

Chapter 5: Department of Transportation Program Policy

Policy on Maximizing the Safety of Nevada's Motorists

Safety has been identified as an overarching goal of the Nevada Department of Transportation. Nevada's motorists depend on the state's highway infrastructure to provide a safe, dependable, and efficient means of transportation. The Department is currently embarking on an aggressive safety campaign.

The Department has taken steps to emphasize safety programming. By matching 50 percent Federal Safety money with State money, NDOT is demonstrating its commitment to fully fund the Department's safety program. Moreover, the Department is committed to being responsive to safety trends.

in developing the state's safety program budget, full consideration will be given to funding such programs to target reductions in accident, fatality, and injury rates.

Policy on Highway Preservation and Reduction of Maintenance Backlog

After providing for the safety of Nevada motorists the Nevada Department of Transportation feels that the next priority of the department must be the preservation of the excellent condition of the state's transportation infrastructure. A timely and prompt investment in this network can provide a manifold return on investment.

- *It is the policy of the Nevada Department of Transportation that the preservation budget is adequate to maintain the existing system without increasing the maintenance backlog.*

Please refer to the *Pavement Preservation Report*, produced by the NDOT Operations Analysis Division, for more information on the funding levels required to address this policy.

Policy on Congestion Relief

The capacity budget realized by the Department each year must be utilized in a manner that maximizes its impact. The Department believes that the smooth flow of traffic along the busiest roadways in the state should be a guiding principle determining the prioritization of funds. (Chapter 7 references elements use in determining the potential capacity budget.)

- *It is the policy of the Nevada Department of Transportation that the Potential Capacity Budget for the department be allocated to address congestion relief (according to acceptable levels of service).*



Policy on Establishing an Evaluation Process Ensuring Geographic Equity for Program Development

As set forward in Chapter 1 of this manual, geographic equity is one of the four divisional guiding principles that govern the program development process. The population of Nevada is mainly concentrated in two urban areas, that of Clark County and Northwest Nevada. A selection process for capacity projects that relied solely on the considerations expressed above would make it impossible to satisfy the need for geographic equity in the state's program.

- *It is the policy of the Nevada Department of Transportation that economic development be an important rationale for programming transportation projects in rural counties.*

Policy on Bond-Funding

Like many state transportation agencies, the Nevada Department of Transportation utilizes bond financing to fund major transportation and construction projects. The policy and procedures regarding project bonding are contained in NDOT's *Bond Manual*. Examples of recent and future bonded projects include the Carson City freeway and I-580 extension, and the Hoover Dam Bypass.

The Nevada Department of Transportation utilizes bond financing to fund major projects, which are the most visible component of the Department's work. Bond financing is utilized for: projects that exceed the Department's annual budget, have regional significance, provide long-term benefit to Interstate Highways and/or U.S. Highways, and Projects, and that could not possibly be constructed without bonding. All bonds are issued in accordance with NRS 408.273.

The Department has adopted the following policy:

- *In the case of bond-funded projects, it is the policy of the Nevada Department of Transportation to utilize a five-year moving average of capitalized bond proceeds when evaluating equity. For example, a \$100 million bonded project in any given community shall be evaluated for equity standards during the first five years of the proceeds of that bond only, and shall not be considered thereafter.*



Policy of the State Transportation Board

Nevada is rather unique among the states because so many high-profile political leaders serve on the State Transportation Board. The Board is chaired by the Governor and its membership includes the Lieutenant Governor, the Attorney General, and the State Controller. Three citizens, representing NDOT's three districts, complete the Board's membership. The Transportation Board serves to ensure the equitable distribution of the Potential Capacity Budget. The Board is empowered to adjust revenue allocations to balance the interests of the State of Nevada. The State Transportation Board also serves to accept the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and approves the Annual Work Program (AWP).