8. Planning Coordination

This section describes the MIC's purpose, structure, and core functions as the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Duluth–Superior area, as well as the federal transportation legislation and state and local plans that guided the development of *Sustainable Choices 2050*.

Duluth-Superior Long-Range Transportation Plan

Sustainable Choices 2050

Planning and Policy Framework

Many policy elements form the planning framework for *Sustainable Choices 2050*. 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

As the designated MPO for the urban 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.

The MIC's Requirements as an MPO

The establishment of MPOs with the passage of the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1962 was intended to provide elected officials representing urban areas with a greater voice and control over decisions regarding transportation planning and project prioritization.

MPOs are mandated by 23 U.S. Code § 134 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 principal role is to establish a setting for effective regional decision-making for our community's shared transportation goals and priorities.

In addition, MPOs must use a performance-based approach to transportation planning decision-making to support national goals and general purposes. As such, each MPO must establish performance targets and integrate them into the metropolitan transportation planning process.

The core functions of every MPO, including the MIC, are to:

Maintain a Long-Range Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)

The MIC's MTP sets forth a community-supported 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

Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs)

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

MPOs establish and manage a fair and impartial setting for effective regional decision-making in the metropolitan area.

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 state and local matching funds.

MPOs are required to involve local stakeholders and citizens in their planning activities.

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

-term timeframes. It also includes 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 MTP.

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 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 its planning areas of Duluth, MN and Superior, WI, with separate 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

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 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 450 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.

and jurisdictional representatives, and federal and state transportation agencies.

Public involvement is a two-way process. It allows the community 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.

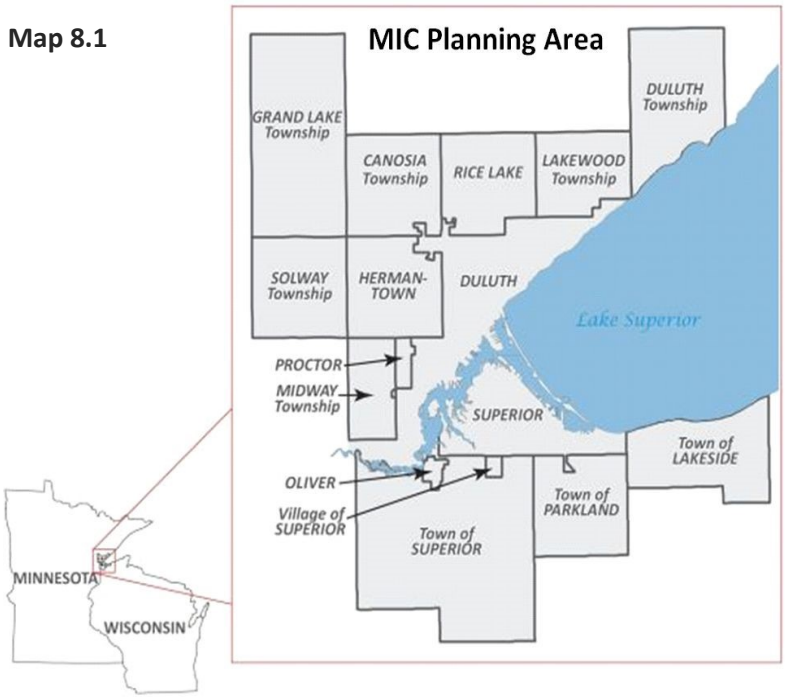
The MIC worked to secure participation from stakeholders throughout the development of *Sustainable Choices 2050*. The public involvement process for this Plan is discussed in detail in Chapter 7 and an overall guide to public involvement activities is outlined in the MIC's Public Involvement Plan, last updated October 2013.

Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Planning Area

The population of the Duluth-Superior area has remained relatively flat for many years: 145,166 in 2000, 147,628 in 2010, 146,771 in 2020, and is projected to grow to 152,587 by 2050 (see Figures 4.8, 4.9, and Table 3 of Appendix E).

