



Division of Planning & Engineering

Office of Project Development

700 East Broadway Avenue

Pierre, South Dakota 57501

O: 605.773.3433 | F: 605.773.2614

dot.sd.gov

Public Meeting Open House

Tuesday, April 23, 2024

Project #: HP 5510 (23) P, Tripp County
Tripp County Master Transportation Plan

The first public meeting open house was held at the Tripp County Courthouse in Winner on Tuesday, April 23, 2024. Thirty-five people attended the open house. There was also a recording of the presentation made available the next day. The project also collected public input through a virtual and online survey, which received 191 responses.

- People want an unpaved county network that is well-maintained and actually goes to places that people and services need.
- Comments on gravel quality & funding.

A copy of the survey and a summary of the responses can be found in Appendix A.



Public Information

Project Location: Tripp County Master Transportation Plan

Project Description: Transportation Master Plan Study

Project Number: HP 5510 (23) P, Tripp County

Public Meeting Information @ <https://fhu.mysocialpinpoint.com/tripp-county-mtp>



Individuals needing assistance, pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), should contact the SDDOT ADA Coordinator (605-773-3540) two business days prior to the meeting in order to ensure accommodations are available. For any in-person meeting, notice is further given to individuals with disabilities that the meeting is being held in a physically accessible location.



Tripp County Master Transportation Plan Public Meeting #1 (Virtual)

April 23, 2024

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Tripp County MTP Agenda

- Introduction and Background
- Existing Conditions
 - Roads (include Functional Class Roadway Jurisdiction, Surface Type, and Roadway Width)
 - Traffic (Existing Volume to capacity)
 - Crash History
 - Bridge Condition
 - Township Property Tax
 - Key Issues and Needs
- Next Steps:
 - Your Contribution
 - Study Schedule
 - Study Website

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Tripp County MTP Study Participants

- Agency Partners: Tripp County, SDDOT, FHWA
- Study Advisory Team: Tripp County, SDDOT, City of Winner
- Consultant: Felsburg Holt & Ullevig with Brosz Engineering, Inc








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What is a Master Transportation Plan (MTP)?

- A 20 –year planning document that will serve as a guide for the County's future transportation network for all modes of travel.
- The Master Transportation Plan examines the following:
 - ❖ Safety
 - ❖ Infrastructure
 - ❖ Operations

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Project Schedule

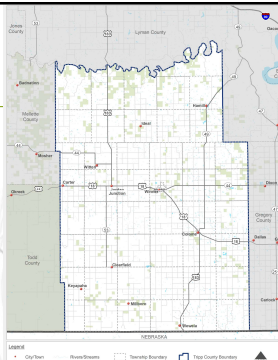
MAJOR TASKS	YEARS/MONTHS												
	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN
Kick-off Meeting													
Methods & Assumptions													
Baseline Conditions Analysis													
Standards Development													
Future Needs Analysis													
Final Report													
Public Meetings													
Public Input Period													
County Commission Meeting													
Stakeholder Meetings													
Website													
Study Advisory Team Meetings													
Project Deliverables													

KEY: ■ In-Person Meeting ■ Virtual Meeting

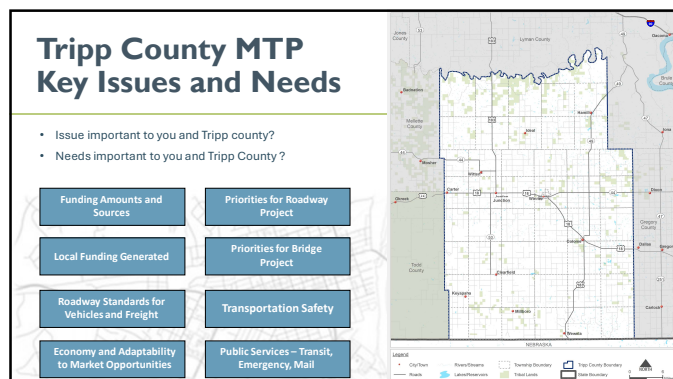
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Tripp County MTP Study Area

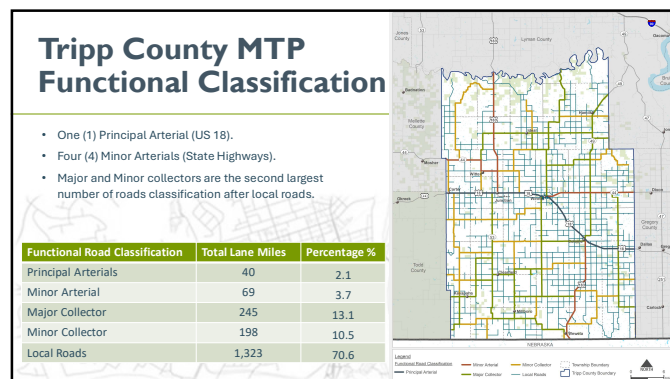
- The focus of the MTP WILL BE Tripp County owned and maintained roadways and bridges.

