2. Planning & Policy

This section reviews the planning policies and processes that guided the development of *CONNECTIONS 2040.*

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Planning and Policy Framework

Many policy elements form the planning framework for Connections 2040. These include the federally-mandated role of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) in combination with other national, state and regional planning directives, as well as the MIC's established public participation and planning processes.

Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council

The Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council (MIC) is the designated bi-state Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Duluth (Minnesota) and Superior (Wisconsin) area. MPOs are federally mandated to conduct a continuing, cooperative and comprehensive (3-C) planning process as a condition for spending federal highway or transit funds in every urbanized area with a population of 50,000 or more.

The MIC's Requirements as an MPO

The MIC's principal role as an MPO is to establish a fair and impartial setting for effective regional decision making for shared transportation goals and facilities. The core functions of every MPO, including the MIC, are to:

- **Maintain a Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)**

  The LRTP sets forth a vision for the area's transportation system with a planning horizon of twenty-five years. It includes strategies to accomplish these goals as well as prioritized projects with short-, mid- and long-term timeframes. It must also include a financial plan that demonstrates how these projects can be implemented using the resources that are reasonably expected to be available over the life of the plan.

- **Develop a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**

  The TIP is a short-range (four-year) program of the area's transportation improvements and must include all regionally significant projects receiving federal funding. The TIP is a mechanism for allocating limited financial resources among the capital and operating needs of the area, based on the transportation priorities, goals and projects identified in the LRTP.

  Within the Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Planning Area, certain local public agencies and cities or towns over 5,000 are eligible to apply for federal TIP funds. These include the Minnesota and

Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs)

MPOs are federally mandated to conduct transportation planning in urbanized population areas of 50,000 or more.

MPOs are comprised of a Policy Board of local elected officials and citizens, professional planning staff and technical advisory committees.

MPOs are funded by a combination of federal transportation funds and required matching funds from state and local governments.

MPOs are designed to provide a fair and impartial setting to allow local officials to decide collaboratively how to spend available transportation funds in their urbanized areas.

MPOs are required to involve local stakeholders and citizens.

MPOs encourage a multi-modal approach to transportation planning and infrastructure investments.

MPOs ensure that expenditures of federal funds for transportation projects and programs are based on a 3-C (continuing, comprehensive and cooperative) planning process.

MPOs have three core products:

- Annual Work Program
- 4-year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
- 20-year Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)

MPOs complement and supplement local government activities but are not in themselves units of government — they have no authority to levy taxes or implement recommendations.

Wisconsin Departments of Transportation (MnDOT, WisDOT); St. Louis and Douglas counties; the cities of Duluth, Hermantown, and Superior; the Duluth Seaway Port Authority; and the Duluth Transit Authority.

The MIC maintains two separate TIPs for the urbanized areas of Duluth, MN and Superior, WI, based on the differing state processes and timelines.

- **Implement a Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)**

  The UPWP spells out the MIC's transportation planning activities as well as administrative activities, budgets and funding sources for each project for a two-year period.

- **Facilitate Public Involvement**

  Public involvement means that stakeholders are involved in our area's transportation planning and decision-making processes.

  "Stakeholders" are individuals or entities that could be significantly affected by the plan recommendations or could significantly influence implementation. Stakeholders include (but are not limited to): the general public; low income; people with disabilities; neighborhood representatives; local transportation providers; local businesses and associations; special transportation interests such as airport and port authorities, freight shippers, advocacy groups for or users of alternate modes such and transit or bicycling, local officials and jurisdictional representatives; and federal and state transportation agencies.

  Public involvement is a two-way process. It gives the community an opportunity to provide input and also serves as a mechanism to provide information and answer questions. This exchange leads to better decisions and gives the public a sense of ownership of the resulting plans and recommendations.

  The MIC worked to secure participation from stakeholders throughout the development of Connections 2040. The public involvement process for this Plan is discussed in detail in Chapter 6 and an overall guide to public involvement activities is outlined in the MIC's Public Involvement Plan, last updated October 2013.

Additional MIC Responsibilities

- **Function as a Bi-state MPO**

  As the designated MPO for the urbanized area that includes both Superior, Wisconsin and Duluth, Minnesota, the MIC works to coordinate and harmonize the activities of federal, state and local agencies in both states.

Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council (MIC)

Mission:
Guiding the future of transportation and planning for the Twin Ports Area

The MIC is the designated MPO for the Duluth-Superior metropolitan urbanized planning area.

The MIC is one of eight MPOs in the State of Minnesota, one of fourteen MPOs in the State of Wisconsin, and one of approximately 400 Metropolitan Planning Organizations across the country.

The MIC provides guidance and leadership on transportation and land use planning issues in the Duluth-Superior metropolitan planning area.

The MIC works to focus the area's limited transportation funding on projects that yield the greatest benefit and integrate with the existing transportation system.

The MIC conducts studies, develops plans, models the transportation system, and programs projects for federal funding in the metropolitan area.

- **Conduct Air Quality Conformity Consultations (through August 2014)**

  In 1994 the City of Duluth was designated an air quality 'Maintenance' area (see sidebar) for carbon monoxide and since this time the MIC has complied with additional federal regulations to ensure regional transportation initiatives were consistent with Clean Air Act air quality objectives.

  An analysis, referred to as Air Quality Conformity, was required to show that emissions created by the transportation programs, policies and projects included in the MIC's LRTP and the Duluth-Area TIP conformed to allowable limits.

  Conformity must be coordinated with federal, state, and local agencies, utilize public involvement and be conducted using the latest planning assumptions and modeling tools in a manner consistent with the Minnesota State Implementation Plan (SIP).

  A Conformity analysis was required every four years or preceding alterations to the MIC-area LRTP, the Duluth-area TIP, or the Minnesota SIP.

  Air Quality 'Attainment' Designation—August 2014

  In August 2014, a joint conclusion was made through the interagency consultation process that air quality has been sufficiently improved to re-designate the City of Duluth an 'Attainment' area.

  Therefore the additional federal Air Quality Conformity requirements no longer apply, effective with this update of the Long Range Transportation Plan as well as for future Transportation Improvement Programs.

Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Planning Area

The population of the Duluth-Superior area has remained relatively stable since the previous census, at 147,628 in 2010, a modest 1.7% increase over the total 145,166 in 2000.

