

UPPER GREAT PLAINS TRANSPORTATION INSTITUTE CHANGE OF ADMINISTRATIVE AUTHORITY STUDY - BACKGROUND MEMORANDUM

Section 17 of House Bill No. 1020 ([Appendix A](#)) directs the Legislative Management to study the feasibility of placing the Upper Great Plains Transportation Institute under the administrative authority of the Department of Transportation. The study must identify potential efficiencies, potential issues, and current services or benefits provided to the Upper Great Plains Transportation Institute by North Dakota State University.

UPPER GREAT PLAINS TRANSPORTATION INSTITUTE

The Upper Great Plains Transportation Institute (UGPTI) was created by the Legislative Assembly in 1967 to foster a better understanding of transportation's role in the economy. North Dakota Century Code Chapter 54-53 ([Appendix B](#)) established UGPTI to be administered by and in conjunction with the North Dakota State University of Agriculture and Applied Science and this chapter establishes a transportation council to serve in an advisory capacity. The President and administration of the North Dakota State University of Agriculture and Applied Science are responsible for the selection of personnel for and the administration of the institute.

The Upper Great Plains Transportation Institute has the following organizational goals:

- Research mission to conduct applied and advanced research in highway, transit, rail, air, and multimodal transportation to address the critical issues of the state and region and to promote safe and efficient freight, passenger, and personal transportation.
- Educational mission to educate the transportation workforce of tomorrow through multidisciplinary curricula that focus on transportation economics, management, infrastructure planning, mobility, and supply chain logistics.
- Workforce development mission to improve the skills and knowledge of the existing workforce through technical and managerial training and the transfer of research results to practitioners.

The Upper Great Plains Transportation Institute is involved in the following 10 program areas:

1. Advanced Traffic Analysis Center - The primary role is to provide support to decisionmakers who are responsible for planning, operating, and funding transportation systems at the local, regional, and state level.
2. Agriculture, Energy and Industrial Freight Center - The primary role is to conduct economic analysis, transportation planning, and network analysis to improve the competitiveness of the region's producers and businesses through enhanced transportation, supply chain management and logistics.
3. Center for Surface Mobility Applications and Real-time Simulation environments - The center's purpose is to:
 - a. Develop new technologies, signal processing, and information processing methods;
 - b. Evaluate existing and emerging technologies;
 - c. Demonstrate innovative applications in transportation;
 - d. Promote knowledge dissemination and technology transfer; and
 - e. Train professionals on new methods.
4. Department of Transportation Support Center (DOTSC) - Established in November 2000 when North Dakota State University (NDSU), through UGPTI, established a partnership with the North Dakota Department of Transportation (NDDOT). This partnership was created to add value to transportation management in the state of North Dakota. The center's mission is to provide engineering/technical/management analysis and support to transportation managers ensuring the safe and efficient movement of people and commerce.
5. Mountain-Plains Consortium (MPC) - The program's theme is "Transportation Infrastructure and Operations to Support Sustainable Energy Development and the Safe Movement of People and Goods." The Upper Great Plains Transportation Institute is the lead institution of the consortium, which is a university transportation center, sponsored by the United States Department of Transportation. The consortium includes Colorado State University, South Dakota State University, University of Colorado Denver, University of Denver, University of Utah, Utah State University, and University of Wyoming.

6. North Dakota Local Technical Assistance Program - The North Dakota Local Technical Assistance Program services provided by DOTSC encourage and enhance the exchange of highway transportation-related technology and information. Local units of government utilize DOTSC as a source for technical assistance and information, educational resources, and workforce development. The Department of Transportation Support Center is actively involved in research implementation through progressive and cost-effective transfer of technology and technical assistance within North Dakota's transportation community. The North Dakota Local Technical Assistance Program is operated in partnership between NDSU and NDDOT as part of the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) Local Technical Assistance Program. Funding is provided by FHWA, NDDOT, the North Dakota insurance reserve fund, and NDSU.
7. Rural Transportation Safety and Security Center - The primary role is to promote and enhance the region's transportation safety and security through research, education, and outreach, in a partnership with stakeholders. It is a collaborative effort between UGPTI and NDDOT, with funding from FHWA.
8. Small Urban and Rural Transit Center - The Small Urban and Rural Transit Center's purpose is to increase the mobility of small urban and rural residents through improved public transportation. The Small Urban and Rural Transit Center's goals are to:
 - a. Enhance public transportation systems in small urban and rural communities;
 - b. Improve accessibility and mobility in small urban and rural communities;
 - c. Foster and facilitate information exchange among transit stakeholders and decisionmakers in public transportation; and
 - d. Contribute to the body of knowledge in transit.
9. Transportation Learning Network - The Transportation Learning Network is governed by a committee representing each of the participating state DOTs and MPC universities. The Transportation Learning Network provides access to information and expertise not readily available to transportation professionals in the region. The Transportation Learning Network identifies, schedules, distributes, and warehouses training for its members.
10. Transportation Safety Systems Center - The Transportation Safety Systems Center is based out of Lakewood, Colorado. The center has been in operation since 1996, and is primarily responsible for the development and maintenance of software used by state and federal safety specialists nationwide. In addition to software development for safety enforcement programs, the center is also extensively involved with safety-related research and analysis. The research is directed toward potential improvements to the prioritization algorithms used to better target enforcement efforts, as well as toward enhancements to the various software programs.

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES PROVIDED BY NORTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY TO THE UPPER GREAT PLAINS TRANSPORTATION INSTITUTE

North Dakota State University provides the following support services at no cost to UGPTI:

- Office space of 11,392 square feet (8,375 square feet in the Quentin Burdick Building and 3,017 square feet in Hastings Hall);
- Facilities maintenance and other operating costs associated with the office space;
- Information technology support for all computer hardware, software licenses, network connections, and telephone maintenance;
- Grant review and submission expertise;
- Grant management support for contract language and submission requirements of federal, state, and private sponsors;
- Authorized representative for all UGPTI contract negotiations; and
- Financial reporting to federal agencies for grants received by UGPTI.

2015 HOUSE BILL NO. 1020

In 2015 House Bill No. 1020, the Legislative Assembly approved a \$23 million budget (\$4.8 million general fund, \$12.2 million federal funds, and \$6 million other funds), a decrease of \$2 million from the 2013-15 biennium and authorized 54.98 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions, an increase of 1.23 FTE positions for UGPTI for the 2015-17 biennium.

PROPOSED STUDY PLAN

The following is a proposed study plan for the committee's consideration:

1. Receive information from UGPTI regarding potential efficiencies, potential issues, and current services or benefits provided to UGPTI by NDSU.
2. Receive information from NDSU regarding potential efficiencies, potential issues, and current services or benefits provided to UGPTI by NDSU.
3. Receive information from NDDOT regarding potential efficiencies, potential issues, and benefits that could be provided to UGPTI by NDDOT.
4. Determine the potential effect, if any, on programs and grant availability if the institute is administered by NDDOT rather than NDSU.
5. Develop recommendations and prepare any necessary legislation.
6. Prepare a final report.

ATTACH:2