

# **Sustainable Transportation for Economic Prosperity in the 21st Century**

## **“STEP21 for Minnesota”**

### **Lessons Learned During the 2015-2016 Session**

#### **Welcome/Lessons Learned**

Good morning. Thank you for inviting me here today to share with you some of the lessons learned during Minnesota's 2015-2016 legislative session. I especially wish to welcome all our visitors to Minnesota. I hope you get a chance to enjoy some of Minnesota's special places. Hopefully you will find these lessons learned useful as you return to your homes and continue to engage with your communities and stakeholders. Thanks for visiting Minnesota.

#### **Thank John**

John Siekmeier is a partner in this work with me. He works for MnDOT as a Pavement and Geotechnical Research Engineer. He volunteers his time with me as my intern. He is here as my intern today not a state employee. He is the best intern I have ever had. I encourage you to share your expertise and passion with a policy maker who is working to transform the transportation system.

#### **Themes to listen for:**

1. Tie asset management and performance measures to legal framework - laws, vision, goals, executive orders
2. Ensure Civil Rights and comply with legal framework
3. Create a Multimodal Transportation System - now and for the future
4. It's about people. Meaningfully engage the public.
5. Urgent to transform our transportation system and DOT culture.

#### **Funding, accountability and bipartisan support**

Although the Legislature did not deliver the transportation investments that Minnesotans expected this year, I remain committed to working with my colleagues from both sides of the aisle to advocate for new, sustainable, long-term transportation investments linked directly to performance measures and greater accountability. The proposed legislation that I am describing today has gained bipartisan support during the last two years. My colleagues, Democrats and Republicans, have added their names and voices supporting this legislation by signing on to the bill, speaking in favor of it on the house floor and during Transportation

Committee meetings, voting for it or moving it out of committee, and signing onto letters. I am optimistic that these ideas and hopefully sustainable, long term funding will become law during the 2017 legislative session.

## **Laws & Vision**

As we discuss accountability and performance measurement today, I believe that it is important for us to remember that we already have many existing state and federal laws and executive orders that do a good job of describing our transportation goals. MnDOT also has a vision statement and that came from engaging Minnesotans in articulating our desired outcomes. It includes these words:

“Minnesota’s multimodal transportation system maximizes the health of people, the environment and our economy.” I hope one day soon we will add for all people.

## **Disconnect between laws, vision and projects**

Where we seem to fall short is when we fail to build projects that are consistent with state and federal laws, executive orders, and our vision and goals. This disconnect, between what we say we care about and what we actually do on projects, is the reason for the proposed legislation that I am describing to you today. It is very important that we make investments and build projects that are consistent with laws, executive orders and our state's vision and goals.

## **Institutionalize vs. outside pressure**

We need MnDOT to institutionalize a more well-defined process, which assures that our transportation investments are quantitatively linked to our vision and goals and are delivered at the project level by MnDOT. We must end the need for continual pressure from communities pleading with MnDOT to follow law, vision, goals, and MnDOT’s own written policies.

## **Collaboration and Communication**

It is my belief that my colleagues and I on the House Transportation Committee appreciate that our transportation department is working harder to become more effective, transparent and accountable. However, to be successful in 2017, we will need much better collaboration and communication by the department and a greater willingness to implement multimodal transportation system and effective asset management that benefit **all** Minnesotans.

Minnesota has been a leader in the nation on many transportation issues. I have confidence in their capacity to achieve implement this legislation.



## **Link Goals with Projects**

I believe that most of us here today can agree that it is important to clearly link the projects we are selecting and building to Minnesota's transportation goals. By doing this, we assure that people and products move about safely, and that opportunity and prosperity are shared by all. What we may not agree on yet is how we will together to:

1. measure and communicate achievement,
2. reward best practices, and
3. administer consequences when necessary.