The MIC's planning jurisdiction encompasses 641 square miles within St. Louis and Douglas counties in Minnesota and Wisconsin, respectively (see Map 8.1). It extends from the census-defined Duluth-Superior Urban Area out to the first ring of non-urban townships. This includes:

Map 8.1



Minnesota/St. Louis County

City of Duluth

City of Hermantown

City of Proctor

City of Rice Lake

Canosia Township

Duluth Township

Grand Lake Township

Lakewood Township

Midway 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 Organizational Structure

The organizational arrangements of MPOs vary throughout the country —some are free-standing entities, some are set up as a division within city or county offices, while others, like the MIC, are housed within regional planning and development organizations.

ARDC, NWRPC, and the MIC

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 8.1).

Regional Development Commissions and Regional Planning Commissions

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

Each is governed by a policy board consisting of elected officials from each jurisdiction within the region.

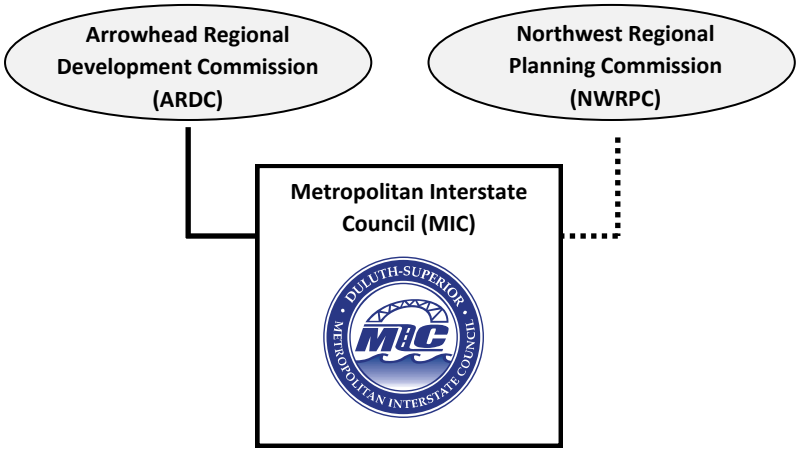
Arrowhead Regional Development Commission (ARDC), the first of nine multi-county regional development organizations in Minnesota, was established in 1969 based on the state Regional Development Act (1969). ARDC serves 7 counties, 180 townships, 70 cities, and 3 reservations in northeast Minnesota.

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.

MIC Board, Staff, and Advisory Committees

The MIC includes a top-level policy board, specialized advisory committees, and professional planning staff.

Figure 8.1 Organizational Structure of ARDC, NWRPC and the MIC



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 8.2). 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

Figure 8.2 Jurisdictional Representation on the MIC Policy

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)	

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.

four-year Transportation Improvement Programs of federally-funded projects in Duluth and Superior.

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.

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 8.3). All three committees meet regularly to consider, discuss, and forward recommendations for Policy Board consideration.

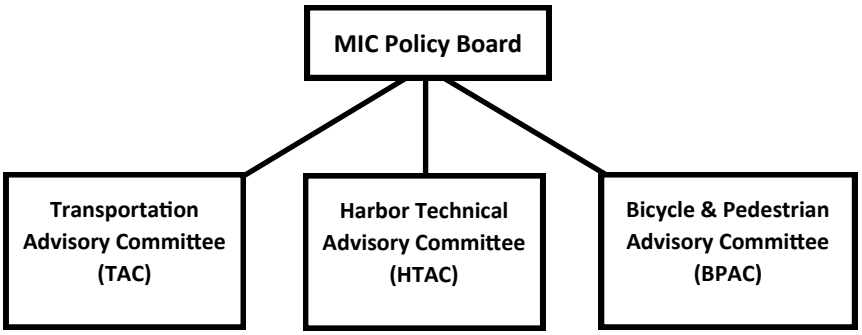


Figure 8.3 MIC Policy Board & Advisory Committees

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

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

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.

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 *Sustainable Choices 2050*.

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

All of the MIC's planning activities (MTP, TIPs, and short-range plans and studies) offer several opportunities for key decision-making points during the planning process, as specified in the MIC's Public Involvement Plan.

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). *Sustainable Choices 2050* incorporates the most recent federal legislative mandates.