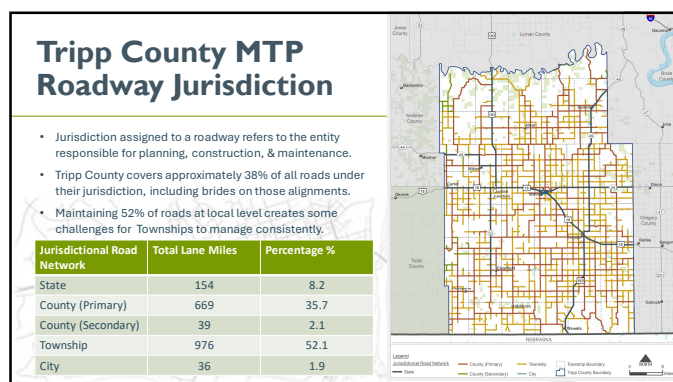
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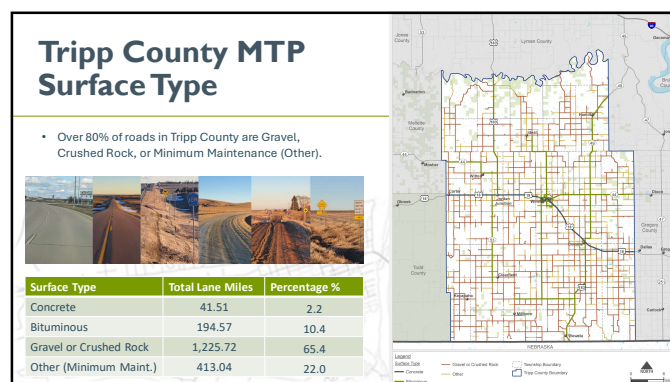
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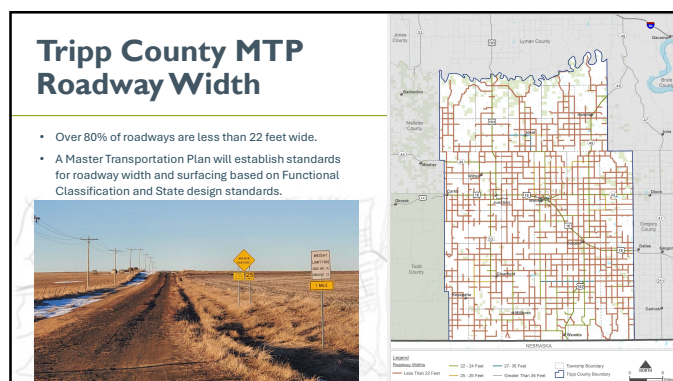
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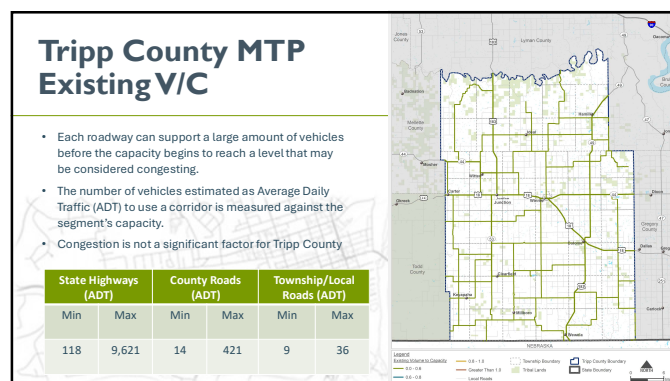
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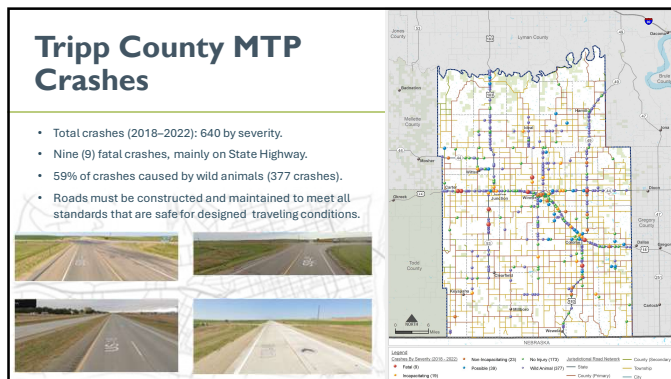
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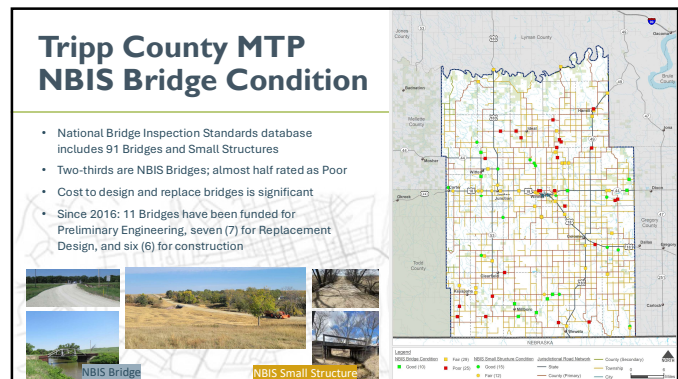
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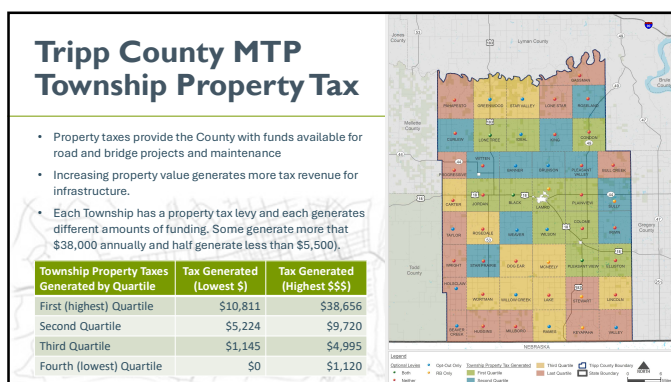
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Study Website

- TrippCountyMTP.com
 - Existing Conditions Figures
 - Survey Questionnaire
 - Comments Form
 - Recorded Presentation
- Survey questionnaire (Deadline: Tuesday, May 7, 2024.)
- The website will post project updates as the study continues.
 - Opportunities for review and comment on plan documents

Survey

Tells us about your travel habits and priorities for transportation in Tripp County.

[Take Survey](#)

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Thank You !

- Next Meeting – Public Meeting #1 (April 23, 2024)
- Project Managers
 - SDDOT
 - Katrina Burckhard, SDDOT Project Manager (Katrina.Burckhard@state.sd.us)
 - Consultant Team
 - Jesse Poore, AICP, FHU Consultant Project Manager (Jesse.Poore@fhueng.com)
- TrippCountyMTP.com

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Access Management

South Dakota's Commitment to Safety and Smart
Investment Decisions in Transportation

What is Access Management?

Access Management is the process of providing highway entrances only at locations where they can be provided safely and efficiently.

Consider that each access point added to an undivided highway in an urban or suburban area increases the annual crash rate by 11 to 18 percent on that highway segment. In rural areas, each added access point increases the annual crash rate by seven percent. Overall, driveway-access crashes alone cost South Dakota approximately \$36.5 million each year.

Each additional access point also contributes to congestion. The more driveways on a street the more places where people are slowing, changing lanes, and turning. A five-lane street can quickly become a parking lot when there are many driveways in each block. When that happens, our valuable transportation investments are wasted and access to adjacent businesses is restricted.

Controlled access facilities are segments of highway where either no access or only limited access to the highway is allowed. Interstate highways are an example of controlled access facilities where no access to the highway is allowed.

