

CHAPTER 13: Implementing *Connections 2030*

Implementing *Connections 2030* means putting all of the plan policies into action. In contrast to the individual policies, which are focused on short-, medium- and long-term time frames and recommended actions, full plan implementation focuses on:

- » Overarching WisDOT priorities for the transportation system through 2030
- » The role of WisDOT and others
- » Methods or tools to deliver the *Connections 2030* vision

Overarching WisDOT priorities for the transportation system through 2030

To optimize existing and proposed future transportation assets and to realize the *Connections 2030* vision, WisDOT will use a phased approach in fulfilling the department's highest priorities through 2030.

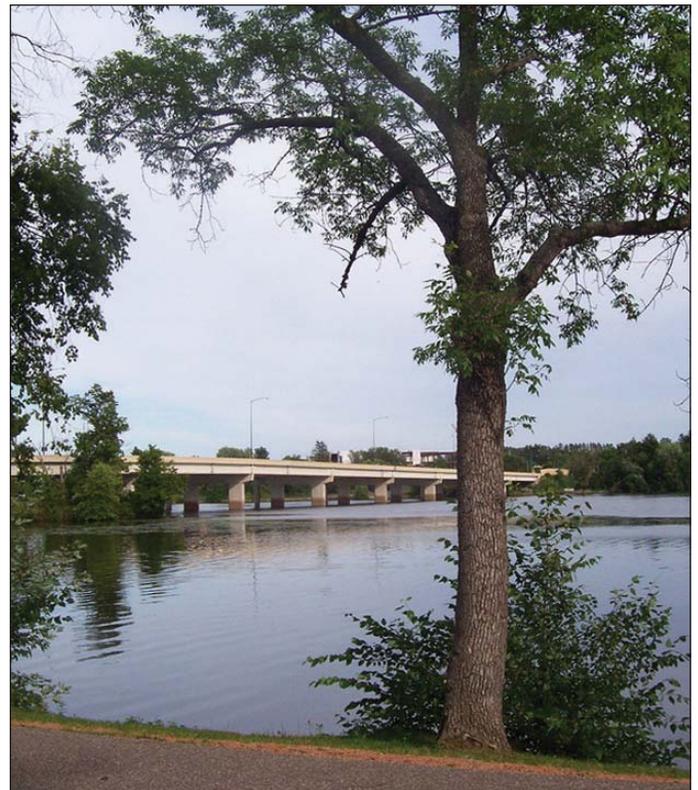
- » Continue to focus on key priorities and initiatives in the short term
- » Build on early implementation efforts and expand efforts to address unfunded needs over the long term
- » Seek sufficient funding and appropriate statutory program changes to fully implement the plan as needed throughout the plan period

Short term: Continue to focus on key priorities and initiatives

WisDOT will maintain commitments to deliver a quality and safe transportation system. Ongoing efforts include, but are not limited to, managing and delivering the Six-Year Highway Improvement Program, addressing safety concerns, and integrating proven best practices to improve department processes. Alongside these efforts, future trends and challenges (including general transportation

Connections 2030

- » Is a dynamic and flexible multi-year strategy – with policies easily adapted to respond to changing priorities and constraints
- » Establishes WisDOT's policy framework and direction for the next 20 years to guide delivery of department products and services
- » Offers implementation strategies that reflect current fiscal constraints
- » Complements rather than supplants regional and local decision-making



▲ *Figure 13-1: WisDOT will maintain commitments to deliver a quality and safe transportation system.*





▲ *Figure 13-2: The Connections 2030 plan vision acts as the overarching umbrella highlighting the overlapping goals of safety and economic growth.*

funding and ensuring adequate staff resources) will require the department to apply a phased approach to fully implement the plan. Efforts in the short-term, therefore, will continue to focus on key priorities and initiatives that:

- » Support the state’s economy
- » Address transportation safety

While supporting the state’s economy and continuing to address transportation safety are key short-term priorities, they cannot and should not be implemented in isolation. The plan identifies key policies and actions organized under the seven themes – preservation, safety, mobility and choice, economic growth, efficiencies, quality of life, and security – to fulfill the *Connections 2030* vision. The plan vision acts as the overarching umbrella highlighting the overlapping goals of safety and economic growth.