The MIC's planning jurisdiction encompasses 641 square miles within St. Louis and Douglas counties in Minnesota and Wisconsin, respectively (see Map 2.1). It extends from the census-defined Duluth-Superior Urbanized Area out to the first ring of non-urbanized townships. This includes:

Minnesota/St. Louis County

City of Duluth

City of Hermantown

City of Proctor

Overview:

Duluth's Air Quality Designations 1978 - 1994

Prior to the construction of the extension of I-35 from Mesaba Avenue on the west side of downtown Duluth to 26th Avenue East, traffic was funneled through downtown Duluth and caused congestion. The combination of tall buildings, low winds and warm air trapped carbon monoxide (CO) from vehicle emissions, and led to a series of air quality violations in the 1970's. In 1978, **the City of Duluth was designated a 'non-attainment' area for CO.**

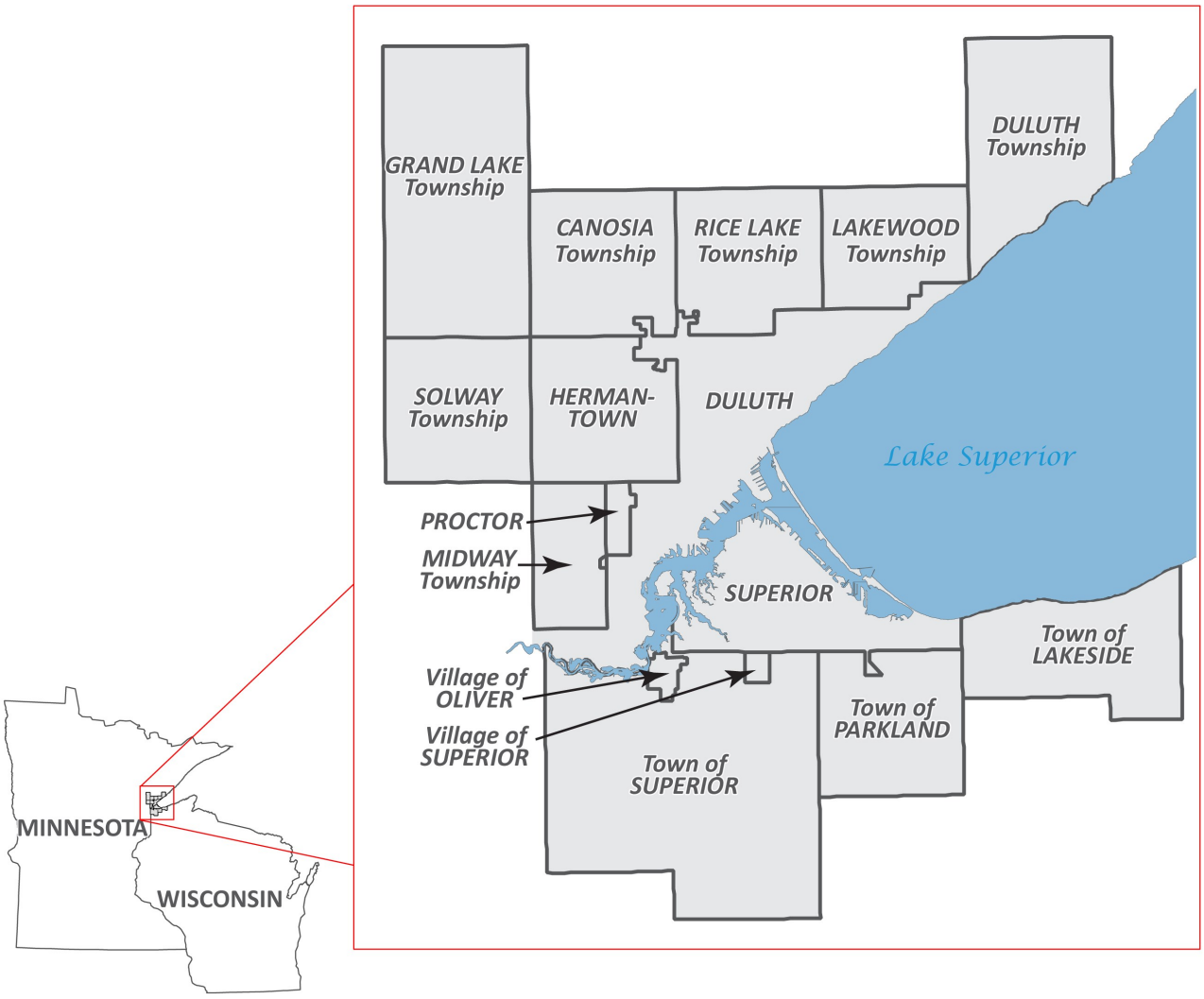
In 1994, two years after the I-35 extension was completed and downtown traffic congestion was mitigated, **it was re-designated as an air quality 'Maintenance' area for carbon monoxide** for 20 years.

During this time the MIC complied with all additional federal regulations including:

- Conducting conformity determinations as part of the LRTP and TIP approvals;
- Updating its LRTP every four years;
- Participating in an interagency consultation process with FHWA, MPCA, and MnDOT to ensure that Duluth-area transportation plans and projects conformed to the state's air quality plan (known as the State Implementation Plan or SIP).

The goal of interagency consultation is to reach a joint conclusion that air quality has been improved and in **August 2014, the** City of Duluth **"Maintenance' was designated as an 'Attainment' area** and the additional air quality requirements no longer apply.

Map 2.1: Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Planning Area



Minnesota/St. Louis County, continued

Canosia Township

Duluth Township

Grand Lake Township

Lakewood Township

Midway Township

Rice Lake Township

Solway Township

St. Louis County

Wisconsin/Douglas County

City of Superior

Douglas County

Town of Lakeside

Town of Parkland

Town of Superior

Village of Oliver

Village of Superior

MIC planning area geography, population and demographic trends are discussed in detail in Chapter 3.