## **Urgency and fully engage**

Hopefully my continuing conversation with MnDOT leaders will encourage these leaders to act with greater urgency as we work together to enhance and communication effectiveness at MnDOT. However, if more motivation is required then it may be good to remind ourselves of the existing Minnesota statute that requires MnDOT to "recommend to the legislature appropriate changes in law necessary to carry out the mission and improve the performance of the department." I will continue to encourage this conversation between MnDOT and the Legislature and I hope that MnDOT will choose to more fully engage with the Legislature regarding:

1. asset management,
2. remaining service life, and
3. performance measures

so that we are better prepared for success in 2017.

## **DOT Executives Agree with Legislative Oversight**

Every year the National Conference of State Legislatures shares experiences from across our country. Here is one of their publications co-published by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Organizations (known to all of us as AASHTO). The title is: "Transportation Governance and Finance: A 50-State Review." When I open to page twelve, I see a figure showing that many DOT executives agree that legislatures have a responsibility to oversee state DOTs. I couldn't agree more. Clearly part of my responsibility as one of the people's elected representatives is to provide oversight that helps our transportation department to be more accountable to all the people. This is part of what I am elected to do and I take my responsibility to the people of Minnesota very seriously. My colleagues at the Legislature also believe strongly in their responsibility to the people they serve.

## **Bill Purpose**

The bill I and other colleagues introduced in 2015 delivers greater accountability to the people for their investments by enhancing the performance standards followed by our transportation department and communicating these asset management performance measures outcomes effectively to the legislature and public. This is necessary in order to increase:

1. organizational effectiveness,
2. encourage prudent allocation of resources, and
3. deliver greater value to Minnesotans. It is critically important that new transportation investments be tied to outcomes that assure sustainable transportation for economic prosperity in the 21st century.

In addition this helps build trust and confidence in the public and legislature to support additional funding.

### **Bill summary**

The bill encourages our transportation department do its part to improve service delivery and enhance financial effectiveness by demonstrating a renewed good faith effort to measure outcomes and deliver greater value. The new statute requires MnDOT to develop a performance, stewardship, and sustainability plan for the trunk highway system to improve the condition of existing infrastructure assets and enhance the effectiveness of our transportation system. This plan must include strategies to achieve the state transportation goals for all transportation modes within trunk highway corridors. Specific outcomes for performance, stewardship, and sustainability must be identified in collaboration with the public in order to assure freedom to move, enhance quality of life, and promote economic prosperity for all.

Specifically, the proposed statute will do these things:

1. Tie performance measures to
  - state and federal laws including Civil and human rights,
  - MnDOT's vision, mission and goals, as well as
  - executive orders like environmental justice.
2. Ensure collaboration with all Minnesotans
3. Establish comprehensive multimodal measures
4. Set targets and realistic expectations for each measure
5. Identify gaps between target and current condition of the transportation asset
6. Create a financing plan for each district that closes that gap and achieves the target
7. Create a sustainability plan for each district that right sizes our transportation system for future needs
8. Requires a licensed engineer to sign these plans assuring best practice standards are used



It also emphasized using a life cycle/remaining service life measure

### **Smoothness/RSL Map**

Two examples of measurement are shown on the maps produced by MnDOT. Both measures are important. Both smoothness and remaining service life provide value. However, it is very important that we carefully consider remaining service life, or a similar measure of long term infrastructure health. As you can see from MnDOT's maps, chasing short term 2-3% smoothness rating has resulted in a long term financial liability. These maps show that it is going to be difficult to fix Minnesota's crumbling infrastructure even with substantial new transportation investments.

### **Educating Constituents**

I educate my constituents about the need for sustainable, long term transportation funding. In a forum I may share this information about our transportation system.

Our transportation system is crumbling and not meeting the current and future needs of Minnesotans. We need to create good jobs through multimodal transportation projects that serve everyone from 1-101 no matter what type of transportation the use – walking, biking, using transit or driving a car. We must create a transportation system that prepares Minnesota for a prosperous future. We must have affordable and safe transportation opportunities for all ages and abilities so Minnesotans have the freedom to move and live independently throughout their lives.

We need to create transparency and accountability in Minnesota's Department of Transportation. We need to maximize every dollar in fulfilling Minnesota's vision to create and maintain a multimodal transportation system that maximizes the health of people, the environment, and our economy - for everyone.