Good access depends on the following:

- Limiting the number of conflict points (places where there is a potential for crashes)
- Separating conflict areas
- Reducing interference with through traffic
- Providing good on-site circulation and storage
- Properly spaced traffic signals

How does Access Management affect businesses?

Studies have shown that access management can provide three benefits to businesses adjacent to highways:

- Making sure that drivers can get in and out of businesses without being blocked by other traffic
- Making the highway more attractive by reducing congestion
- Extending the business' effective service area by reducing travel times

These benefits come not from having many driveways, but by having well-planned, well-located, high-capacity access points on the highway.

Even skeptical business owners have found that proper access management results in an improved business climate, as customers can easily get in and out of their business establishment.

For more information, please contact:

Brandon Soulek

Access Management Engineer

104 S. Garfield Ave.

Pierre, SD 57501

Phone: 605-773-2268

E-Mail: Brandon.Soulek@state.sd.us



Right of Way Information

Individual Landowner Meetings

During the early stages of the project's design, SDDOT will schedule a meeting with individual landowners having property adjacent to the project. See the following page for an explanation of the landowner meeting.

Property Acquisition Offer

After the project construction plans have been prepared and the right of way limits have been established, you may be contacted by an appraiser or negotiations agent to visit with you for that portion of your property that is needed for construction of the project. Your property will be valued, and a written offer presented to you by a negotiating agent who will contact you for an appointment to make the written offer.

Relocation Assistance Program

This program provides a variety of services and payments to owners and tenants who have personal property affected by the right of way being acquired for the project.

Relocation payments are in addition to payments made for the real property being acquired. To preserve your eligibility for payments, do not move property until you have received a written relocation offer or have contacted John Keyes of the SDDOT Right of Way Program in Pierre. His phone number is 605-773-3746. Anyone not satisfied with the relocation offer made to them may appeal using the procedures described in the Relocation brochure.

The landowner may be reimbursed for various fair and reasonable incidental expenses that may be incurred during the transfer of property to the State depending on impacts to personal property and qualifications.

Right of Way Information Brochures

Two brochures "Better Roads brochure" and "Relocation Assistance brochure" have been prepared which explain the SDDOT's Right of Way process. They provide information on your rights regarding the acquisition of your property and the benefits available to you with regard to the Relocation Assistance Program. These brochures are available at this meeting on the "Sign-in" table. Please feel free to take a copy of each with you. These brochures are available at the following SDDOT website: <https://dot.sd.gov/inside-sddot/forms-publications/brochures>



Individual Landowner Meetings

The purpose of this meeting is to provide you with an opportunity to comment on various issues pertaining to the design of this highway project as it relates to your property.

The following topics will be discussed at the meetings. Please note that not all topics will apply to every property owner.

- Permanent purchase and/or temporary use of your property.
- Locations and widths of entrances to your property: The standard South Dakota Department of Transportation (SDDOT) entrance-width for rural highways is 24 feet. Note: In general, existing entrance widths along rural State Highways are 24 feet or smaller. A maximum width of 40 feet is allowed at locations where it is deemed appropriate and necessary. Entrances in urban areas can vary from 16 feet to 40 feet.

The goal of the SDDOT is to provide property owners located adjacent to the project with the access they need, and at the same time, enhance highway safety and reduce project costs. In some instances, the SDDOT may seek to combine duplicate entrances. For example, if your property has two or three entrances to the same property that are located close to each other, we would ask you to assess your current entrance needs and consider one entrance location that will meet those needs.

- Permanent fencing adjacent to the highway: SDDOT's fencing policy allows for the replacement of all disturbed fence with like-kind fence.

Two fence types are typically installed: **Type 2:** 4-strand barbed wire with 8-inch wire spacing, and **Type 6:** 32-inch woven wire with 1 strand of barbed wire on the bottom and 2 strands of barbed wire on the top. Page 12 of the "Better Roads brochure" contains added discussion of your permanent fencing options. This brochure will be available at the meeting.

- Temporary fencing adjacent to the highway: Do you anticipate having livestock in pastures located adjacent to the proposed project during highway construction activities?
- Are you aware of any waterlines, drainfields, septic tanks, underground storage tanks, underground power lines, etc. that are located adjacent to the project and may be impacted by construction activities?
- Are there any highway-related drainage or flooding problems located along your property or elsewhere along this section of highway?
- Possible sites for gravel and additional fill material: Are you aware of potential material available for construction that might be located adjacent to the highway?
- Temporary access during construction activities.

Please review your property and be prepared to discuss the above issues, as well as any other issues that you feel are unique to your property. No offers to acquire property will be made at these meetings since revisions to the plans may occur from your input.



Encroachments in ROW

Federal Regulations (CFR 23.1) require that the State Highway Department (SDDOT) will be responsible for preserving such ROW free of all public and private installation, facilities, and encroachments.

No improvements shall be allowed to remain in the ROW unless they are deemed in the best interest of the public and will not impair the highway or interfere with the free and safe flow of traffic.

Encroachments are any private property or improvement in the public ROW that is not approved by permit such as:

- Landscaping items
- Fence
- Signs
- Buildings
- Etc.

SDDOT Staff will survey the project limits to identify all encroachments. Prior to the project being let to contract, landowners will be contacted by the SDDOT or City Government regarding how each encroachment will be addressed or handled. If it is determined that the removal of an encroachment is required, it will be the landowner's responsibility to remove the encroachment.

For additional information, please contact:

Doug Sherman
Area Engineer
SDDOT Winnter Area Office
1300 W Norway Ave
PO Box 1206
Mitchell, SD 57301-7206
E-Mail: Doug.Sherman@state.sd.us



Environmental, Social & Economic Impacts and Advanced Utility Coordination

Environmental, Social & Economic Impacts

- Project will comply with all state and federal environmental regulations.
- No splitting of neighborhoods will occur because of this project.
- Project will be coordinated with the following state and federal agencies:
 - SD Dept. of Environment & Natural Resources
 - SD Dept. of Game, Fish & Parks
 - US Fish & Wildlife Service
 - State Historic Preservation Office
 - US Forest Service

For additional information, please contact:

Chad Babcock
Environmental Manager
SDDOT Office of Administration
700 E. Broadway Ave.
Pierre, SD 57501
Phone: 605-773-3721
E-Mail: Chad.Babcock@state.sd.us

Advanced Utility Coordination

Highway projects may require adjustments or relocation of existing utilities located along or crossing the highway project. The SDDOT has an "Advanced Utility Coordinating Process" in place that addresses all existing utility involvement. This process involves meeting with the utility owner and project designers to **review** any conflicts and determine the most cost-effective option of changing the design to avoid the existing utility or adjusting the utility. If the utility is required to relocate, all replacement utility easement acquisition and relocation work will be addressed and coordinated between the landowner and the utility company.