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

Transportation Legislation: IIJA/BIL

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) aka the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) is a funding and authorization bill to govern United States federal surface transportation spending. It was passed by Congress in 2021.

In the IIJA/BIL, the metropolitan and statewide transportation

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:

- **2019** Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) aka the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (IIJA/BIL)
- **2015** Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act
- **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

planning processes established in prior transportation authorizations are continued, including requirements for a long-range Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and a short-term Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP). Performance measures and targets are used to assess system performance and progress, and focus greater attention on areas critical to transportation agencies, such as safety, connectivity, freight, asset management, and performance measurement. Public involvement remains a hallmark of the planning process.

Federal Planning Factors

The federally required planning factors of 23 CFR 450.306(b) are addressed in detail, along with a discussion of how they are addressed in this plan, in Appendix A.

Other Federal Requirements

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

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 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 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.

Title VI & Limited English Proficiency

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination by federal government regarding public assistance. Since MPOs receive federal funds, they are required to have a Title VI Plan. Under Title VI and Executive Order 13166, agencies receiving federal funds must also meet requirements to improve limited English proficiency (LEP).

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.

MnDOT's Complete Streets Policy

Complete streets is an approach to road planning and design that considers and balances the needs of all transportation users. It's about the basics: improving the transportation system's safety and functionality for all users. Its main premise is nothing more than for people to get around safely and efficiently from point A to point B, using whatever mode of travel they choose.

The complete streets approach helps to maximize the use of public roadways and right-of-way to provide a comprehensive and connected multimodal transportation system.

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 Transportation Plans

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.

The Minnesota GO vision and guiding principles are intended to be used by all agencies responsible for transportation planning, construction and delivery in Minnesota, including within the MIC planning area, to inform their investment and service decisions by:

- **Leveraging 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.
- **Ensuring 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.
- **Building 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.
- **Ensuring regional connections:** Key regional centers need to be connected to each other through multiple modes of transportation.
- **Integrating safety:** Systematically and holistically improve safety for all forms of transportation. Be proactive, innovative, and strategic in creating safe options.
- **Emphasizing reliable and predictable options:** The reliability of the system and predictability of travel time is frequently as important (or more important) than speed.

Prioritize multiple multimodal options over reliance on a single option.

- **Strategically fixing 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.
- **Using partnerships:** Coordinate across sectors and jurisdictions to make transportation projects and services more efficient.

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 Minnesota GO vision over the next two decades. The Statewide Multimodal Transportation Plan serves as the framework plan for MnDOT's modal plans, as described below.

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).

State Aviation System Plan

This plan identifies the goals, minimum system objectives, and performance measures that serve 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.

Statewide Bicycle System Plan

The 2016 Statewide Bicycle System Plan (scheduled for an update in 2024) presents MnDOT's vision and goals for bicycle transportation, implementation strategies, and performance measures to evaluate progress toward achieving this vision. The plan is one of Minnesota GO's modal plans.

District 1 Bicycle Plan

This 2019 plan identifies bicycle investment routes for targeted improvements in bicycle facilities throughout the entirety of District 1.

MnDOT's Context Sensitive Solutions

Context Sensitive Solutions is "the art of creating public works projects that meet the needs of the users, the neighboring communities, and the environment."

It integrates projects into the context or setting in a sensitive manner through careful planning, consideration of different perspectives, and tailoring designs to particular project circumstances.

CSS is a collaborative, interdisciplinary approach that involves all stakeholders in providing a transportation facility that fits its setting.

Statewide Freight System and Investment Plan One of the Minnesota GO family of modal plans, the purpose of this 2018 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.

District 1 Freight Plan

This 2019 plan was developed with local governments, private businesses, and members of the public to better understand the multimodal freight system and industry needs and issues so policy and programming decisions can be better informed throughout the 8-counties in this District.

Statewide Pedestrian System Plan

The 2021 Statewide Pedestrian System Plan guides MnDOT to maximize its role in making walking safe, convenient, and desirable for all. It establishes project development and investment planning approaches to create better places to walk in every part of the state.