### **Trust and Confidence Wise Investments**

Communicating and tracking performance measures and asset management helps give me and hopefully the public the confidence that new funding will bring our assets into good repair, meet the needs of all Minnesotans, and makes Minnesota and its people economically prosperous.

Therefore, we need to look at transportation effectiveness more broadly. It's not just a funding issue. We need to look hard at effectiveness and how to spend our limited dollars

more wisely. We need to link new investments to forward thinking policies and real action on the ground. This is necessary so that we do not repeat the mistakes of the past and continue to build projects that do not meet the needs of all people. Just adding more lanes to freeways running through urban communities will ruin more neighborhoods and won't eliminate congestion. These so-called "freeways" are certainly not "free" and the vast resources required must be invested wisely.

### **Work together vs. silos**

We need to align our plans and projects with the needs of all Minnesotans for our future together. We need to work together across disciplines to solve our transportation problems so that we maximize every investment and produce the outcomes we want for our state. We can no longer work in silos and fail to share and implement best practices from around the country and world.

### **Specifically we need:**

1. Greater engagement with health professionals, educators, economists, and environmentalists during transportation planning and evaluation.
2. More effective public engagement processes especially in underrepresented and underserved communities.
3. Implementation of best practices from other forward thinking states and countries worldwide.
4. Increased instruction by our educational institutions about context sensitive solution designs, which include all transportation modes including pedestrians and bicyclists.

In Minnesota, I expect our transportation agency to become effective leaders to:

1. Provide multimodal leadership, expert guidance, and technical assistance.
2. Partner and more effectively engage with other state agencies, local governments and the public.
3. Lead the way to fully integrate civil rights, human rights, and environmental justice into transportation decisions from project selection to maintenance.

### **We can't... and we must...**

1. It can't just be about moving cars fast or just getting from A to B.
2. It has to be about mobility for all, and prosperity for all Minnesotans.
3. Everyone's voice needs to be heard.
4. We need authentic system and culture change.

5. We must transform our transportation departments and system
6. We need to stop making poor decisions during project selection and planning, which far too often cause delays and waste resources during construction and retrofitting of projects.

## **Modernize System**

We need a much more sustainable transportation system. Transportation projects are built to last many generations.

We can't just repave our 1960 transportation system without bringing it up to the needs of people in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

We must modernize it.

1. We must make sure we build our transportation system to be safe, efficient and accessible for all people.
2. We must create connections and stop building barriers for people today and future generations.
3. We cannot afford to build projects that end up deficient or unsafe for some users on the day of the ribbon cutting.
4. We need to provide the freedom for everyone to move about safely no matter the mode of transportation they chose - especially for the 40 percent of Minnesotans who don't drive.

## **Current laws on book to achieve vision**

We have laws on the books that are being ignored or not being fully implemented. These include:

1. Laws that require pedestrian and bicycle planning and design.
2. Laws that protect people from discrimination and injustice.
3. Laws that protect our environment and reduce pollution
4. Laws that protect peoples' civil rights

When these existing laws are implemented more fully they will help Minnesota to maximize the health of individuals, the environment, and the economy. This is our vision. With leadership, accountability and working together we can achieve these outcomes.

## **MNDOT Lead & Change vs. externally driven**

We need MnDOT and other transportation agencies to be leaders throughout the transportation program from project selection and planning, to project construction and maintenance. We need to incorporate effective changes into MnDOT's:



1. organizational structure,
2. culture,
3. administrative policies, tech memos, and practices, and
4. community engagement.

Greater leadership must come from within transportation agencies and not have to come repeatedly from community members, outside advocacy groups, and professional associations.

## **Oversight & Performance Measure Summary**

We need oversight, accountability, and transparency. We must institutionalize performance measures in order to achieve our goals and maximize every dollar. We need asset management performance measures that connect to outcomes for individual health, our environment, and our economy, not just car-centric and concrete measures. We need to engage the public in meaningful ways and collaborate effectively as these measures are developed.