For additional information, please contact:

Bronson Blow
Utility Coordinator
SDDOT Office of Road Design
700 E. Broadway Ave.
Pierre, SD 57501
Phone: 605-773-3433
E-Mail: Bronson.Blow@state.sd.us



Wetland Mitigation Registry Form

Federal regulations require that unavoidable wetland impacts caused by highway construction be mitigated. Examples of acceptable wetland mitigation include:

- Wetland creation
- Wetland restoration – plugging an existing, drained wetland.
- Wetland enhancement - adding buffer around an existing wetland.

The South Dakota Department of Transportation (SDDOT) may participate in the cost of wetland creation/restoration/enhancement, if the wetland can be used to mitigate wetland impacts caused by highway construction.

If you are interested in creating, restoring, or enhancing wetlands on your property, please complete the attached form and mail to:

Chad Babcock
Environmental Manager
SDDOT Office of Administration
700 E. Broadway Ave.
Pierre, SD 57501

Your name will be added to the SDDOT Wetland Mitigation Registry and a SDDOT representative will contact you with additional information.

Yes, I am interested in assisting the SDDOT to mitigate wetland impacts by creating or restoring wetlands on my property.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone #: _____ **Email:** _____

Location of property: _____ **1/4 of Section** _____

Township _____, **Range** _____, **County** _____

Please note: Completion of this form does not commit either you or the SDDOT to a mitigation project. It is a statement of interest only.



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Public Comments

Tripp County Master Transportation Plan

Project #: HP 5510 (23) P, Tripp County

Name: Date:

Address:

Telephone #: and/or Cell #:

Written testimony will be included in the meeting record.

Please submit comments by Tuesday, May 7, 2024 to:

Katrina Burkhard SDDOT Project Manager & Planning Engineer, Katrina.Burckhard@state.sd.us.



Sign-In

Tripp County Master Transportation Plan Public Meeting #1

Address: 200 E 3rd St, Winner, SD 57580

Date: Tuesday, April 23, 2024, 5:30 pm to 7:00 pm

Name	Email Address	Organization/Township	Phone Number
[Redacted Sign-In Table]			



Sign-In

Tripp County Master Transportation Plan Public Meeting #1

Address: 200 E 3rd St, Winner, SD 57580

Date: Tuesday, April 23, 2024, 5:30 pm to 7:00 pm

Name	Email Address	Organization/Township	Phone Number
J			
B			
B			
A			
C			
V			
D			
A			
T			
O			
KELIA ARISTO	ARISTO@GMAIL.COM	GMAISON TOWNSHIP	607-892-1000



Sign-In

Tripp County Master Transportation Plan Public Meeting #1

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Address: 200 E 3rd St, Winner, SD 57580

Date: Tuesday, April 23, 2024, 5:30 pm to 7:00 pm

Name	Email Address	Organization/Township	Phone Number
<div></div>			

Email Correspondence

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2024 11:36:36 PM
To: Jesse Poore <Jesse.Poore@FHUENG.COM>
Subject: [EXT] Tripp County Meeting

Mr. Poore,

My name is Nancy Richey. We talked at the planning meeting in Winner.

At that time, I brought up the subject of the quality of the gravel used on our roads. I did not find a place on the online questionnaire to voice my opinion on this, so I am sending my comments directly to you.

If you are making a plan for the next 10 or 20 years, you are looking at the depletion of the present source of road dirt. There has been a noticeable decline in the quality of the dirt coming out of the pit at the corner of Rames Township for some time. It did not seem that the first loads out turned to such horrible white powder. Yet, it is my understanding that this remains to be the main source for road material in Tripp County.

I encourage you to include in your plan the exploration for new gravel. I am sure you are right when you say that all of the gravel in this area is the same stuff. Therefore, maybe there needs to be a number of pits to get the better dirt and stop hauling when the quality declines. There are also possible sites along the White River. Better gravel just might lead to safer roads that require less maintenance and stand up longer.

If there are no new sources for gravel, then your plan should maybe include dust control. The present situation has destroyed the quality of life in every farmstead that is near the white powder roads. This needs to be addressed in plans for the future. I know there are solutions for this, and they are expensive. So, what better place to put them than the long-term plan right along with resurfacing of other roads?

I thank you for your attention on this matter.

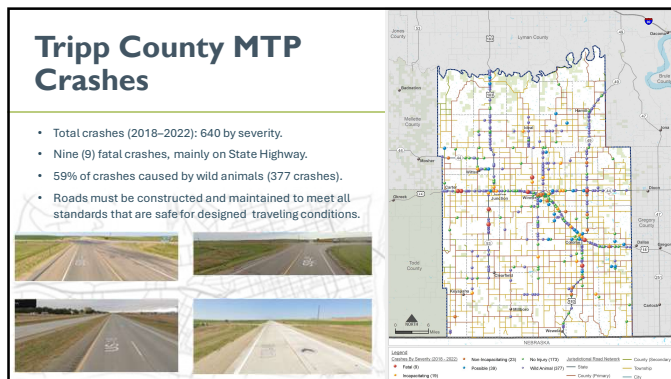
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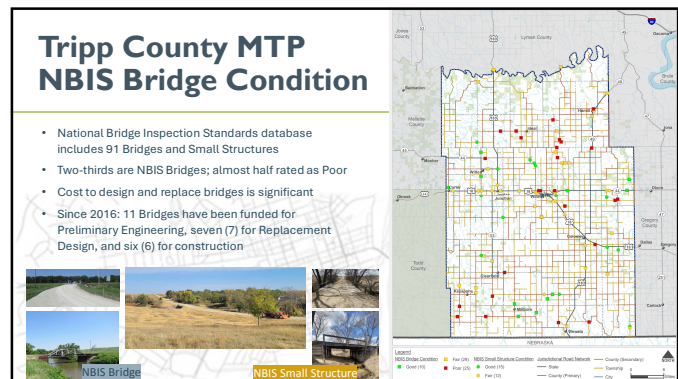
**DEPARTMENT OF
TRANSPORTATION**

