

MINNESOTA
STATE AGENCY

DEPARTMENT
OF
TRANSPORTATION

ACTION
PLAN
1984-86

**DEPARTMENT
OF
TRANSPORTATION**

Submitted by

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "R P Braun", written in black ink.

Richard P. Braun, Commissioner

June, 1984

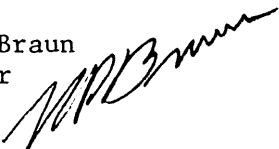
DEPARTMENT TRANSPORTATION - Room 411

Office Memorandum

TO: Rudy Perpich
Governor
Attention: Tom Triplett, Director
State Planning Agency

DATE: June 21, 1984

FROM: Richard P. Braun
Commissioner



PHONE: 296-3000

SUBJECT: Agency Action Plan

The Mn/DOT Agency Action Plan defines eight Key Result Areas within which we will pursue 37 new initiatives over and above the ongoing management of department programs and activities. Of the 12 administration goals you have set forth for the forthcoming biennium, 11 are addressed in some way by at least one of our Action Opportunities. While all mirror your major concerns to some degree, Mn/DOT's emphasis for action also clearly reflects your philosophy of placing the highest priority upon economic growth.

Key Result Areas we have identified for the next two and a half years are:

- I. Initiatives and Techniques for Moving People, Information, and Goods.
- II. International and National Transportation Leadership.
- III. Quality, Productivity and Cost Containment.
- IV. Leadership and Coalition for the Social Good.
- V. Transportation Investment Management and Funding Initiatives.
- VI. Sharing of Transportation Information with Minnesota Citizens.
- VII. Exploitation of New Technology to Harness the Power of Information.
- VIII. Organization and Human Resources Development and Management.

We are confident that by serving the transportation needs of the citizens and businesses of the state, we can contribute strongly to the goals of your administration.

MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

AGENCY ACTION PLAN

June 1984 Through December 1986

INTRODUCTION

This Agency Action Plan outlines a series of initiatives over and above "minding the store" that will be pursued during the next 33 months in support of Mn/DOT's mission. That mission is:

LEADERSHIP for rational and enlightened transportation decisions, ADAPTATION of innovative transportation-related engineering and technology within the public sector, leading to the DELIVERY of safe and productively managed transportation systems and services for the movement of people, goods and information so as to foster for Minnesota citizens economic vitality, provide for personal needs, national/international tourism and commodity marketing.

In its quest to fulfill this mission Mn/DOT carries out a variety of regular ongoing programs encompassing the planning, design, construction, maintenance and operation of transportation facilities and systems plus the administration of multi-modal transportation policy development, planning, regulation and grant-in-aid functions. These programs and functions are managed through the use of operational plans. Additionally, the Department is in the process of developing strategic plans that provide a long range vision/sense of direction as to what Mn/DOT wants to become - what ideal conditions or state of affairs we want to bring about to assure the future vitality of transportation in Minnesota.*

This Agency Action Plan fills the void between ongoing operational plans and programs and the more visionary strategic planning effort now in progress. The Agency Action Plan reflects the identification of major near-term transportation problems, issues and areas of concern. It encompasses anticipated budgetary, legislative, administrative, policy, process, structure and program changes that need to be addressed in the next two and one-half years. Finally, it identifies some near-term actions that will help Mn/DOT make progress toward the evolving strategic vision.

In summary, the Agency Action Plan defines eight tactical goals encompassing 37 subordinate action opportunities for the next two and one-half years and represents Mn/DOT's commitment to their pursuit.

* A complete description of the concept of management planning in Mn/DOT and the status of the strategic planning effort is available upon request.

I. NEW INITIATIVES AND TECHNIQUES FOR MOVING PEOPLE, INFORMATION AND GOODS

Action Opportunity A - Teletransportation Alternatives - Research & Planning

Facilitate future ability to constrain the growth in demand for transportation systems and services. Through the use of public sector consortiums, cooperatively explore existing and potential opportunities for utilizing new techniques in telecommunications to provide alternative transportation services for the movement of people, information and goods. Such studies could include the investigation of:

- the present telecommunications infrastructure;
- the roles of the public and private sectors in telecommunications;
- the relationship of communication technology to transportation services and information needs;
- the opportunities and impacts of developing communication technologies which complement or provide alternatives to existing transportation systems; and
- the potential for providing funding opportunities and/or policy initiatives to stimulate the development of telecommunications which enhance the provision of transportation services.

