a more consistent and effective approach to engagement throughout MnDOT. Special emphasis will be placed on identifying engagement tools and tactics to better reach traditionally underserved populations.
- **Develop and improve educational materials to answer key questions of interest to Minnesotans.** As follow-up to this plan, MnDOT will identify key transportation topics of interest to the public and our partners and develop and improve educational materials such as text, videos and graphics related to these topics. Emphasis will be placed on resources that are engaging, easy to understand, easy to find and accessible to all Minnesotans. This effort will build off existing resources, such as www.dot.state.mn.us/getconnected and www.MinnesotaGO.org. Topics for initial consideration include: (1) How are transportation projects identified and by whom? (2) Where does the money for transportation come from and how is it spent? (3) What are the benefits of transportation investments? (4) What are the goals for our transportation system and progress toward these goals? (5) How and when do stakeholders get involved in the planning and project-development process? (6) How do performance measures influence project selection? (7) What are the long-term projections for system condition?
- **Develop and execute safety education campaigns.** MnDOT supports various safety education campaigns each year, in coordination with Toward Zero Deaths and other agency partners such as the Department of Public Safety. In follow-up to this plan, MnDOT will support safety education campaigns to address key safety issues such as work zone safety, pedestrian and bicycle safety, motorcycle safety and distracted driving. Other safety topics will be identified and implemented on an ongoing basis. MnDOT will work to make all educational materials engaging, honest, easy to find and accessible to all Minnesotans.

Related Objectives: Open Decision-Making

Related Objectives: Open Decision-Making, Transportation Safety and System Stewardship

Related Objectives: Transportation Safety and Healthy Communities

Related Objectives:
Open Decision-Making,
Critical Connections and
Healthy Communities

Related Objectives:
Open Decision-Making,
Critical Connections and
Healthy Communities



ADVANCING EQUITY

- **Study how transportation affects equity and identify transportation strategies and approaches that will meaningfully reduce disparities.** Transportation policies can contribute to inequality related to race, income, ability and other factors. However, they can also help reduce negative effects brought about by development and construction and improve quality of life for all. To better understand how Minnesota's transportation policies affect equity, MnDOT will develop an "advancing transportation equity" report. The report will be modeled from the Advancing Health Equity Report completed by the Minnesota Department of Health. It will include defining what an equitable transportation system is and identifying transportation strategies and approaches that can advance equity and reduce disparities.
- **Pilot tools and strategies to better incorporate equity into project-level decision-making.** MnDOT is committed to incorporating equity into transportation decision-making. However, more work is needed to fully understand what that means for the transportation system and how it will be best accomplished. The upcoming I-94 study between downtown St. Paul and downtown Minneapolis, because of its size, importance, location and history, provides a platform for MnDOT to explore new tools and strategies. The study will focus on ensuring equity is incorporated throughout the project, from early engagement to a more equitable transportation system upon its completion. MnDOT will document lessons learned as a part of this project in order to continually improve the agency's ability to promote equity in future projects.

ASSET MANAGEMENT

- **Expand and improve asset management planning.** Building on the agency's ongoing asset management practices, MnDOT will add more categories of infrastructure to asset management planning efforts. Additionally, MnDOT will review and update data management practices to support the agency's asset management planning and will make MnDOT data available to local partners when possible. MnDOT will also work with cities, counties and other partners to collect and report local system condition data. MnDOT will expand the Transportation Asset Management System to include all significant highway assets – pavement, bridges, pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, roadside infrastructure, etc. When fully operational, the Transportation Asset Management System will identify and track individual assets such as signals, lighting, intelligent transportation systems infrastructure and guard rails. The long-term goal is to include all MnDOT highway-related assets. To account for the full life-cycle of infrastructure, MnDOT will study and implement methods to better incorporate maintenance and operations activities in capital investment plans and will develop a methodology to calculate maintenance needs based on capital investments. MnDOT will also partner with asset management planning efforts for non-highway assets, such as transit vehicles.
- **Identify vulnerabilities and assess risks to the transportation system.** Identifying system vulnerabilities before they become emergency situations allows MnDOT to adapt and plan appropriate responses. MnDOT will continue to complete vulnerability assessments for risks such as landslides and flooding related to a changing climate. MnDOT will also explore vulnerability assessments for risks in other areas. As risks are identified, MnDOT will evaluate strategies to reduce or eliminate vulnerabilities. For example, MnDOT will study the potential of developing a flood mitigation / climate adaptation program that would facilitate updates on the state highway network to increase resiliency to climate-related impacts. MnDOT will also develop better methods to track and report investments to respond to identified system risks.