Appendix A: Survey Results & Summary

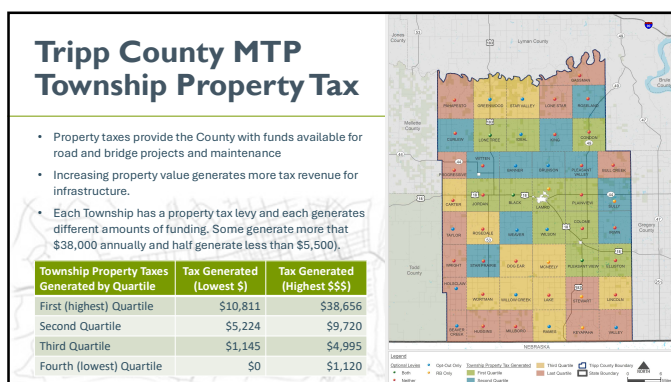
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[Take Survey](#)

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 - SDDOT
 - Katrina Burckhard, SDDOT Project Manager (Katrina.Burckhard@state.sd.us)
 - Consultant Team
 - Jesse Poore, AICP, FHU Consultant Project Manager (Jesse.Poore@fhueng.com)
- TrippCountyMTP.com

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Question 3: *How many drivers live at your primary residence?*

A significant portion, accounting for 55.5%, reported that two drivers reside in their primary residence. Additionally, 20.4% of respondents mentioned having three drivers living in their primary residence and 14.1% of stated that their primary residence accommodates more than three drivers. **This data underscores the prevalence of households with multiple drivers, reflecting a diverse range of living arrangements and transportation needs within the surveyed population.**

Question 4: *For an average week, how many miles are travelled by drivers at your primary residence?*

Drivers who travel between 100 to 200 miles represent 37.9% of responses. The next most common distance traveled falls between 200 to 400 miles, accounting for 32.1% of people surveyed. Additionally, about 20% of responses indicated they travel more than 400 miles from their primary residence in a week. Only 10% of responses reported traveling less than 100 miles from their primary residence during an average week. **This data reinforces that many residents of Tripp County rely on the local transportation network for most of their weekly needs while some residents travel greater distances for trips than some.**

Question 5: *Does your household use public transportation, including school bus services?*

Among the responses received, a majority of 97.4% (186) indicated that their households do not make use of public transportation or school bus services. In contrast, only 2.6% (5) respondents reported utilizing these services. **These results highlight a significant reliance on personal transportation methods within the County. The data also strongly reflects limited access to public transportation options within the County although school districts do provide bussing for many households which may not be reflected fully in the surveys received.**

Survey Section 2: Perception of Roads and Bridges

The second section of the survey included six (6) questions about perceptions of roads and bridges based on their purpose to support two criteria: the County overall and the Township respondents live.

Questions 6 and 7 asked respondents to rate the importance of roadways to determine if roadway types serve the needs of Tripp County drivers differently. Table I summarizes the average score roadways were rated (1-highest, 6-lowest).

Table 1. Roadway Type Importance to County and Township

Roads Types	Tripp County	Township
US Highway 18 & 183	2.1	2.5
State Highway 44, 49 & 53	2.5	2.7
County Paved Road	2.3	2.5
County Unpaved Roads	2.6	2.2
Township/Local Unpaved Roads	3.2	2.8
Municipal Paved Streets	3.6	3.6

Question 6: FOR TRIPP COUNTY RESIDENTS:

Which type of roadways are most important to support the needs of all Tripp County residents, landowners, and businesses?

In Tripp County, highways and paved County roads are most important to residents, landowners, and businesses (See **Table 1**)?

The weight given to US Highway 18 & 183 and County Paved Roads demonstrates the purpose of these paved roads is to serve all Tripp County residents, landowners, and business directly or indirectly. Conversely, while important, County Unpaved Roads, Township/Local Unpaved Roads, Municipal Paved Streets do not serve all residents, landowners, and business as much.

Question 7: FOR MY TOWNSHIP:

*Which type of roadways are most important to support the needs of residents, landowners, and businesses located in the Township of my primary residence (See **Table 1**)?*

When respondents were asked to consider roadway from the perspective of their own Township, a different order of importance was determined. Looking from the township perspectives, **County Unpaved Roads represent the most important roadway type. Most residents must use a county unpaved road to navigate from a primary residence or farm to reach their destination or a paved road. This survey result reinforces the input that has maintaining an efficient and reliable county unpaved roadway network is an important outcome of this planning process.**

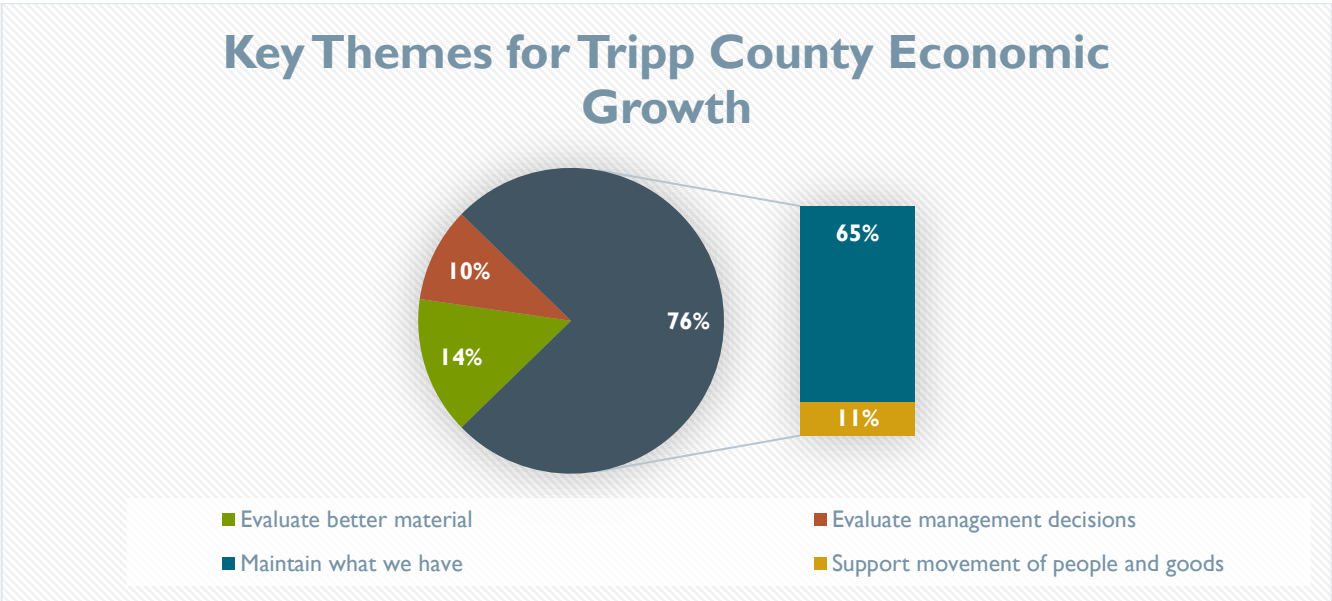
Question 8: *How would you rate the ability of roadways today to support the future economic growth potential of Tripp County?*