Specifically, the proposed statute will do these things:

1. Tie performance measures to
  - state and federal laws including Civil and human rights,
  - MnDOT's vision, mission and goals, as well as
  - executive orders like environmental justice.
2. Ensure collaboration with all Minnesotans
3. Establish comprehensive multimodal measures
4. Set targets and realistic expectations for each measure including remaining service life or life cycle costs
5. Identify gaps between target and current condition of the transportation asset
6. Create a financing plan for each district that closes that gap and achieves the target
7. Create a sustainability plan for each district that right sizes our transportation system for future needs
8. Requires a licensed engineer to sign these plans assuring best practice standards are used

## **Call to action**

Your state needs your help. Your elected representatives and your transportation department need your participation to plan its future together. We all need to be proactively involved to ensure that our transportation system creates economic prosperity and meets the needs of



our families, our communities, and our businesses now and in the future and for our state maximizes the health of people, the environment, and our economy - for all I would add.

### **Move forward together**

As we move Minnesota forward together, I invite your state to join us on this important journey. We are all in this together. We need to come together and harness our collective wisdom. Solutions from the bottom up are much better than from the top down. The urgency of this problem calls on us to work together.

### **Most Vulnerable/HHH**

Past transportation decisions have not been inclusive and have not engaged the people that are most effected by a substandard transportation system. This must change.

The Late Vice President Hubert Humphrey famously said, "It was once said that the moral test of government is how that government treats those who are in the dawn of life, the children; those who are in the twilight of life, the elderly; and those who are in the shadows of life, the sick, the needy and the handicapped."

We need a transportation system that meets this standard. We must plan for the most vulnerable user.

### **Hope**

I believe where there is a will there is a way. I believe Minnesota has been able to lead the nation in many areas because Minnesotans are strong leaders who innovate, collaborate, and solve complex problems. I look to the states that are innovating and addressing these challenges I have discussed today. Thank you for your work.

Together we can create a transportation system that serves all people.

Together we can build a future of prosperity and success in our great nation.