Support the state’s economy

WisDOT will continue to focus immediate efforts on system capacity needs to address congestion, freight movements, transit and passenger rail travel, and bicycle and pedestrian needs.

Address transportation safety

WisDOT will continue to emphasize engineering, education, encouragement, enforcement and emergency response to:

- » Educate drivers to influence driver behavior and, ultimately, reduce crashes, fatalities and injuries
- » Address infrastructure safety needs
- » Partner with stakeholders

As short-term priorities, these goals are tied to the state biennial budget process and will continue to be emphasized as areas for investment.

Medium to long term: Build on early implementation and expand efforts to address unfunded needs

Efforts to fully implement the plan through 2030 will include maintaining and building upon short-term efforts, as well as addressing unfunded needs.

Chapter 12, *Funding Wisconsin’s Transportation System*, provides the long-term perspective and direction for all modal investment decisions over the next 20 years. The chapter describes how budget fluctuations at all levels of government, as well as changing trends and future priorities, are tied to the state’s biennial budget.

With this in mind, WisDOT will review and consider *Connections 2030* issues, policies and actions during each biennial budgeting process.

Over the entire planning period: Seek sufficient funding and appropriate statutory program changes to fully implement the plan

As discussed throughout the plan, WisDOT, local governments and other transportation providers will continue to face challenges when addressing critical needs and providing sufficient or expanded funding to a broader range of transportation services. Funding greatly influences the number of policies or actions that can be implemented. If more funding is

available, the number of items that can be implemented in a given amount of time will be greater. With less funding, fewer actions can be implemented, and it will take longer to implement the same actions. When funding falls short, implementation decisions must consider priorities and trade-offs. Sufficient funds would allow the department to expand its efforts to provide more transportation services. These include:

- » Accelerating delivery of services and making progress in addressing the backlog of infrastructure needs resulting from extending project schedules to meet current funding restrictions
- » Augmenting transit support, establishing a new intercity bus program, and completing all phases of high-speed passenger rail
- » Maximizing use of existing infrastructure through operations and ITS

Throughout the 20-year plan implementation period, WisDOT will use an asset management approach to evaluate the broad range of priorities and analyze potential trade-offs among the actions to address the transportation system.

The role of WisDOT and others as implementers

Nearly all transportation decisions involve WisDOT, the federal government, local governments – including regional planning commissions and metropolitan planning organizations – tribes, the private sector, operators, and other stakeholders.

Asset management

Asset management considers the entire life cycle of transportation decisions, including planning, programming, construction, maintenance and operations. It emphasizes integration across these functions, reinforcing the fact that actions taken across this life cycle are interrelated. It also recognizes that investments in transportation assets must be made with consideration of a broad set of objectives, including physical preservation, congestion relief, safety, security, economic productivity and environmental stewardship.

Since no single entity has authority over the entire transportation system, implementing *Connections 2030* will take coordination and cooperation among many interests and business areas.

WisDOT

The department is made up of three executive offices and five divisions, organized according to transportation function. WisDOT maintains a central office located in Madison, and regional offices throughout the state. This structure helps to preserve the customer-focused approach to transportation development and better serve stakeholder needs. Implementing *Connections 2030* requires that central office and regional office staff continue to work

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The Wisconsin State Patrol operates 16 safety and weight enforcement facilities in the state. Inspectors ensure commercial carriers operate within statutory or permitted size and weight limitations. They check carriers to ensure they have proper registration, fuel tax, insurance and authority credentials. Enforcement activities also occur through mobile enforcement using portable scales.

together to communicate plan policies; engage local stakeholders in transportation discussions; and integrate plan recommendations into project-level activities. Plan implementation responsibilities for both the central office and the regional offices will vary depending on the item, issue or activity.

Central office

The central office is primarily responsible for developing and disseminating transportation policies and decisions at the state level to WisDOT regions, state and federal agencies and other stakeholders. Many of the multimodal transportation initiatives recommended in *Connections 2030*, such as implementation of an intercity bus program, creating a department-wide freight focus, and intercity passenger rail, will continue to be led by the central office. Central office staff will be responsible for much of the broader oversight and management of plan implementation, including communicating policy

information, as well as how shifts in priorities at the program and budget levels or federal or national level issues may impact statewide transportation decisions. In addition, central office staff will be responsible for monitoring plan implementation.