Action Opportunity B - Bicycle Transportation

Encourage biking as a means of travel and enhance biking safety by providing local units of government with funds to construct separate bikeways and bicycle lanes on road shoulders; work with State Comprehensive Bicycle Coordinator and Bicycle Advisory Board to develop a state-wide program and target funding levels; and, propose legislation to be enacted in 1985.

Action Opportunity C - Twin Cities Metropolitan Area Transit Development

Accelerate the development of the most efficient mass transportation network in the Twin Cities metropolitan area by providing demonstrated professional/technical expertise and support towards the study, selection and recommendation of an appropriate supplementary transit-facility system. Further, after transit-facility selection decisions have been reached by the Metropolitan Council study group, provide professional/technical design and construction expertise and active participation in the completion of the recommended transit facility in cooperation with the Metropolitan Council, the Regional Transit Board, and the Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority.

Action Opportunity D - High-Occupancy Vehicle Lanes

Encourage high-occupancy vehicle use of major highways (such as the Interstate System) by implementing traffic movement advantages created through innovative, temporary, or construction features. This may include special high-occupancy vehicle lanes during construction of I-394 or restriping other freeways to better utilize existing lanes and shoulders. Also, peak period metering will be considered. Implementation would benefit car pools by providing travel advantages in relation to other motorists.

Action Opportunity E - Highway Commodity Movements

Support economic development and commerce in Minnesota and promote greater compatibility with neighboring states concerning allowable vehicle weight through an on-going road strengthening program. This will be accomplished by developing a long range road management policy that will result in increased 10 ton route mileage and reduced spring load restrictions.

II. INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION LEADERSHIP

Action Opportunity A - Transportation Access to National and World Markets

Enhance Minnesota's long term economic development growth and support the efforts of the Minnesota World Trade Commission by promoting the fact that Minnesota's north central location and the state's transportation systems provide passengers and shippers direct access to national and world markets. Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport is an international gateway for non-stop flights to Europe, direct thru-plane flight to the Far East, and home base for the world's largest fleet of wide-body aircraft. Minnesota offers access to two major waterways, the Great Lakes and the Mississippi River, and surface transportation access in all directions through its rail and highway systems. This will be accomplished by continued monitoring and supporting efforts to improve and maintain air access to national and world markets.

Action Opportunity B - National Transportation Policy Leadership

Influence the development of Federal legislation and national transportation policy, assess the effects on Minnesota transportation programs and activities and seek resolution favorable to the best interests of Minnesota organizations/citizens. This will be accomplished by:

- continuing to develop a close working relationship with Minnesota's Congressional delegation and Minnesota's Washington, D. C. office;

- providing transportation related testimony to committees of the United States Congress;
- actively participating in the revision transportation related regulations of promulgated by Federal agencies;
- providing transportation related policy proposals to the Governor for adoption by the National Governors Association;
- exercising a prominent role in organizations which affect national transportation policy (e.g., American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, the Transportation Research Board, the National Association of State Aviation Officials, etc.); and
- providing transportation related information to congressional candidates, agency representatives and private organizations.

III. QUALITY PRODUCTIVITY AND COST CONTAINMENT

Action Opportunity A - Technology Transfer

Bridge the gap between private industry technological developments/breakthroughs and their potential adaptation to transportation systems and services within the public sector through "focus group" sessions. With the help of outside expertise when necessary, groups of professional and technical staff will be assembled and used to focus on new technologies such as robotics and bio-technology and explore possible Mn/DOT applications. Research and pilot projects will then be identified to test, transfer or adapt the new technology to transportation systems and services within Minnesota.

