

Greenhouse Gas Offsets and the Regional Solicitation

METROPOLITAN COUNCIL

November 18, 2026

Background

Timeline of Minnesota's Climate Actions

2007 **Next Generation Energy Act** created goal to reduce Minnesota GHG emissions 80% by 2050

2008 Minnesota **Climate Change Advisory group** publishes final report recommending a comprehensive set of state-level climate polocies

2016 **Climate Solutions and Economic Opportunity report** identifies near-term emission reduction opportunities

2019 MnDOT publishes **Pathways to Decarbonizing Transportation in Minnesota**, outlining potential transportation actions to meet GHG goals

2020 **Sustainable Transportation Advisory Committee** established

2021 **Clean Cars Minnesota** rule adopted

2022 Minnesota's **Climate Action Framework** set goal to reduce GHG emissions by 50% by 2030 and achieve net-zero by 2050

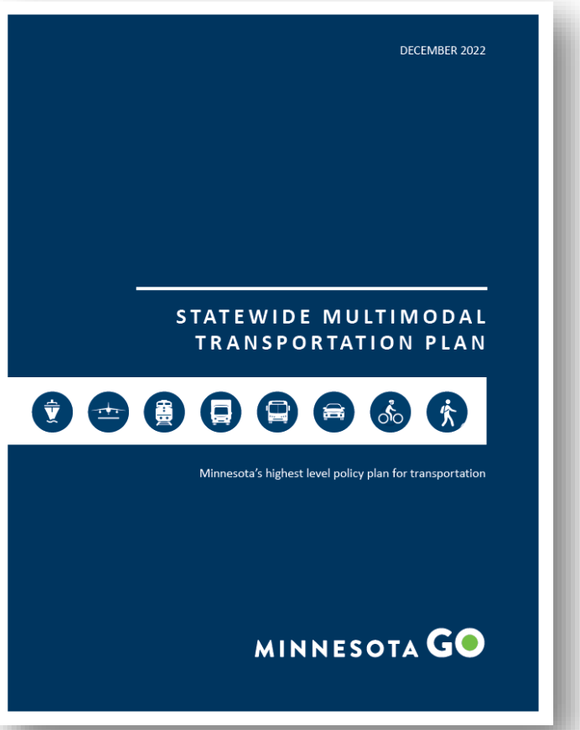
Minnesota **Statewide Multimodal Transportation Plan** establishes transportation GHG reduction targets consistent with the Framework (80% reduction by 2040)

2023 **HF 2887** law creates new transportation funding sources for sustainable transportation, rebates and work groups

Next Generation Energy Act adopts goal to reduce GHG emissions by 30% by 2025, 50% by 2030 and net-zero emissions by 2050

Clean Transportation Fuel Standard Working Group and **GHG Emissions Impact Mitigation Working Group** are established and begin work