Statewide Port and Waterways Plan

This plan provides the current state as well as the historical development of Minnesota's waterways. Financial support, economic benefits, and opportunities for the future are described in the plan. It also maintains the strategies for preserving Minnesota's ports and waterways.

Statewide Rail Plan

The 2015 update of this plan identifies priority rail corridors, programs, and projects that offer effective improvements or expansion for passenger and freight travel in and out of Minnesota.

Greater Minnesota Transit Plan 2010-2030

This is a 20-year strategic plan that sets forth directions for the future of public transportation in Greater Minnesota (outside the seven county metro area). It describes current challenges, examines future transit service needs and estimates future levels of funding that would be required to meet that need and establishes policies to guide future transit investments in Greater Minnesota.

Investment and Asset Management

Minnesota State Highway Investment Plan (MnSHIP)

The 20-Year Minnesota State Highway Investment Plan (MnSHIP) directs capital investment for Minnesota's state highway system.

District 1 10-Year Capital Highway Investment Plan (CHIP) 2024-2033

Each district CHIP includes an overview of the district, planned investments, and list of planned projects over the next ten years. The district CHIPs also highlight district investment strategies and projected 10-year outcomes based on the 10-year list of projects.

Transportation Asset Management Plan

This 2019 plan informs capital and operations planning efforts and serves as a planning tool to help MnDOT evaluate risks, develop mitigation strategies, analyze life cycle costs, establish asset condition performance measures and targets, and develop investment strategies.

Greater Minnesota Transit Investment Plan

This 20-year strategic plan provides direction 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.

Greater Minnesota Mobility Study

This 2018 study considers vehicle and freight mobility investment needs on the National Highway System (NHS) throughout Greater Minnesota. Its primary goal is to identify locations with the greatest mobility or reliability issues and low-cost, high-benefit solutions for future investment consideration.

Safety

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.

Other

Minnesota Statewide Regional ITS Architecture Plan

This 2018 plan provides a common framework for the planning, design, implementation, integration and operation of ITS throughout the state. It reflects the state's compliance with the National ITS Architecture and support system integration and coordination between different transportation stakeholders.

Resilience Improvement Plan 2024

The Minnesota Resilience Improvement Plan (RIP) provides opportunities to make our transportation system more resilient to climate change using regional approaches to mitigate risk.

Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Plan 2023

The plan identifies investments in fast charging along Minnesota's existing Alternative Fuel Corridors (AFCs) — I-94 and I-35. Initial focus will be on light-duty EV charging needs.

Connected and Automated Vehicle (CAV) Strategic Plan

The MnDOT CAV Strategic Plan will help the agency prepare for changes in transportation, by identifying short, medium and long-term strategies to help the agency plan for advancing technology and mobility trends.

Carbon Reduction Strategy

The Minnesota Resilience Improvement Plan (RIP) provides opportunities to make our transportation system more resilient to climate change using regional approaches to mitigate risk.

Statewide Corridor Planning Initiative

Develop a new statewide corridor planning process to evaluate infrastructure and transportation needs in a corridor, promote consistency and set shared expectations for corridor planning.

Wisconsin Transportation Plans

Long Range — Connect 2050

Connect 2050 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

Connect 2050: 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.
- *Connect 2050* is organized and guided by eight goals:

1. Pursue sustainable long-term transportation funding
2. Focus on partnerships
3. Pursue continuous improvement and expand data-driven decision-making processes
4. Increase options, connections, and mobility for people and goods
5. Maximize technology benefits
6. Maximize transportation safety
7. Maximize transportation system resiliency and reliability
8. Balance transportation needs with those of the natural environment, socioeconomic, historic, and cultural resources

Connections 2050 in May 2022.

Modal

Numerous plans, reports, and studies are considered and reflected in Connections 2030, including:

State Airport System Plan 2030

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.

Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020

WisDOT encourages planning for bicyclists at the local level, and this plan provides guidelines for accommodating travel by bicycles when roadways are reconstructed, or new roads are built.