Action Opportunity B - Organization and Management Improvement

Provide for maximum cost effectiveness in the delivery of Department programs/services and in the management of Departmental resources (fiscal, physical, human and information) by:

- participating with the Department of Administration in the analysis of highway design and construction workload requirements, and in the development of criteria to guide decisions governing the most efficient level and mix of complement and consultant services;
- completing the evaluation of district management structures and implementing changes that will facilitate expanded program delivery with restricted resources, enhance constituent services and optimize decentralization while retaining the efficiencies and necessary controls afforded through centralization;

- completing the review and assessment of the functions and management structure of the central office and implementing steps to reduce layers of management and supervision, better balance the span of control and eliminate organization-induced obstacles to mission accomplishment.

Action Opportunity C - Consumable Inventory

Reduce the percentage of the operating budget tied up in Mn/DOT consumable inventory by improving management control. Also, provide for more timely acquisition of materials and optimal use of inventory on a statewide basis using the new statewide automated procurement system. Replace, if necessary, Mn/DOT's present automated inventory system to assure compatibility with the new statewide automated procurement system.

Action Opportunity D - Rule of 85

Foster cost reduction and increase the proportions of complement directly involved in the performance of "production" tasks and activities by taking advantage of the opportunity provided through legislative enactment of the early retirement program (Rule of 85). Adjust managerial/supervisory responsibilities and requirements to allow for the reallocation of at least one-fourth of the managerial/supervisory positions vacated under provisions of the new Rule of 85 to non-managerial, non-supervisory status.

IV. LEADERSHIP AND COALITIONS FOR THE SOCIAL GOOD

Action Opportunity A - Safety Promotion

Encourage and promote the development of safer driving practices by Minnesota citizens through a coalition with the Department of Public Safety, media associations, safety groups, concerned professionals and interested businesses to design and implement a cooperative public service/paid information safety campaign. An educational film distributed statewide to schools and driver training classes would explain how geometric safety features designed into roadways can be used for safe driving.

Action Opportunity B - North Star Workshop

Increase the visibility and vitality of transportation research by identifying and publicizing a "breakthrough area" to receive special emphasis. Conduct an invitational "North Star Workshop" with public and private sector participation for purposes of presentation, discussion, assessment, implementation and correlation with other local and national efforts within the breakthrough area. The North Star Workshop will be given wide publicity through news releases and/or media events.

Action Opportunity C - External Affirmative Action

Increase the numbers of minorities and females employed by contractors so that they may meet the Department of Labor affirmative action goals by expanding the Department's external affirmative action efforts to include a training program. Training of minorities and females will increase the numbers of disadvantaged persons qualified to be recruited and placed with existing contractors.

Action Opportunity D - Disadvantaged and Female Business Development

Expand the Department's outreach program to assist females and minorities in entering the transportation contracting industry as qualified contractors by conducting, in cooperation with the highway construction industry, training programs and the seminars on "How to be a Contractor." This will result in expanding numbers of female and minority contractors so that Mn/DOT can continue to achieve its 10% minority and 2% female participation goals.

V. TRANSPORTATION INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT AND FUNDING INITIATIVES

Action Opportunity A - Economic Development Criteria for Highway Project Ranking

Stimulate and support business expansion and long term economic growth by increasing the influence of economic development considerations in the criteria used for ranking/selecting highway improvement projects. Research findings will be used to establish new ranking formula for major construction and reconstruction projects and for road strengthening projects.

Action Opportunity B - Business/Transportation Climate

Foster public/private partnerships to identify and promote attitudes and actions to improve the business/transportation climate in Minnesota by:

- implanting throughout Mn/DOT a "listen to business" practice, including outreach efforts to do so;
- establishing "good transportation is good for business" as a promotional theme;
- increasing internal understanding of private sector transportation needs; and
- assisting small/new businesses by providing commodity movement information services.

Action Opportunity C - Highway Funding Stability and Taxing Equity

Improve the stability and tax equity of highway funding by developing alternative solutions in cooperation with state, regional and national groups:

- Develop a list of alternative actions that could be acted on now in Minnesota and which would result in short term funding stability improvements.
- For a longer term solution, identify elements of a new highway revenue policy that would both assure funding stability for road work and would also result in greater equity among beneficiaries.