Metropolitan Council

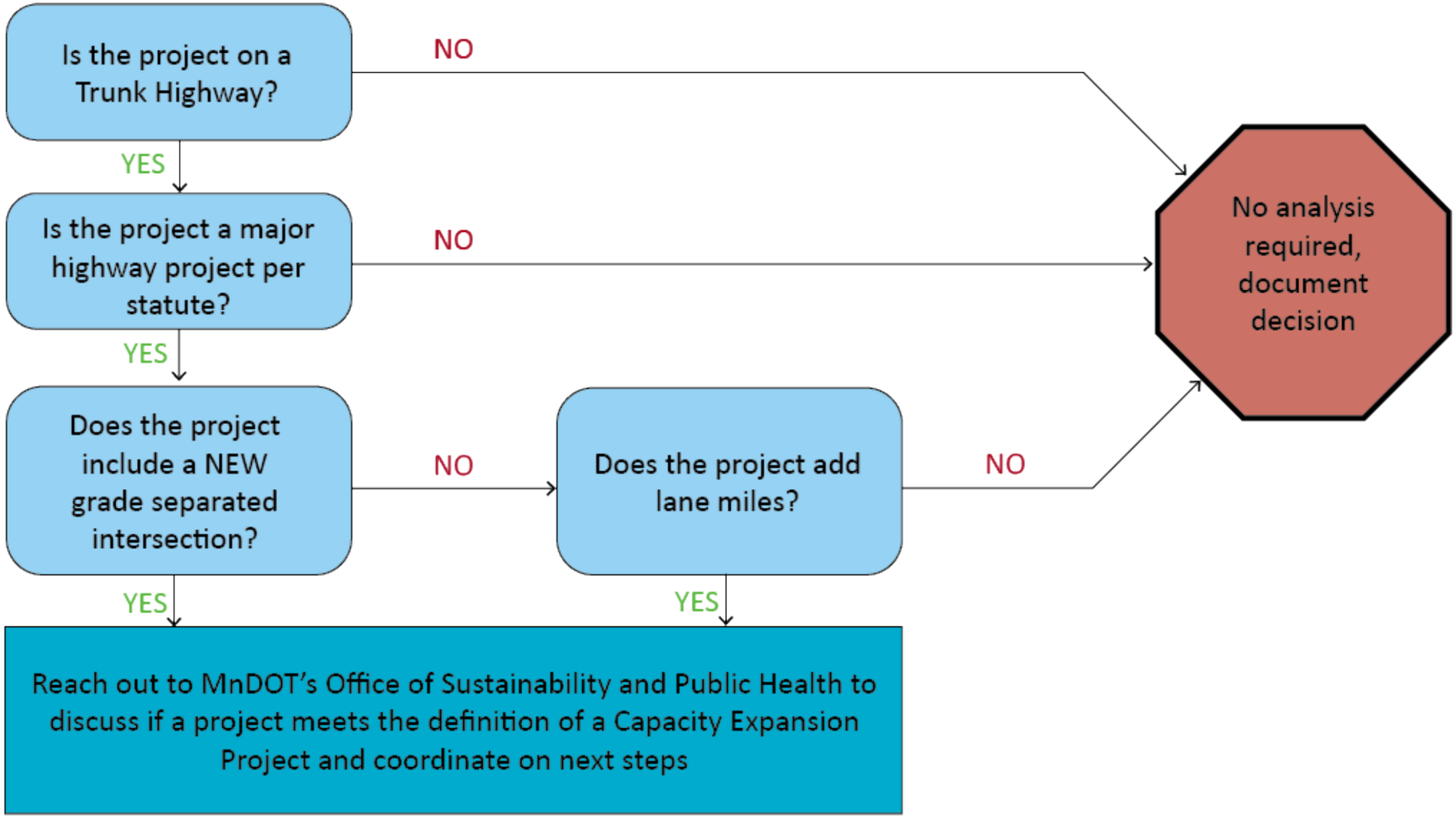
State Law

GHG emissions targets and project assessment:

- MN 216H.02 (2023): Set greenhouse gas emissions goal for Minnesota across all sectors
- MN 174.01 subd. 3 (2023): requires the commissioner of transportation to establish greenhouse gas emission reduction targets for the transportation sector
- MN 161.178 (2023): Requires MN Trunk Highway projects that expand vehicular capacity to be assessed for greenhouse gas emissions impacts, then develop an offset plan to offset those impacts
- MN 161.178 amended (2024): to add a requirement of "assessing a portfolio or program of projects instead of on a project-by-project basis" by 2027; established a TAC



MN 161.178 Applicability



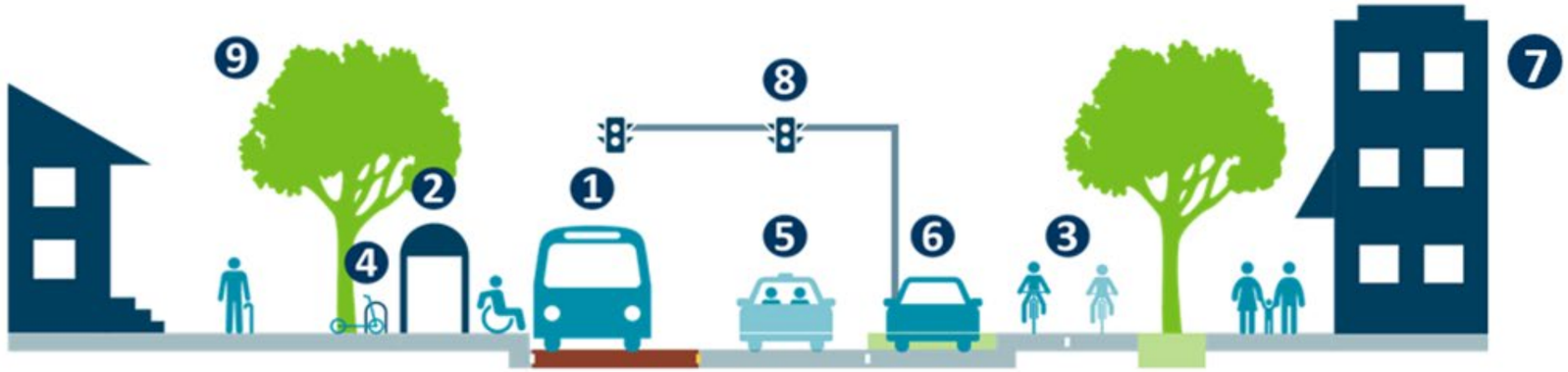
MPO Role

As of February 1, 2025…

- Expansion projects must offset emissions to be entered into the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)
- MPO decides what is programmed in the TIP
- As an MPO, MnDOT has charged the council with:
  - Identifying effective and beneficial offsets
  - Connecting transportation, land use, and economic development
  - Allocating scarce resources
  - Coordinating across agencies
  - Ensuring regional decision-making