Road infrastructure influences economic growth potential for Tripp County's development strategy. The perception of current roadways and their potential impact on economic expansion was important to consider. The current roadways are rated Poor by 44.5% (85) of surveys and an additional 41.4% (79) rated roadways as Fair for fostering future economic growth. Of all responses, approximately 14.1% (27) believe the roadway network is Good or Great to support future economic growth. **Tripp County MTP Study Advisory Team has identified economic development as one important need for the Master Transportation Plan to address. This survey response indicates that infrastructure investment policies may need to be changed from current conditions to begin resolving the issue.**

Question 9: *Can you add a description to explain your perspective?*

Open ended responses to clarify answers given to Question 8 ranged in focus and tone considerably. **Figure 1** summarized the top four comment themes representing 86% of responses. The 133 economic growth comments received were carefully reviewed and organized in a manner that provides clear direction for policy and program decisions that the planning process should strongly consider. Most comments (55.5%) received indicated that Tripp County needs to do everything reasonable to better maintain the infrastructure that exists today. Many recommendations were offered such as increasing the number and training of qualified staff, improving the quality of materials used, keeping paved roads paved, and doing more to provide safe and reliable gravel roads. Very few responses to the question commented on economic growth specifically, but the prevailing inference is that economic growth will be prevented without better maintaining what the County currently has.

Figure 1 **Economic Growth Key Themes**



Question 10: *How would you rate the ability of roadways to support the essential needs of drivers?* (See **Table 2**)

The question explored how well roadways meet drivers' essential needs for residents of the Township (their neighbors) they live in and for their primary residence. No definition was provided for the term “essential,” which allowed responses to reflect on what is essential to their needs. Values in Table 2 are presented individually and as groups Great to Good and Fair to Poor. Ratings are similar when grouped, while distinctions can be seen in individual ratings based on the focus of the response.

For the essential needs of the Township, a large portion of responses (45.0%) rated essential support as 'Fair' with substantial numbers also opting for 'Good' (29.8%) or 'Poor' (20.9%). The essential needs met for primary residences reflect how roadways impact individuals from a first person point of view. In this view, responses were more likely to rating roadways as Poor (27.7%). **These findings indicate that the Master Transportation Plan recommendations must address ways to improve the essential daily driving needs of residents and their neighbors.**

Table 2. Roadway Ability to Support Essential Needs

Rating Ability	My Township		My Primary Residence	
Great	3.6%	33.4%	7.3%	31.9%
Good	29.8%		24.6%	
Fair	45.0%	65.9%	38.7%	66.4%
Poor	20.9%		27.7%	
I'm not Sure	0.00%		0.52%	

Question 11: *Can you add a description to explain your perspective?*

The state of roadways supporting essential driver needs represented various responses that fit within five categories related to perceived inadequacies including Gravel Surface, Maintenance Standards, Rain and Snow Response, Funding, and Labor. County roads are often highlighted as areas of concern, with degradation noted over time. Limited funding and labor forces, especially for townships, present obstacles to effective maintenance. This leads to a lack of consistent or reliable snow removal, wash boards, potholes, and unsafe driving conditions during inclement weather. While some municipalities, like the City of Winner, boast relatively better road conditions, others, like Colome, suffer from streets in need of repair. Paved roads, when present, may suffer from numerous potholes and uneven lanes, posing safety risks for drivers. **The survey responses bring to light the scale of the challenge Tripp County and Townships face to maintain gravel and paved roads. There is broad awareness of the extent of the issue as well as one of the largest challenges. Gravel quality and the funding to deliver and maintain it is a priority for this planning process to address.**

Survey Section 3. Road Conditions Assessment

The third section asked five (5) questions to consider assessment of the paved and unpaved roads in the County.

Questions 12 and 14 asked respondents to indicate what concerns they have about the assessed condition of paved and unpaved roads. **Table 3** summarizes the response of concerns for each surface type.

Table 3. Paved/Unpaved Roads Concerns

Concern Surface Type	Safety	Surface Condition	Route Continuity	Bridge Condition	None/ Skipped
Paved (150 responses)	39.3%	75.3%	14.0%	24.0%	21.5% (41)
Unpaved (178 responses)	53.4%	89.3%	17.4%	2.8%	6.8% (13)

Question 12: *Do you have any specific concerns about the PAVED roads in Tripp County? US Highway 18 and 183, and State Highway 44, 49, and 53.*

Survey responses (150 of 191) indicated multiple concerns exist regarding the condition of paved roads within Tripp County. Three out of every four responses emphasized surface conditions (75.3%) and two out of every five include safety (39.3%) as an assessed concern. Of the surveys submitted, 41 reflect no concern for paved roadways.

Question 13: *Please share your paved road concerns and location as appropriate.*

The condition of paved roads in Tripp County, including US Highway 18 and 183, as well as State Highways 44, 49, and 53 varies. Concerns on US Highways were limited mostly to safety at intersections through Winner and Colome. State Highways presented concerns related to safety based on narrow shoulders and steep drop-offs. The two-way stop-controlled intersection at State Highway 44 with 49 was also a concern. The pavement condition of Highway 49 was listed frequently as a concern. One comment recommended that the State renew the effort to extend Highway 53 to Nebraska border. Bridges on southern end of State Highway 53 and Hamil Reservoir bridge crossing on Highway 49 were specific locations to consider. In addition to US and State Highways, many survey comments were critical of the degrading condition of the county paved roads, specifically North County Road, South County Road, and Rahn Lake Road (296th St) received comments about the crumbling roadway. **The responses to this question highlight a need for the plan that supports safety improvements on State Highways and pavement maintenance plans that enhance the roadways instead of allowing them to be converted to gravel.**