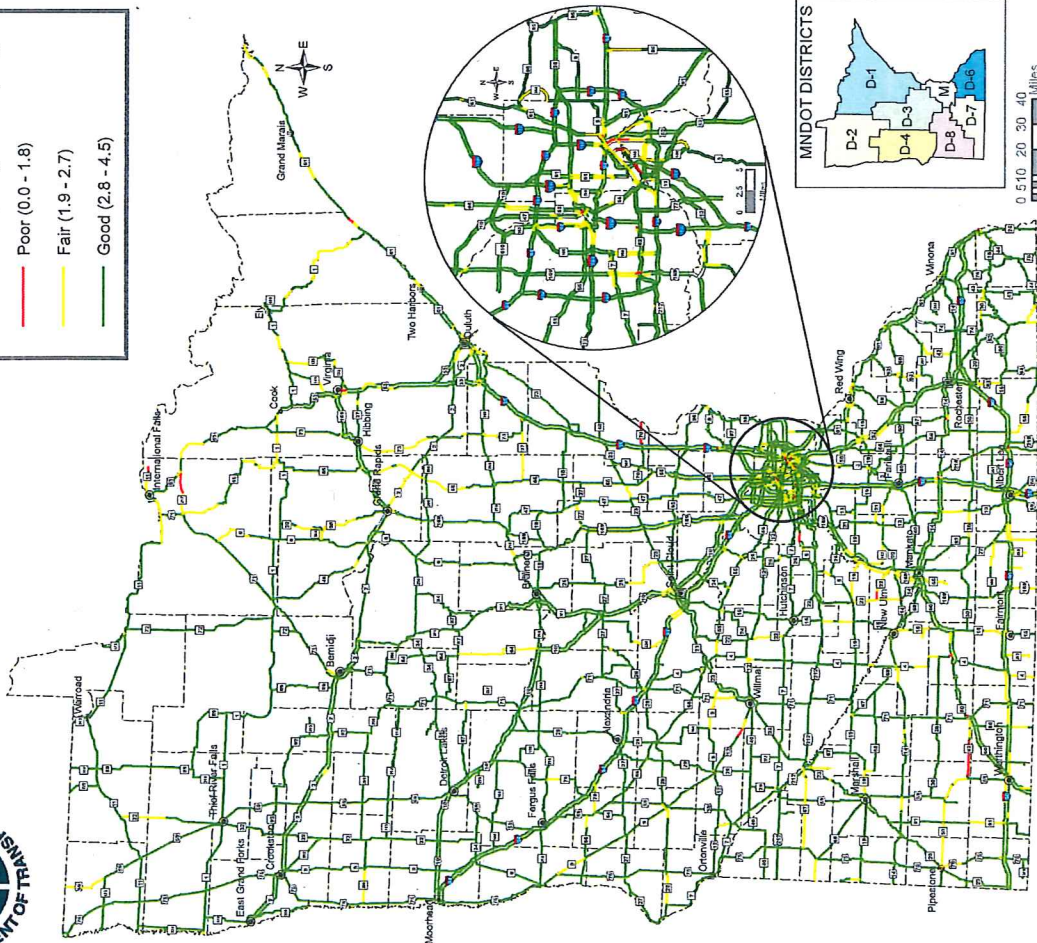
### **Thank you!**

Thank you! Have a wonderful conference and stay in our great state of Minnesota. I look forward to connecting with you.



**STATEWIDE  
2014 PAVEMENT CONDITION  
Pavement Quality Index (PQI)**

- Poor (0.0 - 1.8)
- Fair (1.9 - 2.7)
- Good (2.8 - 4.5)



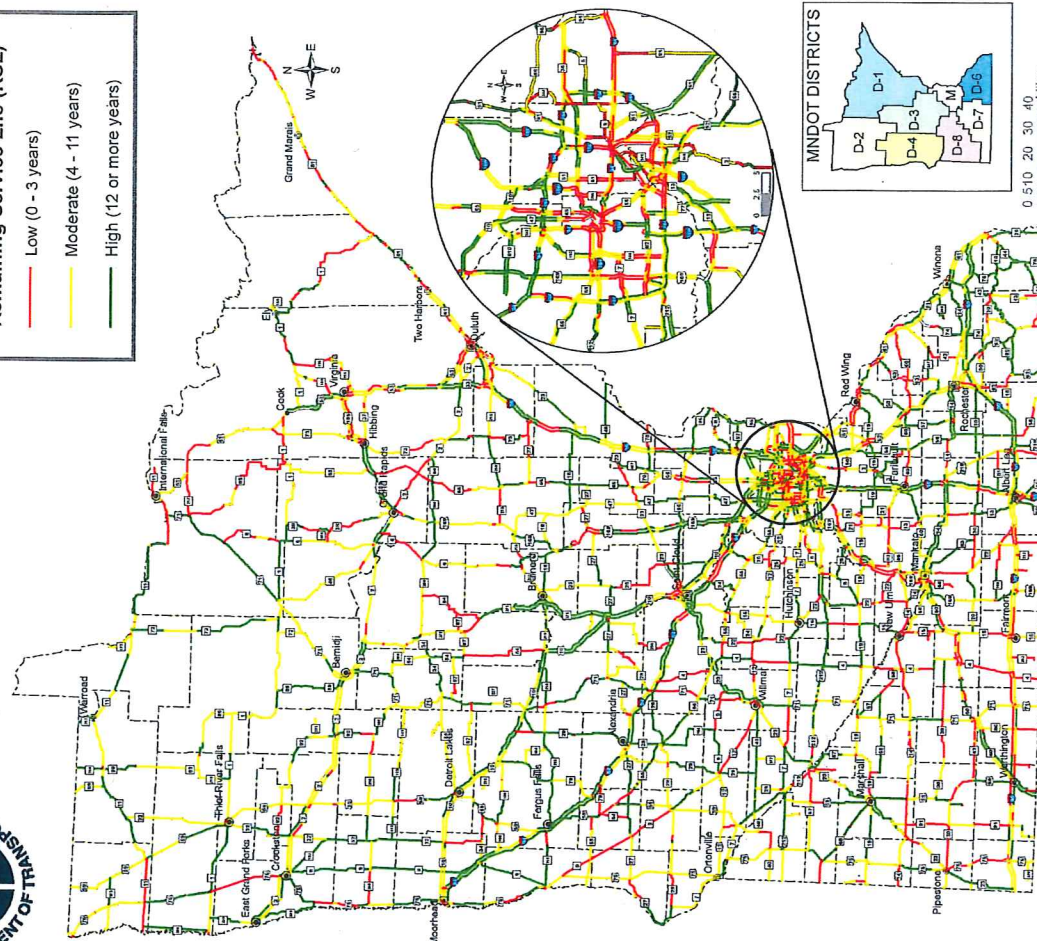
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This map was created by the MnDOT Office of Materials, Pavement Management Unit December 2014. The data displayed is the 2014 Districts most recent rating. To ensure validity of pavement condition data, not all highways are shown. Always verify data in important situations.