State Freight Plan

This 2023 plan focuses on the needs of state highways and local roads, freight rail, aviation, harbors, and intermodal connections. It overviews the current multimodal freight system, assesses statewide freight needs and issues, guides statewide investments, and aligns policies and recommendations with Connect 2050.

Wisconsin Pedestrian Policy Plan 2020

This plan provides a long-range vison to address existing and emerging pedestrian needs through 2020, with recommendations to meet those needs.

Wisconsin Active Transportation Plan 2050

WisDOT is updating the Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan and Wisconsin Pedestrian Policy Plan and combining them into the Wisconsin Active Transportation Plan. This will be a statewide long-range plan focused on human-powered modes of transportation, and is anticipated to be completed in 2024.

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 Rail Plan 2050

This plan establishes a vision for rail transportation through

2050, sets state rail policy, and presents 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.

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 *Sustainable Choices 2050* does not include specific recommendations from individual community plans, it does incorporate community-level concerns into the MTP'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, and recommends improvements to freight movements specific to the region.

Douglas County Comprehensive Plan 2020-2040

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

These 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:

Wisconsin's Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP)

The following Emphais Areas in the Wisconsin SHSP are consistent with objectives 3-2 through 3-5, and will be incorporated into the MIC's Safety Action Plan, a new planning initiative to be undertaken in 2025-2026 (see Ch.6, 'For Study Projects'):

- Improve Safety Culture. Safety Data, Safety Technology
- Increase Occupant Protection
- Reduce Diver Distraction/ Improve Diver Alertness
- Reduce Alcohol & Drug Impaired Driving
- Improve Safety of Intersection
- Reduce Lane Departure Crashes
- Reduce the Incidence and Severity of Motorcycle Crashes
- Improve Work Zone Safety
- Improve Non-Motorist Safety
- Curb Aggressive Driving/ Reduce Speed-Related Crashes
- Improve Driver Performance (Teens, Older, and Competent)

Northeast MN and the Duluth Metro Area

Douglas County, WI and the City of Superior

Comprehensive Plans

MIC-area Comprehensive Plans 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 include:

Imagine Duluth 2035

City of Superior Comprehensive Plan 2040

City of Proctor Comprehensive Plan

City of Rice Lake Comprehensive Plan

Canosia Township Comprehensive Plan

Duluth Township Comprehensive Plan

Lakewood Township Comprehensive Plan

Midway Township Comprehensive Plan

Specialty, Small Area, and MIC Plans

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

MIC Plans and Studies

Bayfront Traffic Modeling Plan (2019)

Campus Connector Trail Plan (2019)

Canosia Township Trails Plan (2018)

Central Entrance Corridor Study (2012)

Central Entrance Corridor Vision Plan (2021)

Downtown Duluth Modal Connections Study (2019)

Duluth Area I-35 Corridor Plan (2024)

Duluth-Superior Area Truck Route Study (2018)

Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Bikeways Plan (2019)

Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Pedestrian Plan (2021)

Duluth-Superior Port Land Use Plan (2016)

Duluth Township Trails Plan (2016)

East 2nd Street Corridor Mgmt Plan-Superior (2011)

Erie Pier Management Plan (2021)

Highway 23/Grand Avenue Corridor Study (2013)

I-35/Bayfront Area Traffic Modeling and Special Event Traffic Control Plan (2019)

Lincoln Park Multimodal Trans Study (2016)

Proctor Transportation Plan (2020)

Transportation Systems Management (TSM) Assessment of MIC Roadways in Minnesota and Wisconsin (2011)

UMD-CSS Transportation Assessment (2009)

City of Duluth Plans

Bayfront District Small Area Plan

Central Entrance - Miller Hill Small Area Plan

Gary/New Duluth Small Area Plan

Gary/New Duluth Health Impact Assessment

Higher Education Small Area Plan

Lincoln Park Small Area Plan

Lincoln Park Small Area Plan Health Impact Assessment

Miller Hill/Central Entrance Small Area Management Plan

Park Point Small Area Plan

Riverside Small Area Plan

Skyline Parkway Corridor Management Plan

Other Local Area Plans and Studies

Northern Lights Express Passenger Rail

St. Louis County Union Depot Passenger Rail Terminal Study