Question 14: *Do you have any specific concerns about the UNPAVED county roads in Tripp County? Do not reference Township/Local roads.*

Input about unpaved county roads was more pronounced with 28 additional surveys providing answers to this question than for paved roadways. Surface condition of unpaved county roads is a concern for nine (9) out of ten responses and more than half of surveys included safety as a concern as well. On the topics of route continuity and bridge condition, there is much less public concern than for addressing surface condition and safety. **When considering alternatives, responses to this question highlight that tradeoffs that prioritize fewer, well maintained county roads may be acceptable if the distance to the destination is somewhat longer.**

Question 15: *Please share your unpaved road concerns and location as appropriate.*

Survey responses regarding unpaved roads in Tripp County highlight various concerns with maintenance (70) and materials (17) standing out significantly (**Table 4**) from the 109 comments received. Responses emphasize the significant and widespread concern about the condition of unpaved roads, grading frequency and methods, as well as the quality of gravel materials used to maintain road quality. Other concerns were far less prominent with five (5) or less comments. These concerns included management of road ditches, management oversight of priorities and decision making, and hazardous driving conditions caused by improper road grading, washouts, and potholes. Concerns extend to specific locations such as 282nd Street and 291st Street, which are characteristic of difficult travel conditions after rain. Insufficient gravel, management of drainage causing flooding after heavy rains, saturated subgrades, and dangerous conditions during wet weather were identified. **Public sentiment is clearly focused on the need for solutions that will ensure unpaved roads are maintained to a standard that is reliable and minimizes the wear and tear on vehicles. Maintenance standards, maintenance plans, maintenance training, and maintenance funding are all part of supporting this need.**

Question 16: *What more should Tripp County do to support essential needs of all Township/Local Roads?*

While it is easier to point out problems with the roadways (Question 15), identifying a list of potential solutions was also easily achieved through the survey. Survey recommendations regarding unpaved roads in Tripp County highlight various options to consider with two themes that stand out significantly (**Table 4**) from the 133 comments received. To enhance support for essential needs of all Township/Local Roads in Tripp County, respondents have provided several recommendations. These include placing **focus on staffing**,

management, and training and establishing maintenance standards in the plan that staff are accountable to follow. **Difficult decisions may be needed regarding the sources of gravel used for unpaved roads.** The durability of the current materials appears to be a fatal flaw resulting in quickly degraded surface, dust, and washboards. The plan will do well to **ensure a framework is communicated for the equitable funding and maintenance of all roads**; special accommodations for roads should not be provided beyond the agreed design and maintenance standards. Increasing funding may not be sufficient if different materials, staffing, and training are not provided, but **no improvement can be expected without addressing current methods and levels of funding.** Other proposals include investing in snow removal equipment, employing experienced contractors for road maintenance, and improving management efficiency.

Table 4. Roadway Ability to Support Essential Needs

Comments	Themes
27 to 38	Improve staffing quantity and quality with additional resources and training, Establish and follow standards for maintenance of unpaved roadways
15 to 16	Use more durable materials for gravel roads, Increase funding to provide adequate maintenance
6 to 8	Support agriculture and higher traffic demands, Improve snow maintenance, Provide equitable access and maintenance, Change jurisdiction authority to improve maintenance
1 to 2	Reliable communication, Add paved roads, Address culvert design and drainage

Question 17: *Please rate the level of safety you perceive while driving personal vehicles on Tripp County roads. Which best describes your experience?*

The survey findings regarding the safety of driving on Tripp County roads reflect two strong points of view (**Table 5**). Approximately one third of responses rate their experience as Somewhat Safe (33.7%), almost the same amount (34.8%) rate their experience as Somewhat Unsafe. A portion of respondents (20.9%) remained unsure or neutral about their experience, indicating the complexity of evaluating safety perceptions. Combining these responses with comments received for questions 14 and 16, **it is reasonable to conclude that travelers that feel somewhat unsafe or very unsafe would support maintenance standards and materials used on heavily travelled, unpaved roads as a positive step to take.**

Table 5. Level of Safety

level of safety	Respondents	Percentage
Very Safe	10	5.3%
Somewhat Safe	63	33.7%
Unsure/Neutral	39	20.9%
Somewhat Unsafe	65	34.8%
Very Unsafe	10	5.3%

Question 18: *Consider the list of potential Issues and Needs that can be addressed by this plan. Please select the most important topic that you want this plan to address.*

Eight potential issues and needs were available to select from. These potential issues and needs were developed based on initial input from the Study Advisory Team. Three issues and needs significantly rose to the top of the list of the responses (**Table 6**). **The other five issues and needs will be considered**

secondary to the master transportation plan providing for design and maintenance standards, roadway project prioritization, and safety.

Table 6. Potential Issues and Needs

Issues and Needs	Respondents	Percentage
Population base and changes	7	3.7%
Programmatic sources and amounts	1	0.5%
Design and maintenances standards	63	33.0%
Economy and adoptability to market opportunity	5	2.6%
Roadway project prioritization	54	28.3%
Bridge project prioritization	2	1.1%
Safety	44	23.0%
Active transportation	7	3.7%

Survey Section 4. Transportation Funding Priorities

Final five (5) transportation survey questions ask for respondents' input about funding.

Question 19: *If presented with choice between alternatives, what cost-saving measures do you believe are most beneficial for Tripp County to achieve long-term sustainable growth and prosperity?*

The intended purpose of this question was to identify strategies that would address needs and issues of the County without changing available funding amounts. Cost saving measures would allow more focus on some needs while reducing the cost expended toward other needs. Based on survey responses (**Table 7**), one out of every four responses did not have a preference to share. According to the survey, the most favored approach for achieving long-term sustainable growth and prosperity in Tripp County involves capping the maximum number of unpaved county road miles meeting state design standards. These are the Primary and Secondary County Roads which currently do not have a minimum standard in place to enforce.