Offset Categories

1. **Transit expansion***
   [bus routes, BRT, passenger rail]
2. **Transit service improvements***
   [increase transit service level, transit fare reduction]
3. **Active transportation infrastructure***
   [gap or standalone trail improvements, bike lane adds]
4. **Micromobility***
   [shared vehicle services]
5. **Transportation demand management***
   [vanpool and shared vehicle programs, telework programs]
6. **Parking management**
   [policies to reduce or eliminate parking requirements, parking pricing]
7. **Land use***
   [increased density, mixed-use & transit-oriented development]
8. **Traffic operations***
   [roundabouts, reduced-conflict intersections]
9. **Natural systems**
   [prairie restoration, reforestation, wetland conservation, restorative ag]
10. **Land acquisition**
    [easements, restoration and enhancement for outdoor recreation system]
11. **As specified by the Commission****



Offset Plan Process

1. Applicant applies to Regional Solicitation and submits draft offset plan
2. Met Council evaluates other projects submitted to Regional Solicitation for offset potential
3. MnDOT and Met Council review the offset plan and work with the applicant to finalize it
4. The offset plan is submitted to MnDOT's GHG TAC for certification
5. The GHG TAC approves the offset plan and the project is approved to enter the TIP/STIP

Regional Solicitation Assessments

Assessed for offsets

- New Trails
- New Sidewalks
- New Bike Lanes
- Transit Expansions

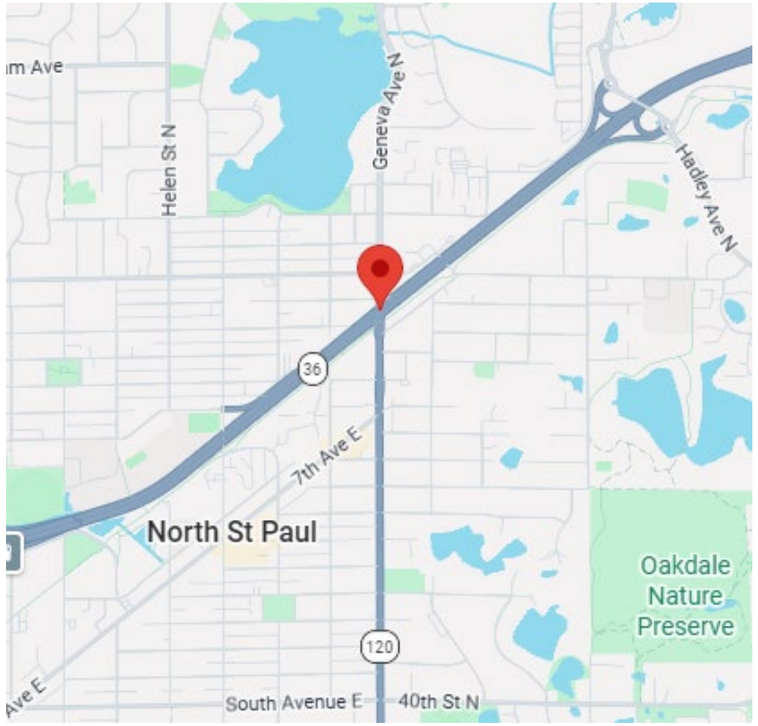
Not assessed

- Roundabouts
- Active Transportation Planning
- Transit Customer Experience
- 4-to-3 Conversions

Regional Solicitation Expansions

MN 36 & MN 120: New grade-separated interchange on the border of Washington and Ramsey Counties

- Will be the first project in the state to go through the process
- No other submitted Regional Solicitation projects need to go through the process based on the definition in the state statute
- ~6,000 metric tons of GHG to offset
  - Applicant (Washington Co) provided draft offset plan
  - TAB and the Met Council are retaining offsets from Regional Solicitation projects if more offsets are needed
  - The % of project offsets retained = the % of funding provided by the Regional Solicitation



MN-36 & MN-120 in North St. Paul/Oakdale

Offsets in Submitted Applications

Application Type	Applications w/ assessed offsets	Total VMT	% VMT funded by RS*	Total GHG	% GHG funded by RS*
AT - Local Bike Facilities	45	37,667,200	33,363,200	7,600	7,200
AT - Pedestrian Facilities	14	4,358,900	3,210,600	1,000	700
Bridge Connections	1	206,700	144,700	100	100
Arterial BRT	1	8,920,100	3,585,900	2,600	1,100
Congestion Management Strategies	2	752,100	393,300	200	100
Proactive Safety	6	10,470,600	8,215,700	2,100	1,600
Reactive Safety	4	7,216,900	4,232,600	1,400	800
Regional Bike Facilities	22	42,693,500	28,505,100	8,500	5,700
Roadway Modernization	13	55,997,900	31,130,900	10,900	6,100
Transit Expansion	1	16,296,200	13,037,000	2,500	2,000
Travel Demand Management	5	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
Grand Total	**114**	184,579,700	125,818,600	36,400	25,100

*The Met Council can claim the % of offsets generated by a project in proportion to the % of the project that is funded by the Regional Solicitation

Offsets and Potential Funding

Regional Solicitation Funding % out of Total Project Cost	Total VMT	Total GHG	% VMT funded by RS	% GHG funded by RS
30%	55,373,910	10,920	37,745,580	7,530
40%	73,831,880	14,560	50,327,440	10,040

- The MN 36 & MN 120 Interchange has ~6,000 metric tons of GHG to offset



Thank you

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