MIC Organizational Structure

ARDC, NWRPC and the MIC

The organizational arrangements of MPOs vary throughout the country —some are free-standing entities, some are set up as a

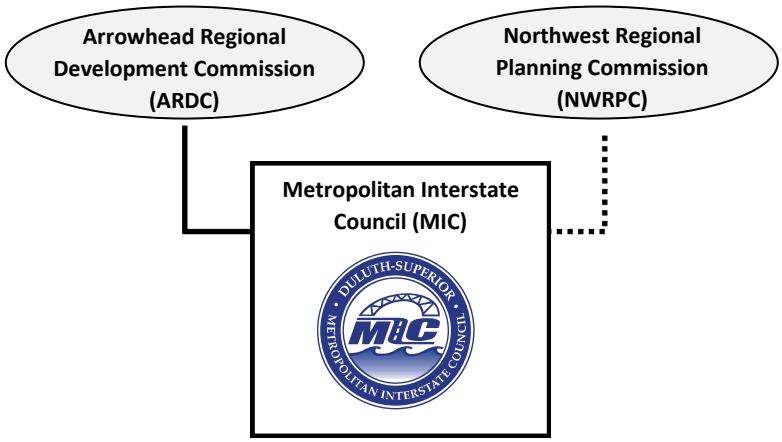


Figure 2.1 Organizational Structure of ARDC, NWRPC and the MIC

Regional Development Commissions and Regional Planning Commissions

Regional Development Commissions (RDCs) in Minnesota and Regional Planning Commissions (RPCs) in Wisconsin are typically multi-county planning and development districts that, like MPOs, encourage cooperation between local, state, and federal agencies, elected officials, the private sector, and citizens.

RDCs and RPCs work to solve shared economic development, transportation, human services and natural resource challenges. Each is governed by a policy board consisting of elected officials from each jurisdiction within the region.

Arrowhead Regional Development Commission (ARDC), the first of nine multi-county regional development organizations in Minnesota, was established in 1969 based on the state Regional Development Act (1969). ARDC serves 7 counties, 180 townships, 70 cities, and 3 reservations in northeast Minnesota.

Northwest Regional Planning Commission (NWRPC) was created in 1959 by local units of government of northwest Wisconsin. It is the oldest planning commission in Wisconsin and one of the first multi-county planning commissions in the nation. The NWRPC is a cooperative venture of 10 counties and 5 tribal nations in the northwest corner of the state.

division within city or county offices, while others, like the MIC, are housed within regional planning and development organizations.

The MIC was formed in 1975 under a joint agreement between the Arrowhead Regional Development Commission (ARDC) in Duluth, Minnesota and the Northwest Regional Planning Commission (NWRPC) in Spooner, Wisconsin and is housed as a division of ARDC (Figure 2.1).

MIC Board, Staff and Advisory Committees

Typically, an MPO includes a top-level policy board, specialized advisory committees and professional planning staff.

MIC Policy Board

The MIC Policy Board is comprised of 18 elected officials and appointed citizen representatives (nine from Minnesota and nine from Wisconsin) who represent all local units of government within the planning area (Figure 2.2). The Policy Board considers and determines key MPO actions as well as the policies and recommendations in its plans and studies. It is also responsible for prioritizing projects for inclusion in the four-year Transportation Improvement Programs of federally-funded projects in Duluth and Superior.

Figure 2.2 Jurisdictional Representation on the MIC Policy Board

Minnesota (9 representatives)	Wisconsin (9 representatives)
4 City of Duluth (2 city councilors, 1 Duluth Transit Authority Board member, 1 citizen)	**4 City of Superior** (1 citizen, 3 city councilors)
1 City of Hermantown (elected official)	**5 Douglas County** (4 county board supervisors, 1 suburban township elected official or citizen)
1 City of Proctor (elected official)	
3 St. Louis County (1 county board member, 1 suburban township elected official and 1 suburban township citizen)	

MIC Planning Staff

The MIC's professional planning staff conducts ongoing planning and administrative activities, including research, data collection and analysis, mapping, facilitating public input and feedback, consulting with area jurisdictions and bringing plans and recommendations forward to the Policy Board for final approvals. Staff members include a director, administrative assistant, Geographic Information Systems (GIS) specialist and three transportation planners.

The MIC Policy Board provides cooperative leadership to meet the following objectives:

To address major transportation issues and solve problems that affect multiple jurisdictions or agencies within the Duluth-Superior metropolitan area.

To develop detailed transportation information that will encourage decisions to enhance livability and optimize the movement of people and goods throughout the metro area.

To improve the comprehensive transportation network so that it is safe and fully integrated.

To gain the maximum benefit from each public transportation investment.

To establish an effective area-wide transportation planning process that is inclusive and responsive to the needs and interests of the area's residents, interest groups, units of government and affected agencies.

Transportation Advisory Committee

- City of Duluth—Planning (2)
- City of Duluth—Engineering (2)
- City of Superior—Planning (1)
- City of Superior—Engineering (1)
- City of Hermantown (1)
- City of Proctor (1)
- State/MnDOT—Planning (1)
- State/MnDOT—Engineering (1)
- State of Minnesota—Economic Dev. (1)
- State/WisDOT—Planning (1)
- St. Louis County Engineering (1)
- Douglas County—Engineering (1)
- Duluth Transit Authority (1)
- Airport (1)
- Port/Harbor (1)
- Bike/Pedestrian (1)

Advisory Committees to the MIC

Three formal advisory committees advise the Policy Board on technical matters and interact with the MIC's professional staff for consultation, analysis and other project work (Figure 2.3). All three committees meet regularly to consider, discuss and forward recommendations for Policy Board consideration.

- **Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC)**

  The Transportation Advisory Committee, or TAC, is comprised of staff-level officials, planners and engineers from local jurisdictions and state and federal agencies. It also includes modal representatives (bike/pedestrian, transit, port and airport).

- **Harbor Technical Advisory Committee (HTAC)**

  The Harbor Technical Advisory Committee, or HTAC, provides guidance on decisions affecting the Duluth-Superior harbor. It also serves as an interstate forum for the development of recommendations relevant to the private, local, state and federal stakeholders who are directly involved with or impacted by their planning, programming and implementation.

- **Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC)**

  The Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee, or BPAC, was formed in early 2010 to provide citizen input into the planning and implementation of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure and to assist with data collection and developing recommendations for a variety of MIC projects including an area bike map and events such as the annual Bike to Work Day.