Based on comments provided with this survey, **the public is very concerned that the available resources are not sufficient to effectively maintain all unpaved county roads currently. Reducing the number of County Primary and Secondary roads could help better maintain fewer miles with better maintenance schedules and materials.** While 20.9% favored alternative measures not listed in the survey, no opportunity in the survey was provided to offer other suggestions. Based on comments provided elsewhere in the survey, increasing funds available for maintenance, implement strategy for low water crossing on some small structures, and contracting out more maintenance to townships could be envisioned as possible cost-saving measures. **The most difficult, but important outcome of this planning process will be to update the framework for the County Primary and Secondary Road network that provides equitable access and maintenance for residents.**

Table 7. Cost-Saving Measures

Issues and Needs	Respondents	Percentage
Convert paved roads to gravel roads for lower-volume County roads that have reached the end of their useful life.	25	13.4%
Reduce the number of bridges and large culverts by removing low priority bridges that have reached the end of their useful life.	18	9.6%
Cap the maximum amount of Unpaved County Roadway miles that meet the State Design Standards and focus preservation and maintenance on priority corridors identified by this planning process.	59	31.6%
Other alternatives not listed above.	39	20.9%
I don't have a preference to share.	46	24.6%

Question 20: *Please select from the following options to describe your perception of how important it is that County and Township taxes rates (mill levy) are adequate to ensure County Roads and Bridges are maintained according to State standards.*

This question was asked to evaluate if public perception supports the idea that funding levels must be able to support the maintenance needs of the Tripp County roads and bridges. According to 184 responses (**Table 8**), survey results indicate 81.0% agree or strongly agree that it is important for County and Township tax rates (mill levy) to be adequate to ensure that County Roads and Bridges are maintained according to State standards. However, there is a notable portion of respondents, comprising 14.1%, who disagree that tax rates should be updated for this purpose. **The Master Transportation Plan can provide a clear forecast budget (revenue and expenses) for construction and maintenance through 2045. By doing so, the portion that will be funded by local taxes has strong support based on survey responses.**

Table 8. Tax Importance rates (mill levy) to Roads & Bridges

Rate	Respondents	Percentage
Strongly agree	29	15.8%
Agree	120	65.2%
Disagree	26	14.1%
Strongly disagree	9	4.9%

Question 21: *Please select from the following options to describe your perception of how important it is for all Townships to equitably share in the costs required to ensure County Roads and Bridges are maintained according to State standards.*

The amount of property taxes that are generated by each Townships varies significantly across Tripp County because the mil levy and the value of property is significantly different across Tripp County. County roads and bridges serve the County needs primarily as well as local needs within the Township it is located. If county roads and bridges are to meet State standards, the County must equitably collect revenue and manage the expenses related to construction and maintenance throughout Tripp County. County roads and bridges that do not serve a County purpose, may exacerbate the current challenge of achieving minimum maintenance standards and cost of durable materials. The 186 completed survey responses (**Table 9**) reflect 68.3%

agreement or strong agreement that equitable sharing of costs is needed among all Townships to maintain County Roads and Bridges to State standards. Based on survey results and comments for previous questions, it is clear that tension exists between some Townships based on the lack of consensus about spending maintenance funds on County Primary roads that do not serve a County-wide purpose. **The Master Transportation Plan can clarify the equitable distribution of costs for County Roads and Bridges, but ongoing work will be needed for developing adequate funding for township roads as well.**

Table 9. Equitable share cost

Rate	Respondents	Percentage
Strongly agree	29	15.6%
Agree	98	52.7%
Disagree	41	22.0%
Strongly disagree	18	9.7%

Question 22: *Rate the following transportation project types in order of importance to Tripp County (1 is Highest to 8 is Lowest)*

The Master Transportation Plan will propose projects that support the issues and needs of Tripp County. According to the survey, respondents prioritized transportation project types for Tripp County, ranking them from most to least important (**Table 10**). The highest average ranked project type (1.74) will bring existing roads up to higher maintenance standards. This response is consistent with other survey question responses and comments. Bringing existing roadways up to minimum State Standards represents the second highest average rating (1.90). Intersection Safety projects at County Paved Roads or State Highways and Corridor Safety projects on County Paved or Unpaved Roads round out the top four priorities based on survey responses. **The Master Transportation Plan will provide the guidelines needed for maintenance and design standards that include safety needed for interactions and corridors so that prioritization and funding levels can be adjusted to support them.**

Table 10. Transportation project type priorities

Project Types	Ratings (Highest to Lowest)
Existing Road Improvement to higher maintenance standard	1.74
Existing Road Improvement to State Standard	1.90
Intersection Safety project at County Paved Road or State Highway	2.88
Corridor Safety project on County Paved or Unpaved Road	2.95
Consolidating redundant County Unpaved Roadways	3.54
Other	3.72
Bus/Transit Services	4.55
Bicycle/Pedestrian Facilities	4.62

Question 23: *What is the most important outcome that this planning process will have on Tripp County's future in 2045?*

The Master Transportation Plan must direct steady progress for the next 20 years. The needs and issues identified through public input indicate the need for programmatic policies, right sizing the County road network, and prioritization of projects. The survey results (**Table 11**) highlight the most crucial outcome anticipated from the planning process for Tripp County's future in 2045. The majority of respondents (62.5%) reaffirm that standardizing maintenance for County roads and highways is the most important outcome. Additionally, 17.1% of respondents emphasized the significance of streamlining funding to accomplish more projects efficiently. **Questions about priorities were asked multiple times throughout the survey. When considering long-term outcomes, the greatest progress may be experienced and supported by standardizing maintenance by addressing methods, materials, staffing, and funding.**

Table 11. Outcomes on the planning process

Outcomes	Respondents	Percentage
Clarify projects that are completed	6	3.2%
Streamline funding to accomplish the most projects	32	17.1%
Standardize the design of County roads and highway	14	7.5%
Standardize maintenance of County roads and highways	115	62.5%
Support economic growth of the County	20	10.7%

Question 24: *How did you learn about this online survey?*

The project team used multiple methods of communication to encourage public participation and completion of the Phase I survey. Every mailing address in Tripp County received a postcard with the project website link and a QR code for quick navigation. The survey question allowed multiple options to be selected for the response to Question 24. The amount of responses that indicated Word of Mouth (48.1%) demonstrates a significant contribution of grass roots governance where residents talk to each other about what is going on and about being part of influencing changes. Most responses to the Other option (19.3%) indicated that they learned of the survey from a text message sent by a member of the Study Advisory Team or through social media sharing which are other forms of Word of Mouth. **The amount and detail of survey input has been significant. The purpose of the Phase I survey was to collect information that can guide decision making and direct the information that is reflected in the alternatives considered for the Master Transportation Plan. The public anticipates hearing from the Study Advisory Team about how their input will be used.**

Table 12. Communicating list

Postcard	Flyer	Newspaper	Word of Mouth	Project Website	Other
16.0%	3.2%	5.3%	48.1%	8.0%	19.3%