**STATEWIDE  
2014 PAVEMENT CONDITION  
Remaining Service Life (RSL)**

- Low (0 - 3 years)
- Moderate (4 - 11 years)
- High (12 or more years)



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This map was created by the MnDOT Office of Materials, Pavement Management Unit January 2014. The data displayed is the 2014 Districts most recent rating. The RSL is the predicted number of years until the RSL of a segment drops from its current value to 2.5. To ensure validity of pavement condition data, not all highways are shown. Always verify data in important situations.



A bill for an act

relating to transportation; highways; requiring the commissioner of transportation to develop a performance, stewardship, and sustainability plan for the trunk highway system; amending Minnesota Statutes 2014, section 174.03, by adding a subdivision.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

Section 1. Minnesota Statutes 2014, section 174.03, is amended by adding a subdivision to read:

Subd. 12. **Trunk highway system performance; stewardship and sustainability required.** (a) The commissioner shall develop a performance, stewardship, and sustainability plan for the trunk highway system to improve the condition of the existing infrastructure and enhance the effectiveness of the transportation system.

(b) The trunk highway system performance, stewardship, and sustainability plan shall include strategies to achieve the state transportation goals for the trunk highway system defined in section 174.01 and comply with all other applicable Minnesota and federal statutes.

(c) The trunk highway system performance, stewardship, and sustainability plan must include all transportation modes and all infrastructure assets within trunk highway corridor rights-of-way. At a minimum, the plan shall include:

(1) quantity and quality of assets, including but not limited to bridge, pavement, geotechnical, pedestrian, bicycle, and transit assets;

(2) predictive and consequential measures of performance, stewardship, and sustainability, identified in collaboration with the public;

(3) annual performance targets for each performance measure, to be achieved by each district of the department, which must comply with the following:

(i) state transportation goals defined in section 174.01 and all other applicable Minnesota and federal statutes;

(ii) United States Department of Transportation regulations under Code of Federal Regulations, title 23, part 490; and

(iii) additional performance targets identified in collaboration with the public;

(4) identification and explanation of the performance gap between target and current status;

(5) life cycle, risk, and health impact assessments for projects in each district of the department, which at a minimum shall include:

(i) identification of the expected and potential material and energy inputs, including costs;

(ii) identification of the expected and potential material and energy outputs, including costs; and

(iii) assessment of the safety, health, economic, social, and environmental impacts associated with the inputs and outputs;

(6) an annual investment plan for each district of the department based on funding expected during the next ten years, which describes strategic investments that produce the best long-term value to Minnesota and enhance safety, health, mobility, and economic well-being; and

(7) a sustainability plan for each district of the department that recommends specific trunk highway segments to be removed from the trunk highway system and specific local road segments to be added to the trunk highway system, in order to optimize financial sustainability.

(d) The commissioner shall submit the trunk highway system performance, stewardship, and sustainability plan, which shall be signed by a professional engineer licensed in Minnesota, to the chairs and ranking minority members of the legislative committees having jurisdiction over transportation policy and finance every year by December 15.

**EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective July 1, 2016. The initial performance, stewardship, and sustainability plan under this section is due December 15, 2017.