Responsibility for integrating policy commitments into day-to-day activities within the department will be borne by central office and regional staff in different ways. Central office staff typically are responsible for taking a broader system level view of state planning, programming and project delivery issues. This perspective will help address overarching WisDOT priorities for the system through 2030. However, because they have direct contact with local stakeholders and primary responsibility for project delivery, region staff will be responsible for the majority of day-to-day integration.

Regional transportation offices

Regional offices include:

- » Regional transportation offices – responsible for operating and maintaining the state’s transportation system
- » Division of Motor Vehicle customer service centers – responsible for supporting statewide licensing needs
- » State Patrol posts – responsible for enforcement and police communications
- » State Patrol safety and weight inspection facilities – responsible for commercial motor carrier monitoring and enforcement

WisDOT regional office staff work primarily with consultants, local units of government, and many other stakeholders. WisDOT regions provide local communities with important transportation data and project information for economic development needs. They also provide technical assistance. Where applicable, the regions consider and integrate multimodal connections with highway projects. WisDOT region staff participation in local comprehensive planning processes also helps to

WITH THE FINAL ADOPTION OF CONNECTIONS 2030, WisDOT regional staff will be on the forefront of communicating plan recommendations and integrating them into regional and corridor-level activities that will lead to plan implementation.

ensure better transportation coordination. In addition, region staff are primarily responsible for delivering the state's transportation projects.

With the final adoption of *Connections 2030*, WisDOT regional staff will be at the forefront of communicating plan recommendations and integrating them into regional and corridor-level activities. The following present some examples of region-level activities that will lead to plan implementation.

Preserve and keep safe the state trunk highway system, which includes, but is not limited to, efforts that:

- » Provide routine maintenance and preservation activities
- » Identify and address safety issues
- » Upgrade and implement the *Corridors 2030* network

Continue efficient operation of the system by:

- » Coordinating with other department offices to address congestion and roadway operational issues
- » Coordinating implementation of Intelligent Transportation System strategies with appropriate department business areas and other stakeholders
- » Integrating appropriate design concepts (such as roundabouts) and operational efficiencies (such as signal timing) into roadway projects
- » Integrating consideration of potential environmental impacts and implementing mitigation strategies for all appropriate projects



▲ *Figure 13-3: Coordinating with other department divisions, other agencies and responders to address congestion and roadway operational issues will help ensure the state's transportation system continues to operate efficiently.*

- » Identifying opportunities to integrate bike and pedestrian accommodations into projects, where feasible

Support efforts to expand multimodal transportation options with central office staff and other appropriate entities to:

- » Implement intercity passenger rail
- » Pilot intercity bus services
- » Improve coordination among transit providers and operators

Continue to coordinate with other entities to:

- » Maintain and enhance working relationships with local units of government, tribes and other stakeholders



- » Encourage coordination between local roadway and state highway projects

Continue efforts, with the central office, to support economic growth activities and initiatives, such as:

- » Create a freight focus within the department
- » Support and integrate training and job development opportunities for disadvantaged businesses and individuals seeking transportation career training

Motor vehicle customer service centers and State Patrol

In addition to the regional transportation offices, staff in the department's motor vehicle customer service centers and in the State Patrol posts and safety and weight inspection facilities are integral to implementing the plan. A few examples include:

- » Implement federal requirements such as REAL ID
- » Continue driver licensing and monitoring
- » Provide permits to freight trucks moving through the state
- » Communicate and enforce state motor vehicle and carrier laws
- » Coordinate and communicate across agencies to improve responses to incidents
- » Increase use of appropriate technologies to improve incident reporting (for example, crashes) to further support crash data collection and analysis

Plan implementation will also require careful consideration and responses to staffing needs. As noted in Chapter 6, *Promote Transportation Safety*, additional troopers will be required to respond to the expected increase in the number of travelers using the system. Additional department staff resources will also be required to continue delivering the quality transportation system and further position the department to meet the needs and challenges in the next 20 years.