Action Opportunity D - State Airport Funding

Enhance the safety and effectiveness of air transportation by upgrading navigation aids, weather information and the timeliness and accuracy of flight planning data by supporting the transfer of revenue from the aircraft sales tax to the State Airports Fund.

Action Opportunity E - Bridge Replacement Funding

Foster a more informed and coordinated decision concerning Minnesota's bridge replacement needs on the several road systems:

- develop information illustrating the bridge replacement needs on local (city, county, township) and trunk highway (state) roadways;
- foster and coordinate with local authorities to evaluate and request appropriate funding;
- evaluate alternative funding for the trunk highway bridge replacement program.

Action Opportunity F - Interstate Completion

Facilitate interstate traffic flow and safety by completing as rapidly as possible all remaining gaps in the Interstate Highway System. This will be done by establishing a contract letting schedule for completion of the remaining 40 miles of interstate highways in Minnesota that will enable completion of all lettings by the congressionally mandated completion date of 1989. The Advance Construction Interstate funding mechanism and/or Advance Construction Bonding will be appropriately used, if required, to assure the availability of funds necessary to meet such a schedule. The use of Advance Construction Bonding will require additional legislative bonding authorization within the limits of Minnesota's debt management policy.

VI. SHARING OF TRANSPORTATION INFORMATION AND TECHNOLOGY

Action Opportunity A - Speaker's Bureau

Create greater public understanding of Mn/DOT plans and actions by establishing a centralized source of service and support for a decentralized statewide speakers bureau. This will be accomplished by providing "outreach" personnel with the necessary training, audio visual aids and other tools, customized speeches or handouts as needed, and providing appropriate advance publicity. In addition, a method will be developed to determine the effectiveness of speakers activities.

Action Opportunity B - Education About Transportation

Broaden students' perceptions/knowledge on how government/transportation works in Minnesota by pursuing a coalition with the State Department of Education, appropriate other state agencies and outside organizations (e.g., American Automobile Association, Minnesota Good Roads, etc.) to encourage development and use of transportation educational units (lesson plans, film strips, and educational aids). This would be tied to an effort by Mn/DOT districts to actively seek entry into schools through functions like career/government days or initiation of a program like "Capitol for a Day"...i.e., "Transportation Department for a Day".

Action Opportunity C - Information Outreach

Foster technology transfer and improve transportation knowledge for decision making. This will be accomplished by better dissemination of data developed or acquired by the department in its normal engineering, research, planning, and policy formulation responsibilities to local governments, interested businesses and the general public. Investigate establishing an information/technology transfer center and district libraries. Expand distribution of informational publications through cooperative library ventures.

VII. EXPLOITATION OF NEW TECHNOLOGY

Action Opportunity A - Retraining Due to New Technology

Assure the continued full utilization of Mn/DOT human resources by being responsive to the fact that new technology is changing employee skill and knowledge requirements at unprecedented speed. Provide affected employees with the opportunity to develop the skills needed to effectively meet the Department's changing needs. Also, prepare employees for the reassignment of activities, tasks and responsibilities by significantly increasing the commitment to training and retraining.

Action Opportunity B - Electronic Communications

Overcome the barriers of distance and location inherent in a large, decentralized and geographically dispersed organization. Based on the success of the initial pilot effort in office automation, expand electronic mail capabilities for textual material to include all districts and maintenance area offices. Determine the longer term role to be played by text, image, graphic and voice communication modes in developing rapid communication methodologies throughout Mn/DOT.

Action Opportunity C - Market New Technology To Employees

Develop within employees an enthusiastic and receptive attitude towards the implementation of new technology and encourage acceptance of electronic communications as a routine means of conducting business by:

- using new technology tools to increase ease of access to training opportunities,
- conducting an internal communications program with a focus on the personal benefits from using high-tech tools, and
- building on the enthusiasm generated by new users, through the exchange of findings and experiences in the User Network Information and Technical Exchange newsletter (UNITE).