Related Objectives:
Open Decision-Making and
System Stewardship

Related Objectives:
Critical Connections,
System Stewardship and
Healthy Communities

Related Objectives:
Open Decision-Making and
Healthy Communities

Related Objectives:
Critical Connections,
System Stewardship and
Healthy Communities

LAND USE & TRANSPORTATION

- **Develop tools and resources to support transportation decisions that reflect the surrounding context.** For years MnDOT has embraced the idea of context sensitive solutions and flexible design standards to develop and maintain a transportation system that is reflective of the people and places that it serves. However, adoption of these ideas has been inconsistent. Developing context guidance will help bring together related initiatives, establishing a common framework and language to describe context-focused design and maintenance going forward. One particular component of context that will need to be explored is the definition of “urban.” MnDOT will review its current policies and programs to identify the different ways in which urban is defined and select a definition to be used for performance reporting. Additional work that seeks to establish recommended practices for community engagement in different settings will also be part of this effort. In the end, additional context guidance will provide multiple potential starting points for a project, allowing for greater flexibility while offering a common reference for many different initiatives at MnDOT.
- **Update MnDOT technical guidance to incorporate new practices and policy direction.** MnDOT is responsible for a variety of technical guidance which influences how projects are developed and impacts communities in Minnesota. It is important that these documents are updated periodically to reflect new research, innovation and policy direction. In the near term, MnDOT will update its access management guidance to reflect changes that have occurred to the state’s highway system since the guidance was completed in 2008. Effective access management reduces congestion and crashes, preserves road capacity, improves travel time, eases movement between destinations and supports local economic development. The Road Design Manual establishes uniform policies and procedures for MnDOT. Since it was last updated, several revisions have occurred. MnDOT will update the Road Design Manual to incorporate existing technical memoranda and consider additional policy guidance, such as new context considerations. Other guidance documents will be reviewed and updated, as appropriate.

PLANNING

- **Review existing and potential new National Highway System intermodal connectors.** NHS intermodal connectors, or last mile connectors, are roadway segments that provide access between the NHS and major passenger or freight intermodal facilities such as ports and airports. Eligible intermodal facilities are determined by annual passenger or freight volumes or daily vehicle traffic and the importance of the intermodal facility within the state. MnDOT will work with its partners to review existing NHS intermodal connectors and identify potential new connectors.
- **Refine the methodology used for calculating return on investment.** Calculating return on investment includes not only financial considerations, but also social, economic and environmental factors such as safety, noise, travel time, vehicle operating costs and air quality. Currently, MnDOT uses ROI when selecting projects for some programs. MnDOT will clarify how ROI is used in its current programs, examine whether ROI can be used in additional programs and research potential new factors for consideration. MnDOT will also explore tools to measure the health impacts of transportation decisions, such as the Integrated Transport and Health Impact Modelling tool.
- **Maintain the MnDOT Trend Analysis Library.** As part of the SMTP update process, MnDOT produced more than 20 papers that explore the interaction between trends that will shape the future of Minnesota and the state's transportation system. These papers are available on MnDOT's statewide planning website – www.MinnesotaGO.org. As a follow-up to this plan, MnDOT will identify and implement an update schedule for each paper to ensure they are kept up-to-date and available as a resource for future planning and engagement efforts. New trend topics will be added as they emerge.
- **Study and work with transportation partners to prepare for connected and autonomous vehicles.** Vehicle technology is changing rapidly. As part of this plan update, MnDOT identified some of the potential implications of self-driving and connected vehicles. MnDOT will work with other state and federal agencies, transportation partners and industry to monitor changes, review and update regulations, and explore demonstration projects. As part of those efforts, MnDOT will explore how to ensure the technology benefits individuals with disabilities. As more information about how the new vehicles perform in real world conditions becomes available, MnDOT will review and adjust the agency's plans to incorporate the technology.

Related Objectives: Critical Connections

Related Objectives: Open Decision-Making, Critical Connections and Healthy Communities