▲ *Figure 13-4: Additional state troopers will be required to respond to the expected increases in the number of travelers using the system.*

Other stakeholder roles and responsibilities

Outside of WisDOT, two important stakeholder groups influence *Connections 2030* implementation. These groups consist of:

- » Government entities, such as local units of government and tribes
- » The private sector, operators and others

Government entities, such as local units of government and tribes

Successful implementation of *Connections 2030* requires involvement and coordination with other government units such as local governments and tribes that own and operate their own transportation services. Over the planning period, WisDOT will continue to work with the various state agencies and tribal governments to address short- and long-term system priorities and continue to discuss and coordinate resources and activities through the existing partnerships and agreements. The plan identifies several initiatives that

require continued coordination and communication with other state agencies, federal agencies, local law enforcement officials and other stakeholders:

- » Coordinating corridor- or project-level decisions to minimize and mitigate potential conflicts, such as highway access issues resulting from local land use planning decisions
- » Maintaining and enhancing partnerships and agreements with other agencies and governments
- » Responding to transportation incidents by planning and coordinating communication needs with agencies and local law enforcement agencies

Private sector, operators and others

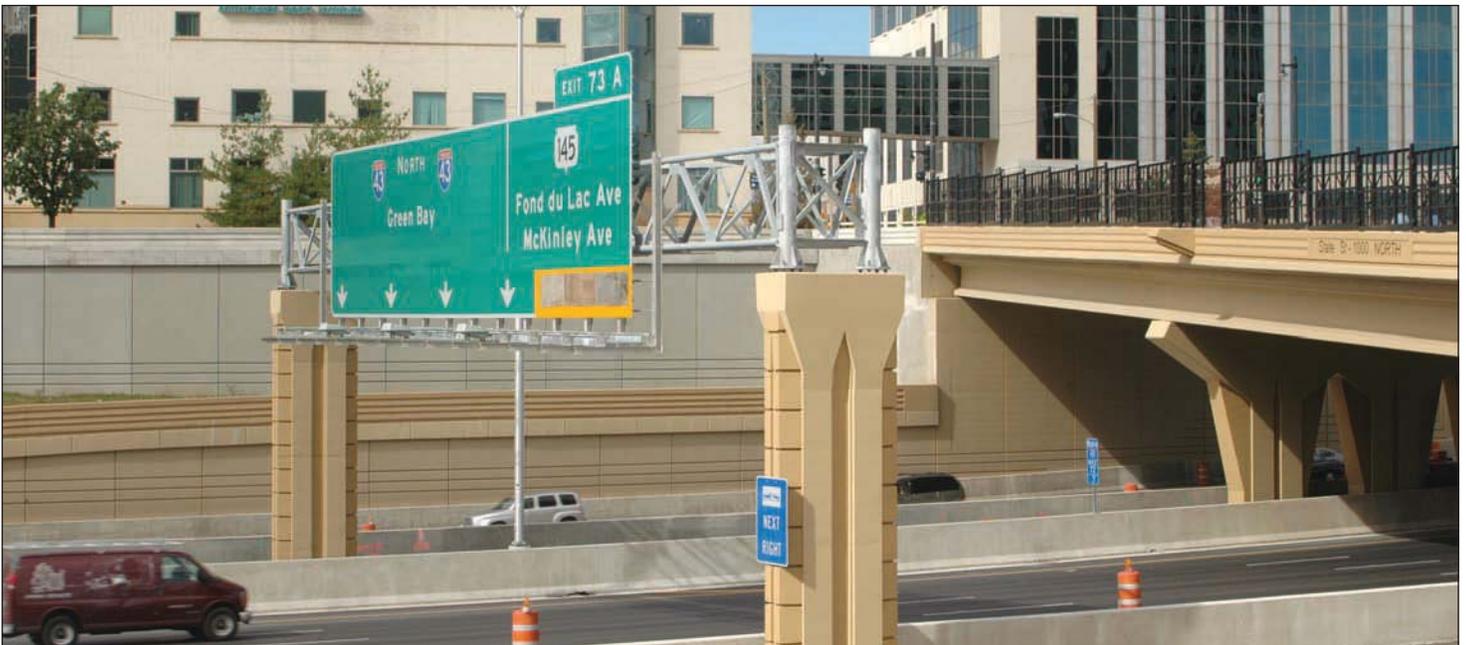
WisDOT is responsible for all decisions regarding the state trunk highway system. For all other modes of transportation, the infrastructure or service is owned or operated by someone else – the local government, tribe or private sector. If there is any federal or state funding assistance, WisDOT may be one of a few agencies that administers the funding and provides