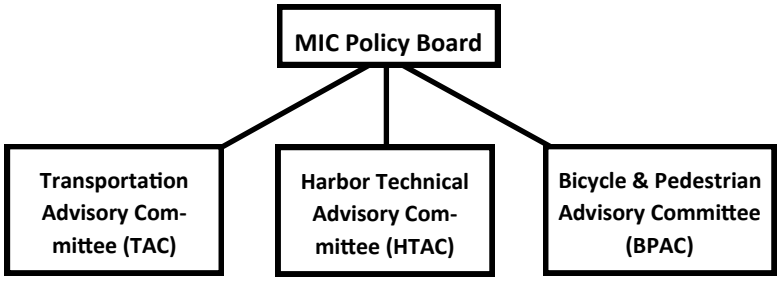


Figure 2.3 MIC Policy Board & Advisory Committees

Harbor Technical Advisory Committee

The HTAC's voting members include a broad range of area stakeholders:

City/County/Regional

- City of Duluth
- City of Superior
- St. Louis County
- Douglas County
- MIC
- NWRPC
- Western Lake Superior Sanitary District
- Duluth Seaway Port Authority

State/Federal

- MnDNR
- WisDNR
- MnDOT
- WisDOT
- MN Pollution Control Agency
- MN Sea Grant Program
- WI Sea Grant Program
- USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service
- US Army Corps of Engineers
- US Coast Guard
- US Fish & Wildlife Service

Industry and Environmental/Citizen

- Coal sector
- General Bulk sector
- General Cargo sector
- Grain sector
- Harbor Engineering sector
- Harbor Services sector
- Iron Ore sector
- Pilots/Vessel Operations sector
- Recreation sector
- Save Lake Superior Association
- St. Louis River Alliance
- Isaak Walton League

The MIC's Planning Process

Transportation planning is a cooperative process designed to foster involvement by all relevant stakeholders. Federal, state and local guidelines are integrated into a planning process utilized by the MIC for all its planning projects, including **Connections 2040**.

Project-Level Planning Process

The MIC's transportation planning process is not a "one size fits all" approach but rather recognizes that different projects call for customized approaches that will require different steps (even the repeating of some steps) and will vary in the types and frequencies of stakeholder participation.

However, all of the MIC's planning activities (LRTP, TIPs and short-range plans and studies) offer several opportunities for public participation at key decision points during each of the four phases of the planning process as illustrated, below. Each phase represents a strategic point in time to engage stakeholders with the types of information that need to be considered at those times.

Federal public participation requirements are integrated into the MIC's planning process, as outlined in Figure 2.4), below:

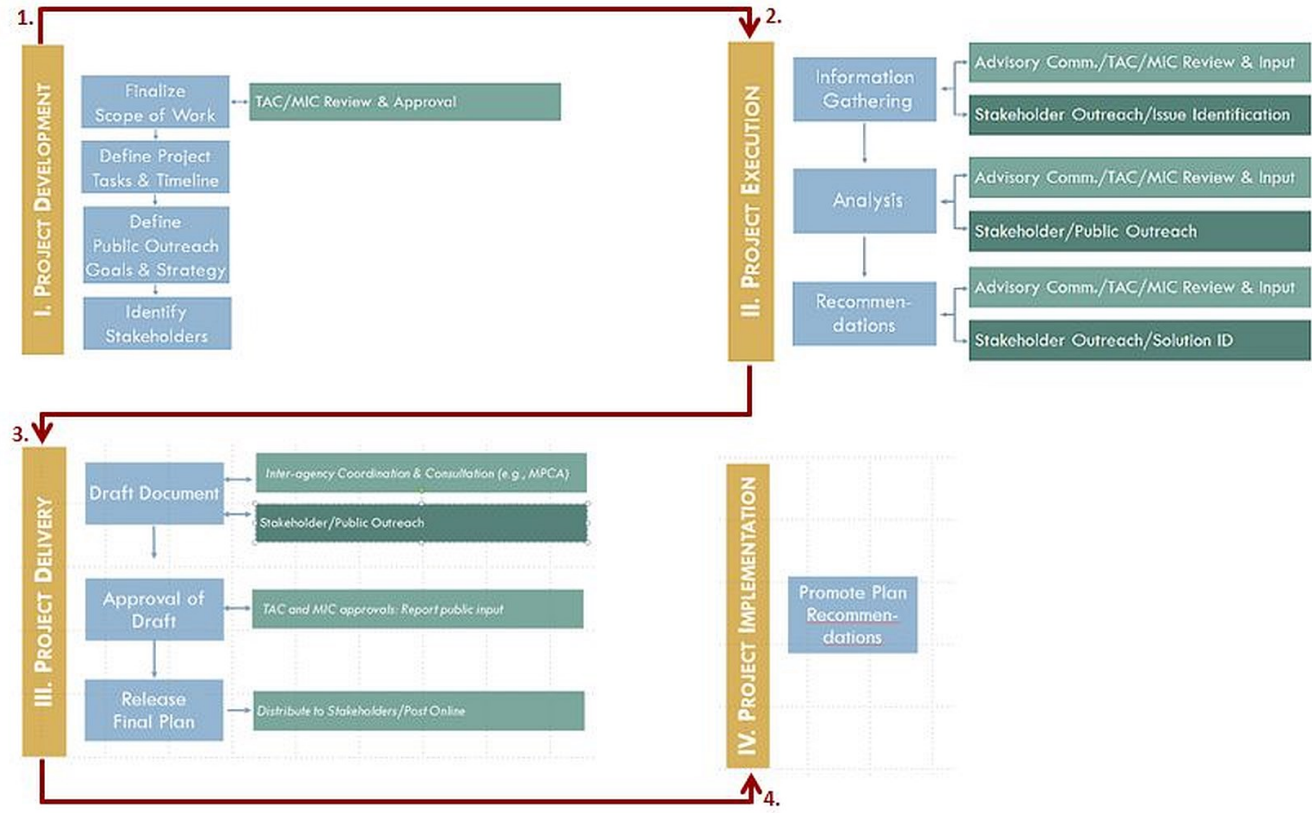


Figure 2.4 The MIC's Project-Level Planning Process

Planning Framework — Federal Guidance

MPOs are charged with providing regional-level coordination and planning for transportation investments in a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive manner (the 3-C planning process). Connections 2040 incorporates the following federal-level legislative mandates:

Transportation Legislation

MAP-21—Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (2012)

The most recent federal transportation authorization bill, MAP-21, was passed and signed into law on July 6, 2012.

In MAP-21, the metropolitan and statewide transportation planning processes established in 1991 (ISTEA through SAFETEA-LU, below) are continued and enhanced to incorporate performance goals, measures and targets into the process of identifying needed transportation improvements and project selection. Public involvement remains a hallmark of the planning process.

Requirements for a long-range plan and a short-term transportation improvement plan (TIP) continue. The long-range plan must describe the performance measures and targets used in assessing system performance and progress in achieving the performance targets.