Related Objectives: Open Decision-Making

Related Objectives: Transportation Safety and Critical Connections

Related Objectives:
Healthy Communities

Related Objectives:
System Stewardship and
Healthy Communities

CLIMATE CHANGE & ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

- **Work with transportation partners to identify and advance statewide strategies for reducing greenhouse gas emissions.** As part of this plan update, MnDOT formally adopts the target of reducing GHG emissions from the transportation sector by 30 percent from 2005 levels in accordance with the Minnesota Next Generation Energy Act. While GHG emissions from the transportation sector have declined and are projected to continue declining, emissions are still projected to be 10 to 15 percent higher than the target. Many different approaches will be required to make progress on this target. MnDOT will work internally and with transportation stakeholders to identify and implement strategies to reduce GHG emissions from the transportation sector.
- **Study and implement new and improved practices to reduce negative environmental impacts from state highway maintenance and operations.** MnDOT manages more than 175,000 acres of greenspace along Minnesota's roadways. How these green spaces are managed impacts the environment. For example, these green spaces are an opportunity to provide habitat corridors for pollinators such as bees and butterflies. The use of native plant mixes also provides habitat for native animal life and reduces the impact of storm water runoff and erosion from major precipitation events, among other environmental benefits. As such, it is important that MnDOT reduce negative impacts to, and enhance where possible, these green spaces. To do this, MnDOT will continue to study the costs and benefits of increasing the use of native roadside planting and partner to implement native plantings in key corridors. Additionally, MnDOT will implement strategies to reduce chloride use during winter maintenance and limit the spread of invasive species.



NEXT STEPS FOR THE FAMILY OF PLANS

MnDOT's family of plans provides direction for all the ways that goods and people move throughout Minnesota. All planning at MnDOT begins with the Minnesota GO 50-year Vision. The SMTP is the next level of planning in the family of plans. It provides policy direction to each of the modal and system plans. The modal and system plans include:

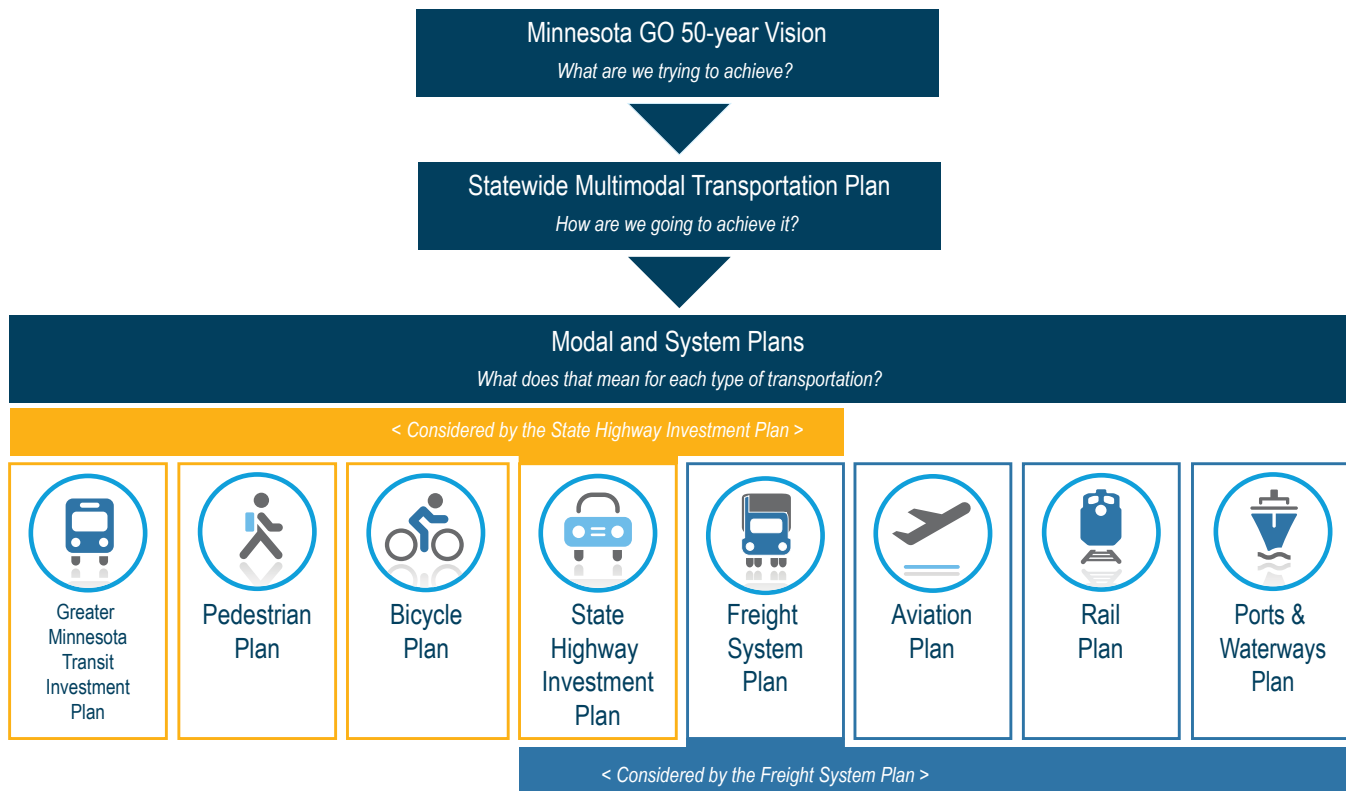
- **Greater Minnesota Transit Investment Plan** – This plan sets priorities for transit investments and determines the level of funding necessary for the state to meet its transit needs in Greater Minnesota. The Greater Minnesota Transit Investment Plan is currently being updated and is anticipated to be adopted in late 2016 / early 2017.
- **Statewide Pedestrian System Plan** – MnDOT is currently developing the state's first statewide pedestrian plan. The plan will be based off of the collaborative framework, **Minnesota Walks**, developed in 2016 with the Minnesota Department of Health. The plan will also identify key strategies to increase walking and rolling year-round. It is anticipated to be complete in late 2017 or early 2018.
- **Statewide Bicycle System Plan** – This plan identifies policy direction for bicycle transportation in Minnesota. The most recent update of the Statewide Bicycle System Plan was adopted in 2016.
- **State Highway Investment Plan** – This plan sets a fiscally-constrained, performance-based, 20-year investment direction for future capital improvements on Minnesota's state highway system. The 20-year State Highway Investment Plan is currently being updated and is anticipated to be adopted in early 2017.
- **Statewide Freight System Plan** – This document broadly plans for Minnesota's freight system across all modes. The most recent update of the Statewide Freight System Plan was adopted in 2016.
- **State Rail Plan** – This plan establishes guidance for Minnesota initiatives and investments for freight and passenger rail services. The most recent update of the State Rail Plan is anticipated to be adopted in 2016.
- **State Aviation System Plan** – This plan informs decision making and guides the development of Minnesota's system of publicly-funded airports. The most recent update of the State Aviation System Plan was adopted in 2013.
- **Statewide Ports and Waterways Plan** – This document broadly plans for Minnesota ports and waterway facilities. The first Statewide Ports and Waterways Plan was adopted in 2013.

