



Highway Transportation: Proposed Policy Direction

For confirmation September 4, 2013

Overall direction

The Metropolitan Council recognizes the essential role that highways play in the transportation system of the region. The Council will guide the region's highway investments as part of a coordinated, interconnected, and multimodal regional transportation network that safely, reliably and affordably connects people and freight with destinations in the region and beyond. The Council will continue its strategic partnerships with the Minnesota Department of Transportation, counties and local governments to maintain and improve these assets over time. Today's highway system is facing changing circumstances – decreasing federal, state and local resources for highway expansion, increasing needs for preservation and reconstruction of an aging system and potentially declining vehicles mile traveled.

Thrive-level language

Thrive MSP 2040 will explicitly incorporate a highway improvement strategy that emphasizes preserving existing highway assets and optimizing capacity through strategic investments.

The Council will optimize the capacity of the existing highway system by undertaking a smart investment approach that includes:

- Active Traffic Management technologies;
- Lower-cost/high-benefit safety and capacity improvements;
- Managed and priced highway lanes that enhance capacity and provide a reliable alternative to congested travel;
- Other strategic capacity enhancements, such as converting signaled intersections into highway interchanges.

Where possible, the Council will prioritize highway investments that benefit transit.

The Council will work with local jurisdictions to align development patterns and transportation investments along the region's developing edge by focusing growth and investment along corridors with strong potential for future transit or managed lane investments. Areas outside these corridors may continue to develop but are unlikely to receive investments from federal or state sources for new or expanded highways.

Additional detail about regional highways will be developed and adopted in the Transportation Policy Plan.