Action Opportunity D - Decision Support Systems

Improve managerial planning and control by implementing an automated decision support system to allow Mn/DOT managers access to special purpose data they need. Long range, the decision support system will provide incorporating data from other departmental information systems into the computer network presently available to managers. Expand managers awareness of data and support available from these other systems. Expand the availability of such a decision support system to all interested managers.

Action Opportunity E - District Maintenance Applications

Improve the performance of labor intensive highway maintenance activities by expanding the utility of the highway maintenance worker through aggressive application of new technology - giving the workers the new technology "tools" they need to better do their jobs. Establish a value engineering project to identify, research, develop and implement at least one application of new technology to highway maintenance.

Action Opportunity F - Teleconferencing

Reduce travel time and expense for essential meetings involving Mn/DOT employees from throughout the state through the

demonstrational application of video-teleconferencing to allow business meetings & seminars to take place electronically rather than physically. Based on experience and knowledge already gained through the successful demonstration of the video-teleconferencing Mn/DOT conducted in conjunction with the Transportation Research Board, develop plans to conduct several video conferences for Mn/DOT employees to better evaluate the cost/benefit of this technology. Additionally, initiate a study to determine the feasibility of establishing video-conferencing centers in the central office and at a specified number of district locations.

VIII. ORGANIZATION AND HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT

Action Opportunity A - "Know Why" Program

Build organizational cohesiveness by stressing the need and providing for improved employee understanding of the basis and rationale for Mn/DOT plans and actions. Enhance employee knowledge of Mn/DOT interface with external constituencies. Identify and implement initiatives to institutionalize "KNOW WHY" as a central theme of an internal communications effort, stressing equally management's obligation to share and explain and employees' obligation to inquire and understand the historical, technical, political, economic or social reasons underlying and involved in department decisions.

Action Opportunity B - Managerial Succession Preparedness

Improve manager versatility so that by 1990 most managers will be capable of filling at least three positions within the central office and districts should the occasion so demand. Clearly identify the unique requirements of each managerial position regardless of the established classification. Based on the unique requirements identified for each position, managerial personnel will be encouraged to develop appropriate competencies for other positions through participation in ad hoc committees, activity exchanges, mobility or special assignments, mentoring, and through in-service or formal development programs.

Action Opportunity C - Maintenance Management

Improve highway maintenance operations budgeting and scheduling practices through the concentrated effort by the Maintenance Action Committee to:

- develop work planning and budgeting delegation procedures;
- develop work schedules to support budgeting;
- define management information system requirements for maintenance; and

- improve maintenance budgeting systems and procedures.

Action Opportunity D - Mentoring for Protected Classes

Assist protected class employees to reach their full potential within Mn/DOT employment. This will be done by establishing a mentor/advisor program for employees who volunteer to participate. The program will include match-ups of protected class individuals with other persons having experience in the areas of expertise desired for purposes of coaching and counseling.

Action Opportunity E - Organization Design and Classification Studies

Strengthen the internal organization and assist managers in providing the best alignment of essential functions and activities responsive to Mn/DOT's overall mission, goals and objectives; create dynamic and highly motivated work teams; and ensure proper position allocation for compensation equity while minimizing adverse impact on the classification of incumbent employees. Formalize and implement more fully an internal multi-discipline organization design and classification consulting service, providing all managers with the opportunity to request assistance in the design of their own organizational structures and assistance in managerial improvement efforts such as team building, role and relationship clarification and activity value analysis.

Action Opportunity F - Central Office For A Day

Increase Commissioner's Staff dialogue and interface with district managers to foster improved mutual understanding of local, regional, and statewide transportation issues and to develop closer rapport between division heads and district employees. This will be accomplished by initiating a "Central Office for a Day" outreach program wherein the Commissioner's Staff will meet at the district headquarters with the districts top staff at least once a year.

Action Opportunity G - Program Delivery

Assure that sufficient projects are ready for contract bidding to utilize all construction funding available over the next three years by:

- developing a program delivery strategy based on reasonable, yet aggressive, future funding assumptions;
- effective use of consultants; and
- increasing use of automation for design and construction activities to shorten project development time.