

**Interim Transportation Committee
Thursday, November 12, 2015 - Roughrider Room**

County Major Collector Routes

**North Dakota Department of Transportation
Director Grant Levi, P.E.**

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee - I'm Grant Levi, Director of the North Dakota Department of Transportation (DOT or Department). I am here to provide you information on County Major Collector routes.

One of the roles defined for the Department in North Dakota Century Code 24-01-01 is to establish an integrated system of all roads and streets to provide safe and efficient highway transportation throughout the state.

- To accomplish this and comply with the federal highway programs, which go back many years, a process was put in place working with local jurisdictions to classify the system of roadways. The roadway classification system was completed for state, larger cities above 5,000 people and counties.

County Major Collector (CMC) Routes

Defining routes as CMC on the county system of roadways was the means to identify a higher system of roadways within the counties that became part of an integrated federal aid network which became eligible for federal aid. The CMC routes are also referred to as "Farm to Market" roads. These routes are generally the roads that see the highest traffic volumes within the county and are used to bring commodities to the market and provide connectivity within and across county boundaries. The federal funds (road dollars) each county receives every year can only be spent on these routes.

The total CMC miles for all 53 counties is 10,854. The number of CMC miles within each county varies based on:

- Traffic patterns
- Traffic generators
- Spacing
- Proximity to urban areas, and connectivity across county boundaries,
- Connectivity within the county, and connectivity with state routes.

The 2015 legislative session removed some language from North Dakota Century Code (NDCC), section 24-05-16 which designated county system mileage to be 22,500 miles and established percentages of mileage for each county. NDCC Section: 24-05-16. County road system - Designation now reads as follows:

"The county road system must be the roads designated and selected by the boards of county commissioners. The director must be informed of the system so designated. Any changes of the original designation which can be justified and based on new developments must be made by the board of county commissioners and the director must be notified of such changes. In designating and selecting roads on the county road system, the boards of county

commissioners of the several counties shall take into account such factors as the actual or potential traffic volumes, the conservation and development of the county's natural resources, the general economy of the communities, and the desirability of integrating such county roads into the general scheme of the statewide network of county roads.”

Another section of state law - NDCC Section 24-01-05: Designation of county system – removal from state highway system - has not changed and still limits the amount of miles a county can receive federal aid funds as 22,500 miles. The Department wants you to be aware of the possible conflict in language in state Century Code.

Adding or deleting CMC Miles within a County

As changes happen within a county or cities within those counties, such as economic growth due to agriculture, industrial, oil industry, etc.; each county can re-evaluate their transportation infrastructure system and make the necessary changes to that system to account for increased traffic.

The counties can request an addition or deletion of CMC miles within their County as these events change the traffic patterns within a county. In order to do this, they have to send a request into the Department for review.

- With each request, the county needs to supply the reason for the addition or deletion, how the traffic has changed (traffic generator such as elevator, gravel pits, Trans load facilities, etc.), a map of the road(s) to be added and any other necessary information to make a decision.
- After the Department reviews the request, the request will be sent to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) provided the Department is in agreement with the request.
- FHWA has the final approval or denial of these requests based on the information submitted by the counties.

State and County Coordination Process

For many years the Department has worked with the counties to select federal aid eligible projects. The DOT's Local Government Division worked closely with each county to ensure projects met federal aid requirements and enhanced the state's transportation system.

We enhanced the process that was in place in recent years when state funding became available to ensure the criteria outlined in each of the bills were met.

- For the administration of the state funds, the state was divided into regions. (Please see attached map)
- Meetings were held in each of the regions to discuss the criteria contained in the funding bills and to establish a process that ensured coordination between counties and the state to meet that criteria.
- The process that was agreed to requires the counties to complete an application.
 - The Department reviews the application to ensure the criteria contained in the bill were met.
 - The applications are then either presented to a group of other counties for approval at a designated regional meeting or sent out to the appropriate regional representative(s) for review and approval.
 - The review and approval by counties is to ensure other counties also see a need for the project and they agree the criteria were met.

- The counties are responsible for obtaining the environmental clearance of these projects, designing, bidding, and overseeing the construction of these projects.
- If federal funds are involved with any of the projects, then the normal federal aid process is followed to meet all of the federal requirements.