SAFETEA-LU—Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (2005)

Signed into law on August 10, 2005, SAFETEA-LU established new and revised requirements for the MIC's transportation plans and programs, as well as its underlying planning processes, by:

- Giving more responsibilities to MPOs and local governments, along with a requirement for more citizen input into decision making.
- Requiring consideration of projects and strategies that will protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve the quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and state and local planned growth and economic development patterns.
- Including transportation security as a stand-alone planning factor, with consideration of projects and strategies that will increase the security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users.
- Requiring that MPOs include a discussion of types of potential environmental mitigation activities, developed in consultation with federal, state, and tribal wildlife, land management, and regulatory agencies.

Federal Legislation and the Role of MPOs

The MPO role in transportation planning has become more robust as national transportation policy has evolved through a series of federal legislative initiatives:

2012 Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21)

2005 Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA -LU)

1998 Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21)

1991 Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA)

1962 Federal-Aid Highway Act

7 Planning Factors (TEA-21)

- Economic vitality
- Safety & Security
- Accessibility & Mobility
- Environmental Protection & Enhancement
- Integration and Connectivity
- Efficient Management & Operations
- Emphasis on preservation

- Expanding public participation requirements to encourage earlier involvement and requiring consultation with state and local agencies responsible for natural resources, environmental protection, conservation and historic preservation.
- Coordinating with officials responsible for other types of planning activities that are affected by transportation in the area, including state and local planned growth, economic development, environmental protection, airport operations, and freight movements.
- Adding specific requirements to make plans and planning information available in electronically accessible formats, including via the World Wide Web;
- Expanding the fiscal constraint planning provision is to ensure that revenues (federal, state, local, and private) are available to adequately cover the costs of projects included in the plan, while providing for the operation and maintenance of the existing highway and transit systems.

Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (1998)

Although there were few statutory changes under TEA-21, the legislation provided greater flexibility and eligibility in highway funds and focused greater attention in certain areas critical to transportation agencies, such as connectivity, freight, asset management, and performance measurement. TEA-21 also:

- Requires that seven planning factors be included in transportation plans (see list at right);
- Allowed a listing of illustrative projects (that would be constructed if funding were available) in addition to a fiscally constrained list of projects;
- Emphasized the importance of Environmental Justice and Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) deployment.

Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (1991)

With the passage of ISTEA, MPOs evolved into active planning bodies responsible for producing long and short-range transportation plans, coordinating public participation in the transportation investment decision-making process, and serving as an impartial regional platform for debate and discussion. It also:

- Introduced an intermodal approach to highway and transit funding with collaborative planning requirements;
- Established the responsibility of MPOs to develop a Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) with a twenty-year planning horizon

MAP-21 / SAFETEA-LU Planning Guidance:

- Planned growth and economic development planning [49 USC 5303 (g)(3) and 23 USC 134(g)(3)]
- Transportation systems security/ emergency preparedness [49 USC 5303(h)(1)(C) and 23 USC 134(h)(1)(C)]
- Environmental mitigation activities [49 USC 5303(i)(2)(B), 5304(f)(4)(A)(B) and 23 USC 134(i)(2)(B)]
- Public participation plan [49 USC 5303(i)(5)(B)(i) & (ii) and 23 USC 134 (i)(5)(B)(i) & (ii)]
- Coordination with other types of planning [49 USC 5303(i)(4)(A), 49 USC 5304(f)(2)(D)(i), and 23 USC 134 (i)(4)(A)]
- Consultation with tribes [49 USC 5304 (f)(2)(D) and 23 USC 135(f)(2)(D)]
- Consultation with economic development agencies [49 USC 5303 (g)(3) and 23 USC 134(g)(3)]
- Use of visualization techniques [49 USC 5303(i)(5)(C)(ii), 23 USC 134(i)(5)(C)(ii)], and 5304(f)(3)(B)(ii)
- Electronic publication of plans [49 USC 5303(i)(5)(C)(iii), 23 USC 134(i)(5)(C)(iii), and 23 USC 135(f)(8)]
- Transportation Alternatives funding, e.g., Safe Routes to School (SRTS)

and a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) with a minimum three-year programming horizon;

- Required MPOs to include a financial component with a fiscally constrained list of projects outlining transportation funding resources.

Federal-Aid Highway Act (1962)

The Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1962 created the federal requirement for urban transportation planning largely in response to the construction of the Interstate Highway System and the planning of routes through and around urban areas,. The Act required, as a condition attached to federal transportation financial assistance, that transportation projects in urbanized areas of 50,000 or more in population be based on a continuing, comprehensive, urban transportation planning process undertaken cooperatively by the states and local governments.

Other Federal Requirements

The following regulations identify additional federal requirements that impact the MIC's planning and programming activities, including:

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act ensures that no person shall, on the grounds of race, color or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program receiving federal assistance from the United States Department of Transportation.

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires all Federal agencies to systematically assess the environmental impacts of their proposed actions and consider alternative ways of accomplishing their missions that are less damaging to the environment. To ensure the public's interests are protected, proposed actions involving Federal resources may not take place until all NEPA and agency requirements for environmental analysis are met.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and ADA Amendments Act of 2008

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires that disabled populations must be assured access to employment, public services, and private facilities through improved transportation services. The MIC will identify actions necessary to ensure that the local transportation planning process involves the entire community, particularly those with disabilities, in the development and

Disadvantaged Business Enterprises

The ADA requires that agencies using FTA and FHWA funds make an effort to utilize Disadvantaged Business Enterprises to perform a percentage of their work. The ADA also requires that efforts be made in the planning and design of mass transportation facilities to ensure that elderly and disabled individuals have facilities available to effectively utilize.

The MIC must show a good faith effort when procuring assistance from private contractors and will use minority and disadvantaged firms and contractual services whenever appropriate. It will address the needs of the elderly and disabled through its public participation outreach efforts and by working closely with the Duluth Transit Authority (DTA), which provides accessible dial-a-ride transit services and equips regular route buses with wheelchair lifts.

improvement of public transportation facilities and services. The local process must also ensure that physical locations for such activities, as well as the information presented, shall be accessible to persons with disabilities.

Clean Air Act Amendments (CAAA) of 1990

The Clean Air Act Amendments require greater integration of transportation and air quality planning, and assign a greater responsibility to transportation plans and programs for reducing mobile source emissions. They allowed the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to establish National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for various pollutants. NAAQS standards have been developed for carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, ozone, lead, particulate matter, and sulfur dioxide.

Environmental Justice Executive Order (12898) 1994

Environmental Justice is the public policy goal of ensuring that low-income or minority populations do not bear "disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities." Adverse human health effects include air and noise pollution, divided neighborhoods, loss of access to opportunities and jobs, property value changes, safety, and aesthetics.