Figure 6-1 shows the relationship between the plans within this family.

The new policy direction from this SMTP will be reflected in each of MnDOT's modal and system plans as they are updated. It is anticipated that these updates will occur over the next few years.

In addition to MnDOT's family of plans, there are many more supporting plans and studies that inform transportation decision-making at MnDOT and for other transportation partners. These plans focus on specific topics, such as safety or on specific geographic areas or corridors. All of this planning helps direct the specific projects that build, maintain and operate Minnesota's transportation system.

Figure 6-1: MnDOT Family of Plans



MONITORING & REPORTING

To track progress toward the objectives identified in this plan, MnDOT will continue to monitor and report on the key performance measures identified in **Chapter 5**. The primary reporting method is MnDOT's Annual Transportation Performance Report. This report holds transportation partners accountable for delivering the direction identified in this plan. It also allows the public and transportation partners to see how well the plan strategies are working. Since the SMTP is only updated every four years, annual performance reporting is useful to identify if and when any mid-course corrections are necessary.

MnDOT will also work to develop additional performance measures and targets in the near-term. The current list of measures does not tell the complete story of the plan, yet. For some policy areas there is a need to develop new measures or reassess existing targets to better communicate progress. Specific measures to be explored and developed are identified in **Table 6-1**. However, others may be added over time.

Table 6-1: Proposed performance measures to be developed in the next one to three years

PROPOSED MEASURE	RELATED OBJECTIVE
Public engagement measures to be developed by MnDOT public engagement committee	Open Decision-Making
Construction projects completed on time	Open Decision-Making
Measure of project delivery for modes / programs that MnDOT manages through grants as opposed to construction	Open Decision-Making
Access to trauma center measure	Transportation Safety
Allied Radio Matrix for Emergency Response maintenance / reliability measure	Transportation Safety
Job accessibility by bicycling and walking	Critical Connections
Reliability of intercity commuter rail and bus services	Critical Connections
Measure of improvement to bicycle and pedestrian networks on the state highway system	Critical Connections
Measure of availability/condition of first/last mile connections	Critical Connections
Measure of rail asset condition	System Stewardship
Measure of waterway asset condition	System Stewardship
Measure of pedestrian asset condition	System Stewardship
Measure of total system value	System Stewardship
Measure of total system size	System Stewardship
Measure of jurisdictional transfer progress	System Stewardship
Annual percent of Minnesotans who use each mode of transportation	Healthy Communities

MnDOT will also look to improve how performance measures are reported to make sure the information is easy to find, engaging and accessible to all Minnesotans. MnDOT will update its performance measure website and reporting to include all the performance measures from **Chapter 5** and new measures as they are adopted.

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