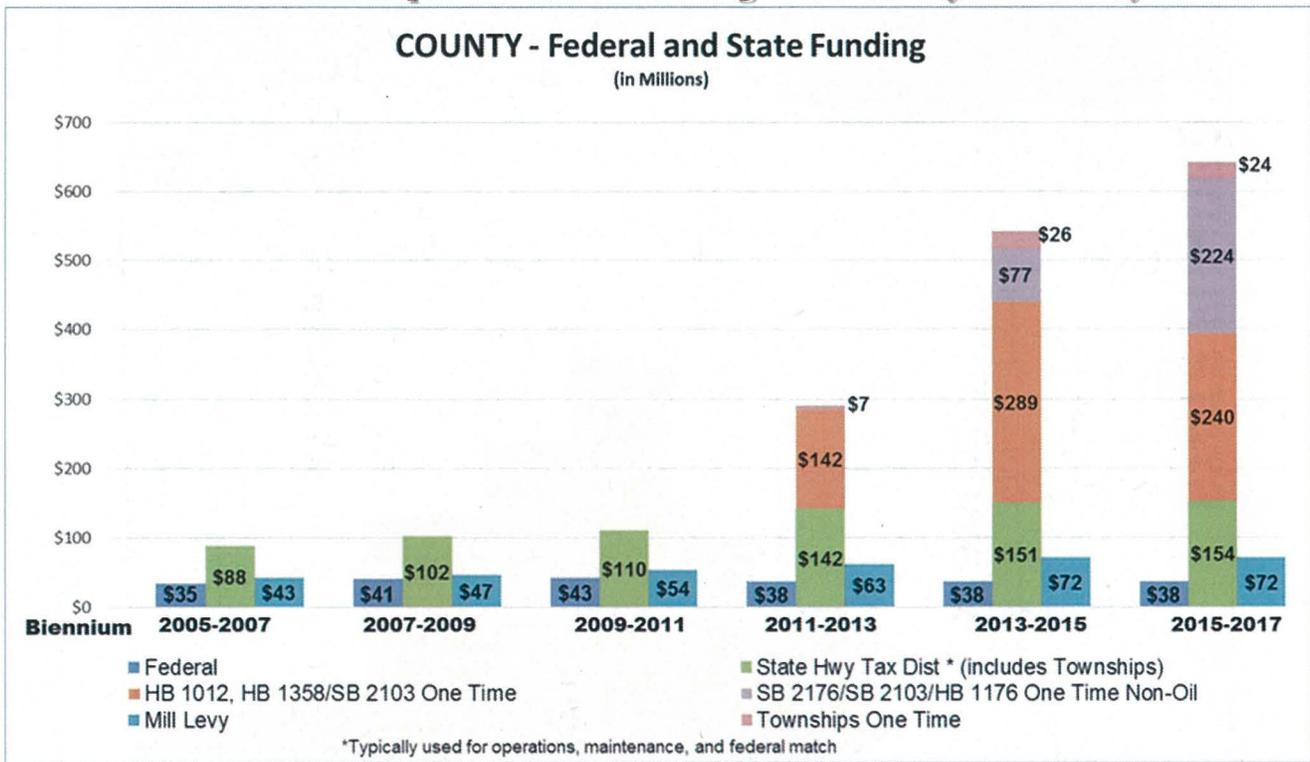
The Department reimburses the counties either on work completed or based on a signed contract to do the work, as long as the project has been approved and meets the requirements and dates set forth in the appropriations bill.

Once the project has been completed, the counties are required to send in a “final” certification letter along with the appropriate documentation detailing the final costs and that the project was built according to the plans and specifications. The Department will then either reimburse the county for any eligible remaining costs or request state funds back if applicable.

The process we have in place in working with the counties has worked well to confirm guidelines in state statute are met and ensure the system of roadways that are funded.

For your benefit the chart below is an historical highlight of the funding provided to the counties.

Biennial Comparison of Funding for County Roadways



Does not include funding from HB1176 tax formula change in which local county/city authorities decide how to spend funding.

Thank you for the opportunity to present information to you today.

STATE FUNDED REGIONS