technical assistance relative to design standards, services needs, land use impacts and coordination of decisions that may impact the state highway system. The plan identifies several recommendations that address transportation needs statewide that are not under the direct jurisdiction of the department. Among these are transit recommendations to address inefficiencies, coordination needs and funding needs for locally operated systems.

Sometimes decisions on policy or project funding are shared and WisDOT can act as a catalyst for local or private transportation investment. In this way, transportation stakeholders and WisDOT will collaborate (either at the region or central office level, or both) to meet the *Connections 2030* vision.

Methods and tools for delivering the *Connections 2030* vision

To implement the plan vision, WisDOT will remain flexible, and adjust actions as needed to:



▲ Figure 13-5: WisDOT is responsible for all decisions regarding the state trunk highway system. For all other modes of transportation, the infrastructure or service is owned or operated by someone else – the local government, tribe or private sector.

- » Apply appropriate processes and tools
- » Monitor plan implementation progress and system performance

Apply appropriate processes and tools

Many tools will be used to implement *Connections 2030*, such as:

- » Corridor management
- » Value engineering
- » Project scheduling and funding

Other tools include state statutes and administrative rules to implement or modify specific policies, as well as technological and data analysis tools used to evaluate current conditions and help with prioritized decision making. Local tools, such as local subdivision regulations and zoning that affect transportation decisions and land use, will also impact plan implementation.

Corridor management

As a new department decision-making tool, corridor management links transportation planning, project development, and facility operations to provide a well-rounded perspective for implementation decisions.

Corridor management means managing a corridor in a cohesive, investment-focused way. It is an inclusive, coordinated means for transforming transportation policies into transportation projects. It can also mean utilizing subsequent planning phases for long-term corridor management strategy identification. While transportation projects are sometimes the result of studies, corridor management does not always lead to a transportation project.

More specifically, corridor management:

- » Looks beyond pavement conditions and outside WisDOT’s traditional highway rights of way
- » Helps WisDOT improve coordination with other state agencies, local units of government and stakeholders

- » Looks at regional and more detailed local-level corridor plans to manage the corridor vision and address needs over time
- » Focuses on multimodal transportation investments and local land use goals
- » Helps make today’s decisions consistent with a desired future vision

Statewide System-level Priority Corridors

To illustrate corridor management priorities and recommended *Connections 2030* implementation actions statewide, 37 Statewide System-level Priority Corridors (Map 13-1) have been identified. These corridors:

- » Serve critical sectors of the state’s economy or major population centers
- » Generate significant activity for both passenger and freight traffic
- » Show significant growth in travel or economic development
- » Serve important multimodal functions
- » Connect to other regions within Wisconsin, as well as other states

While the Statewide System-level Priority Corridors follow specific state trunk highway routes, the corridor concept goes beyond the highway right of way and includes a “buffer” of transportation system linkages, including surrounding transportation modes and key transportation connections. Illustrative in concept, the plan’s corridors portray *possible* implementation actions and *relative* processes and tools to address specific transportation needs within a “buffered” land area. The Statewide System-level Priority Corridors facilitate a *conceptual perspective* on further detailed planning throughout the state through a variety of programs, modes and opportunities.

Each corridor has been named to provide a regional or local context when viewing potential priorities and implementation strategies. Economic and/

or cultural importance of the corridors is also discussed. Corridor names do not replace statutorily designated corridor names, nor do they constitute official renaming of any corridor segments. See Appendix A for the list of corridor names, the naming origin description, and a guide for how to read the maps. All corridor maps may be viewed at www.wiconnections2030.gov.

