

# Wisconsin Department of Transportation Mega Project Management

## Mega Project Executive Summary

Since Mega project delivery and management practices constantly evolve, adapt and change to meet current needs, there is no single solution that can be implemented in the exact same fashion to yield the exact same results. As such, right sizing has been a focus as a method to share best practices and gain consistency, as well as to address concerns raised within the Governor's Waste, Fraud, and Abuse efforts.

This team's efforts are intended to help efficiently allocate resources, encourage continuous improvement, and to provide the tools needed to allow the department to adapt to a dynamically changing environment.

## Mega Project Management

The purpose of Mega Project Management DTSD Division Initiative is to provide guidance and consistency concerning roles and responsibilities and management of Federal Major Projects on the Wisconsin Highway System.

The Department's vision is to strengthen the project team's ability to forecast challenges and proactively manage Federal Major Projects, so that decision-makers have the ability to recognize the need for (and then act upon) meaningful and timely changes through the use of Mega Project Management Best Practices, tools and resources. Guidance from this initiative will be utilized on Mega Projects and other High Profile Projects.

## What is a Mega Project?

Federal law (SAFETEA-LU) establishes additional oversight and reporting requirements for Federal Major Projects, thus the Department intends to utilize defined Mega Management tools and resources for all projects that fit the Federal Major Project definition or are defined as Federal Majors by FHWA. All Federal Major Projects will be considered a Mega Project for management reporting and control purposes and should not be confused with legislative sub-program Southeast Wisconsin Freeway Mega project as described in the Program Management Manual. The definition of a Federal Major or Mega Project is defined as follows:

- A project that is "a recipient of Federal financial assistance with an estimated total cost of \$500 million or more".

### *Examples:*

- ❖ I-94 North South from Mitchell Interchange to Illinois state line
  - ❖ Zoo Interchange
  - ❖ US 41 in Brown and Winnebago counties
  - ❖ I-39/90 from US Highway 12 to the Illinois state line
- A project with an estimated total cost below \$500 million can also be designated by FHWA as a Federal Major Project if FHWA determines the project will require a substantial portion of the transportation agency's program resources; has a high level of public or congressional

interest; is unusually complex; has extraordinary implications for the national transportation system; or is likely to exceed \$500 million in total cost.”

### What is a High Profile Project?

Projects that are NOT a Federal Major or Mega Project but that management has decided needs additional oversight and reporting are High Profile Projects. State Major Highway Projects enumerated by the legislature’s Transportation Projects Commission may be considered a High Profile Project. Typically, projects over \$100 million in total cost and/or that have significant public, outside agency and legislative issues and interest may also be considered a High Profile Project. Department management may choose to utilize some Mega Management reporting and controls on High Profile Projects. Other smaller, tightly schedule and sensitive projects may also require additional oversight and management.

#### *Examples:*

- ❖ US 10/441
- ❖ Hoan Bridge
- ❖ Verona Road
- ❖ Lake Delton Dam Replacement
- ❖ ARRA Program

See “Wisconsin Department of Transportation Guidance Matrix for Project Organization, Tools, Management, and Reporting.”

### How will the use of Mega Management reporting and controls be made regarding future major highway projects?

DTSD management should discuss whether the Mega Management approach should be implemented for projects along an existing four-lane corridor, such as the Interstate system, during the environmental study process. FHWA will look at the total cost estimate for the project limits as defined in the Record of Decision or final environmental document to determine whether the project costs exceed \$500 million and qualifies as a Federal Major project. These Federal Major projects would use Mega Management reporting and controls. Verification of Federal Major Project designation should be finalized through consultation between the Region Director with senior management from DTSD, DTIM and OPBF with final concurrence from the Secretary.

A project that is known to fit the Mega project definition should begin to use the federal and department Mega guidelines and requirements and should be defined a Mega project. For example, a project in the early NEPA stages of a project that fits the Mega definition would complete required steps during the NEPA process. This would include a Cost Estimate Review and a Draft Project Management Plan.

The Regional Director should consult with senior management from DTSD, DTIM, and OPBF in order to discuss and seek concurrence from the Secretary on utilizing Mega Management and control tools for High Profile Projects. The Regional Director will also coordinate the Department’s subsequent discussion with FHWA. State Major Highway Projects enumerated by the legislature’s Transportation Projects Commission should consider use of some or all Mega Management reporting and controls at the time of enumeration.

## How will a Megaproject designation be made regarding future reconstruction projects on the Southeast Wisconsin freeway system?

The 2011-13 biennial budget, 2011 Wisconsin Act 32, created legislative sub-program Southeast Wisconsin Freeway Megaproject “for any project on southeast Wisconsin freeway having a total cost in excess of \$500 million.” (s. [84.0145\(1\)\(c\)](#), Wis. Stats.) Currently, two projects have been enumerated as Megaprojects; the I-94 North-South corridor and the Zoo Interchange. Future freeway reconstruction Megaprojects must be enumerated in Wisconsin law before construction may begin on a project. However, unlike for Major Highway projects, Wisconsin law does not prescribe a specific process to be followed for enumerating Southeast Wisconsin Freeway Megaprojects.

Any southeast Wisconsin freeway work **not** defined as a “Mega project” is now done under the Backbone Rehabilitation or Major Projects Program. See the Program Management Manual for more information.

Reference: [FHWA Innovative Program Delivery](#)