Federal Transit Act (FTA) of 1997

The Federal Transit Act requires any urban area with a population of 50,000 or greater to undertake a process to develop transportation plans and programs based upon transportation needs. Additionally, these plans and programs will consider transit elements in comprehensive long range land use plans, development objectives, and social, economic, environmental and energy conservation goals.

Planning Framework – State Guidance

Both Minnesota and Wisconsin statewide plans were also used as framework for developing goals and objectives for this plan. Key state plans are summarized below.

Minnesota GO / 50-Year Vision for Transportation

In 2012, MnDOT completed the Minnesota GO visioning process to better align the transportation system with what Minnesotans expect for their quality of life, economy and natural environment.

As the plan states, "Ownership of the vision is a shared responsibility." The Minnesota GO vision and guiding principles are

Community Impact Assessment—FHWA

Community Impact Assessment is linked and similar to Environmental Justice, but is not tied specifically to minority and low-income populations as is Environmental Justice. As defined by FHWA, Community Impact Assessment is a process to evaluate the effects of a transportation action on a community and its quality of life. This assessment should focus on important impacts of transportation projects to people such as mobility, safety, employment effects, relocation, isolation, and should suggest context sensitive transportation mitigation.

Private Enterprise Participation—FTA

The FTA requires plans and programs to encourage the involvement of private firms in providing transportation services for the community. In addition, these regulations established guidelines on the involvement of the public sector where a private sector vendor is already providing a service at a competitive rate.

The Duluth Transit Authority (DTA) uses a private operator to provide its accessible transit service to those with disabilities. The DTA and MIC jointly evaluate any new or current services to ensure maximum efficiency so that public subsidies do not provide unfair advantages over private sector bidders. The MIC also maintains a private participation policy related to the involvement of transportation providers in the planning and competitive bidding process.

Public Participation Requirement—FTA

The MIC's process for the annual development of the Transportation Improvement Programs for Duluth and Superior satisfies the DTA's public participation requirements for the program of projects.

intended to be used by all agencies responsible for transportation planning, construction and delivery in Minnesota, including the MIC planning area, to inform their investment and service decisions:

Leverage public investments to achieve multiple purposes
The transportation system should support other public purposes, such as environmental stewardship, economic competitiveness, public health and energy independence.

Ensure accessibility
The transportation system must be accessible and safe for users of all abilities and incomes. The system must provide access to key resources and amenities throughout communities.

Build to a maintainable scale
Consider and minimize long-term obligations–don't overbuild. The scale of the system should reflect and respect the surrounding physical and social context of the facility. The transportation system should affordably contribute to the overall quality of life and prosperity of the state.

Ensure regional connections
Key regional centers need to be connected to each other through multiple modes of transportation.

Integrate safety
Systematically and holistically improve safety for all forms of transportation. Be pro-active, innovative and strategic in creating safe options.

Emphasize reliable and predictable options
The reliability of the system and predictability of travel time are frequently as important (or more important) than speed. Prioritize multiple multimodal options over reliance on a single option.

Strategically fix the system
Some parts of the system may need to be reduced while other parts are enhanced or expanded to meet changing demand. Strategically maintain and upgrade critical existing infrastructure.

Use partnerships
Coordinate across sectors and jurisdictions to make transportation projects and services more efficient.

The Minnesota GO guiding principles are reflected in the goals for the MIC's *Connections 2040*, as illustrated in Figure 2.5.

Minnesota Statewide Transportation Goals
MN statute 174.01 subd. 2

To provide safe transportation for users throughout the state;

To provide multimodal and intermodal transportation that enhances mobility and economic development and provides access to all persons and businesses in Minnesota while ensuring that there is no undue burden placed on any community;

To provide a reasonable travel time for commuters;

To provide for the economical, efficient, and safe movement of goods to and from markets by rail, highway, and waterway;

To encourage tourism by providing appropriate transportation to Minnesota facilities designed to attract tourists;

To provide transit services throughout the state to meet the needs of transit users;

To promote productivity through system management and the utilization of technological advancements;

To maximize the benefits received for each state transportation investment;

To provide funding for transportation that, at a minimum, preserves the transportation infrastructure;

To ensure that the planning and implementation of all modes of transportation are consistent with the environmental and energy goals of the state;

To increase high-occupancy vehicle use;

To provide an air transportation system sufficient to encourage economic growth and allow all regions of the state the ability to participate in the global economy;

To increase transit use in the urban areas by giving highest priority to the transportation modes with the greatest people moving capacity; and

To promote and increase bicycling as an energy-efficient, nonpolluting, and healthful transportation alternative.

Figure 2.5: ***Minnesota GO*** *Guiding Principles as represented in the MIC's* ***Connections 2040*** *Goals*

Connections 2040 GOALS → / Minnesota GO Guiding Principles ↓	SYSTEM PRESERVATION & OPTIMIZATION	NETWORK INTEGRATION	ACCESS & MOBILITY	ECONOMIC VITALITY	ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION	OPERATIONS and MAINTENANCE	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION	SAFETY	SECURITY
Leverage public investments to achieve multiple purposes				●	●			●	●
Ensure accessibility		●	●				●		
Build to a maintainable scale	●				●			●	●
Ensure regional connections	●	●		●					●
Integrate safety						●		●	
Emphasize reliable and predictable options		●	●	●		●	●		
Strategically fix the system	●	●		●		●			
Use partnerships		●		●	●	●	●	●	●

Statewide Multimodal Transportation Plan

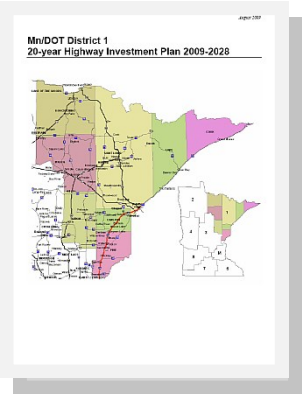
MnDOT's 20-year Statewide Multimodal Transportation Plan articulates policies, strategies and performance measures as a framework to help achieve the vision over the next two decades. The Statewide Multimodal Transportation Plan serves as the framework plan for MnDOT's family of modal plans.

Policy and Modal Plans

The long-range outcomes for transportation in the state, as articulated in the Minnesota GO vision, may take up to 50 years to be fully realized and extend to an entire family of plans that provide direction for different modes of transportation (aviation, bikes, freight, highways, pedestrians, ports and waterways, rail and transit).