Conceptual corridor maps

For each of the Statewide System-level Priority Corridors, a map has been developed to illustrate *Connections 2030* concepts. The maps form a conceptual framework that:

- » Links policies with program decisions for implementation
- » Illustrates statewide priorities to be linked with:
 - Regional and local analysis and implementation activities
 - Surrounding local land use, feeding transportation routes and environmental constraints
- » Depicts the *Connections 2030* system-level vision
- » Illustrates short-, medium- and long-term recommendations, as well as actions that take place throughout the planning period

As part of corridor management, WisDOT's regions will continue to work with the appropriate stakeholder groups to develop individual corridor plans. The corridor plans will be a subset of the Statewide System-level Priority Corridors and/or a supplement to further regional corridor priorities that may be different and more inclusive than the corridors

identified in *Connections 2030*. The results of these planning efforts will help WisDOT define visions for key multimodal corridors statewide, address system priorities, maintain corridor functions, manage and prioritize limited resources (staff and dollars), and identify future priorities and actions. Implementation at the corridor and project level will require more detailed analysis than is provided in the plan's conceptual corridor maps.

Efforts at the region and local levels will require an in-depth analysis to establish a corridor vision and identify needs and priorities to maintain the vision over time. One example of this concept is the tiered environmental impact statement (EIS) process occurring along the North Country Corridor (US 8 from the Wisconsin/Minnesota state line to US 53). This process identifies smaller sections of the longer corridor and looks at possible actions, with a focus on local issues. The corridor management plans will enable the department to make informed investment decisions and, where possible, preserve existing corridors to delay system expansion.

Value engineering

Value engineering is a methodology by which long-term functionality and quality of a system or system component is considered and included at the design stage and then implemented. This maximizes the usable life of the system component and minimizes maintenance, repair and replacement costs. For example, WisDOT performs numerous maintenance activities on state trunk highways. Value engineering helps to ensure that the infrastructure is designed and built to minimize the ongoing cost and frequency of those maintenance activities. A cross-functional team of people outside of the project

Region-level priority corridors

Connections 2030 identifies 37 Statewide System-level Priority Corridors. WisDOT regional staff will identify additional corridors that are important at the region level. Examples of these potential region-level priority corridors include the WIS 47/WIS 55 corridor in northeastern Wisconsin and the WIS 20 corridor in southeastern Wisconsin.

team typically performs the value engineering review process. WisDOT will continue to include value engineering as a key step in implementing transportation projects.

Scheduling and funding projects

Wisconsin's long-range plans and corridor plans typically are implemented through programming decisions (scheduling and financing of projects in the next four to six years), which align infrastructure needs with available funding and staff resources.

WisDOT administers a variety of programs involving federal, state and local funds that support all modes of transportation. These funds are allocated across the various transportation modes based upon analysis of needs. This analysis uses a range of data sources, known priorities, and funding availability, as well as statutory and regulatory requirements. In general, each program and funding decision is mode-specific. However, opportunities exist to fund multiple modes on and along highway facilities. For example, if a roadway is being reconstructed, a sidewalk, bike lanes or a wider paved shoulder is likely to be added and should be pursued. If an intersection is scheduled for work, a roundabout or improved signal timing may be considered to improve facility function and operation.

To better align with a corridor management approach, future efforts will need to evaluate opportunities to program projects and needs based on the broader corridor level.

Monitor plan implementation progress and system performance

Significant efforts have been made to develop a long-range, system-level plan that is meaningful, reasonable, and practical. Performance monitoring will help validate and verify the plan's proposed policy direction over time. *Connections 2030* performance monitoring has two objectives: measure implementation progress, and assess transportation system performance as a result of plan implementation.

Performance monitoring within department program management decision-making processes (for example,

Programming

Programming is a process required under federal regulation (23 CFR Part 450). It requires each state to carry out a continuing, comprehensive and intermodal statewide transportation planning process, including development of a statewide transportation plan and transportation improvement program, that facilitates the efficient, economic movement of people and goods in all areas of the state.

safety and traffic forecasting) is generally consistent and established. Efforts to establish and implement system-level plan performance measures have been challenging. For WisDOT to assess implementation progress and system performance, a concise set of planning level performance milestones is needed. WisDOT will define appropriate milestones to measure plan implementation progress.

In addition, WisDOT will continue to monitor implementation of the National Surface Transportation Policy and Revenue Study Commission's recommendations discussed in Chapter 12, *Funding Wisconsin's Transportation System*.