Minnesota State Highway Investment Plan (MnSHIP)

The 20-Year Minnesota State Highway Investment Plan 2013-2032 will support the guiding principles from the Minnesota GO vision and link the policies and strategies in the Statewide Multimodal Transportation Plan to capital improvements that will be made to the state highway system.



MNDOT District 1 Highway Investment Plan 2009-2028

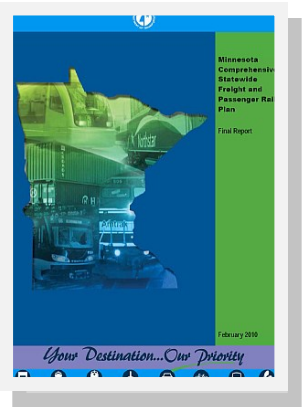
Part of the overall Minnesota State Highway Investment Plan, this 20 -year plan is a guide for future capital investments in the state trunk highway system for northeastern Minnesota.

Minnesota Statewide Highway Systems Operations Plan

This plan documents policy, strategies, performance targets and investment priorities for maintenance and operations-related activities for Minnesota's 12,000-mile transportation system through 2015. It balances many competing activities, which include clearing snow and ice, patching roadways, inspecting bridges and replacing damaged signs. These various activities enhance safety and mobility for system users.

Minnesota Strategic Highway Safety Plan

This plan was created to reduce the number of traffic fatalities and serious injuries on Minnesota's roadway as part of the Towards Zero Deaths initiative. An update to this 2007 plan is currently in development, which will incorporate input from Minnesota's safety community and new crash and other data.

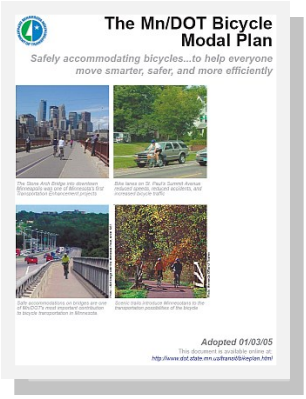


Minnesota Comprehensive Statewide Freight and Passenger Rail Plan

The purpose of this 2010 plan is to guide the future of the rail system and rail services in the State. The development of the Plan included extensive involvement by the private sector, public officials, and representatives, as well as the general public. An update to the 2010 version is currently underway.

Statewide Freight Plan

The purpose of this 2005 plan is to provide an integrated system of freight transportation in Minnesota – highway, rail, water, air cargo, and intermodal terminals – that offers safe, reliable, and competitive access to statewide, national, and international markets. An update to the 2005 version is currently underway.



Mn/DOT Bicycle Modal Plan 2005-2030

This 2005 plan is consistent with MnDOT's mission "…to help Minnesotans travel safer, smarter and more efficiently" It prioritizes

and guides investments in safe bicycle and pedestrian accommodations on MnDOT owned and influenced facilities.

Statewide Bicycle System Plan

The Statewide Bicycle System Plan is a modal plan that follows the completion of the 2013 Statewide Bicycle Planning Study. The planning process is currently underway and aims to accomplish four goals—

- To create better ways to think about biking in MnDOT projects;
- To identify future long-distance bikeways;
- To help MnDOT coordinate with communities when a local street is also state road; and
- To help MnDOT understand how to prioritize funding for bicycle infrastructure across the state.

The Greater Minnesota Transit Investment Plan

This is a 20-year strategic plan that provides directions for the future of public transportation in Greater Minnesota. The plan describes current challenges in the state, examines future transit service needs and analyzes future levels of funding to meet that need.

State Aviation System Plan

This plan identifies the goals, minimum system objectives, and performance measures in which serves as a guide to meet the demands for airport facilities throughout Minnesota to ensure safety and economic competitiveness nationally and internationally, while managing available funding options. The gap between available funds and identified needs will likely be managed by an established prioritization system in which the needs of each project will be carefully reviewed. The future of aviation in Minnesota includes sustainability practices, new technology, and multimodal connectivity.

Context Sensitive Design

The former Context Sensitive Design Policy is now being called the **Context Sensitive Solutions** with a key difference in rationale as context-sensitive projects do not necessitate a design component. The same principles still apply such as seeking safe facilities for all users, environmental harmony, addressing community concerns, involving stakeholders, utilizing a full range of flexibility and design choices, and creating a long lasting value for the public and communities.

Street and Development Design

In alignment with Policy 8-C of Mn/DOT's Statewide Transportation Policy Plan, the MIC's planning process will incorporate the principles of **Context Sensitive Design** and **Complete Streets**:

Context Sensitive Design

It is Mn/DOT's policy to use a context sensitive approach to create excellence in project development, that incorporates design standards, safety measures, environmental stewardship, aesthetics and community sensitive planning and design.

Mn/DOT's approach to Context Sensitive Design promotes six key principles:

- Balance safety, mobility, community, and environmental goals in all projects
- Involve the public and affected agencies early and continuously
- Use an interdisciplinary team tailored to project needs
- Address all modes of travel
- Apply flexibility inherent in design standards
- Incorporate aesthetics as an integral part of good design

Complete Streets

Complete Streets are designed to enable safe access for all users. Pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and bus riders of all ages and abilities are able to safely move along and across a complete street.

Complete Streets Policy

MnDOT requires Complete Streets to be considered at all phases of planning and project development in the establishment, development, operation, and maintenance of a comprehensive, integrated and connect multimodal transportation system. This policy is to uphold, complement, and elevate existing state and federal laws and departmental direction that support and integrated, multimodal transportation system.

Long Range Transportation Plan — Wisconsin

Connections 2030: Wisconsin's Long-Range Multi-Modal Transportation Plan

Connections 2030 is the long-range transportation plan for the state of Wisconsin, addressing all forms of transportation over a 20-year planning horizon: highways, local roads, air, water, rail, bicycle, pedestrian and transit. WisDOT officially adopted *Connections 2030* in October 2009.

Policy and Modal Plans — Wisconsin

Additionally, numerous plans, reports, and studies are considered and reflected in Connections 2030 and in the MIC's Long Range Plan goals and strategies, including:

Wisconsin State Airport System Plan 2020

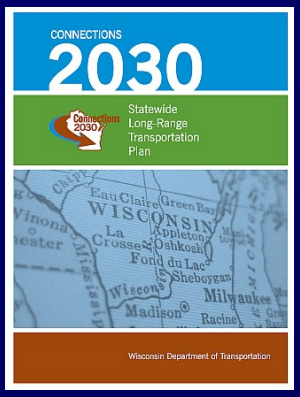
This plan provides a framework for the preservation and enhancement of a system of public-use airports adequate to meet the current and future aviation needs of the State of Wisconsin.

Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020

WisDOT encourages planning for bicyclists at the local level, and is responsible for developing long-range, statewide bicycle plans. Guidelines for accommodating travel by bicycles when roadways are reconstructed, or new roads are built, are available and their use is encouraged.

Wisconsin Statewide Pedestrian Policy Plan 2020

WisDOT developed the Wisconsin Pedestrian Policy Plan 2020 to provide a long-range vision addressing existing and emerging pedestrian needs over the next 20 years, with recommendations to meet those needs.



Connections 2030: Wisconsin's Vision for Transportation

WisDOT envisions an integrated multimodal transportation system that maximizes the safe and efficient movement of people and products throughout the state, enhancing economic productivity and the quality of Wisconsin's communities while minimizing impacts to the natural environment.

Connections 2030 policies are organized according to seven themes:

To preserve and maintain Wisconsin's transportation system

To promote transportation safety

To foster Wisconsin's economic growth

To provide mobility and transportation choice

To promote transportation efficiencies

To preserve Wisconsin's quality of life

To promote transportation security

Wisconsin State Highway Plan 2020

This is a 21-year strategic plan which considers the highway system's current condition, analyzes future uses, assesses financial constraints and outlines strategies to address Wisconsin's preservation, traffic movement, and safety.

Wisconsin Long-Range Rail Plan 2030

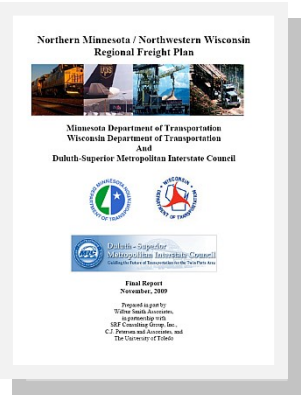
This plan is currently under development to meet federal and state legislative requirements. Set for completion in 2010, it will establish a vision for rail transportation through 2030; set state rail policy; and present priorities and strategies for investment.

Wisconsin Strategic Highway Safety Plan

This plan provides background and information about highway safety in Wisconsin and lays out strategies for the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) and its many safety partners to address key safety issues.

Planning Framework – Local Coordination

Many of the MIC's member jurisdictions develop and maintain a number of planning documents to help guide coordinated development and investment decisions.

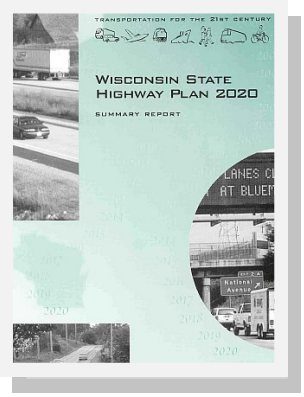


Regional Plans

Several planning initiatives from in and around the MIC area are relevant to the development of this document. While *Connections 2040* does not include specific recommendations from individual community plans, it does incorporate community-level concerns into the LRTP's policies, goals and objectives. Current region-wide plans include:

Northern MN and Northwest WI Regional Freight Plan

This is a multimodal transportation planning effort that includes highway (commercial vehicle operations), rail, waterway, air cargo, pipeline, and intermodal transportation. It assesses the demands from freight being placed on the regional transportation infrastructure, documents the existing freight transportation system in the region, examines regional and local issues not captured in previous freight studies, and plans for improvements to freight movements specific to the region.

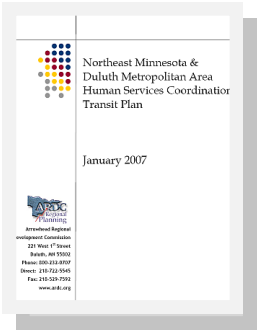


Douglas County Comprehensive Plan 2010-2030

The transportation element of the Douglas County Comprehensive Plan reviews the existing types of transportation choices in the county, and identifies applicable local, state, and regional transportation plans affecting Douglas County.

Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plans

The plans assess transportation needs for individuals with disabilities, older adults, and persons with limited incomes; inventory available services; and develop strategies to address the identified gaps in service for more efficient utilization of resources. Two of these plans have been developed in the MIC Planning Area:

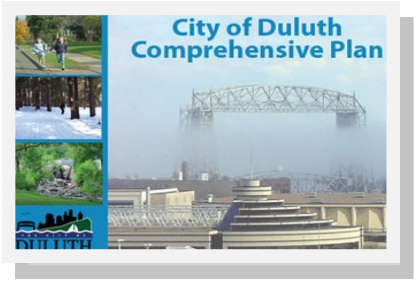


Northeast MN and the Duluth Metro Area

Douglas County, WI and the City of Superior.

Comprehensive Plans

Comprehensive Plans that provide an overall guide for growth while maintaining or improving quality of life for its residents by identifying future land use, utilities, green space and transportation needs. Current Comprehensive Plans within the MIC area include:



Canosia Township Comprehensive Plan

City of Duluth Comprehensive Plan

City of Proctor Comprehensive Plan

City of Superior Comprehensive Plan 2010-2030

Duluth Township Comprehensive Plan

Lakewood Township Comprehensive Plan

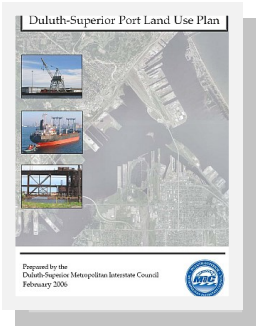
Midway Township Comprehensive Plan

Rice Lake Township Comprehensive Plan

Town of Parkland Comprehensive Plan 2010-2030

Specialty and Small Area Plans

Several recent local planning initiatives that are relevant to the MIC's planning outlook include:



Bayfront District Small Area Management Plan

Duluth and Superior Port Land Use Plans

Gary/New Duluth Small Area Plan

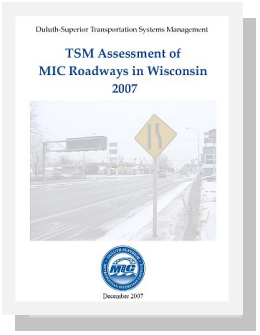
Historic Union Depot Passenger Rail Terminal Study

Lincoln Park Small Area Plan

Miller Hill/Central Entrance Small Area Management Plan

Park Point Small Area Plan

Skyline Parkway Corridor Management Plan



Transportation Systems Management Assessment of MIC Roadways in Minnesota and Wisconsin