

Common Cents

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Dave's Two Cents

One question that I hear from many Department employees is “aren’t the Statewide Capital Investment Strategy (SCIS) and Asset Management (AM) the same thing?”

It’s an excellent question. And the answer is no, they are not the same. But I can see why people ask this question, as it’s reasonable to assume that the SCIS and AM overlap each other.

The SCIS is used to develop investment options for various categories of transportation initiatives that are primarily based upon goals, objectives and performance measures. It is, first and foremost, an investment strategy. It provides strategic direction for the development of our annual capital program.

AM is conceptually broader than the SCIS, although the SCIS is an integral part to any robust AM program. AM is concerned with the entire life cycle of transportation decisions – planning, programming, construction, maintenance and operations. It is policy-driven and performance-based, but equally important is how data is developed, and how it is used for those decisions. AM covers a broad spectrum of principles and practices and drives the development of the SCIS.

I encourage employees to regularly visit the Department’s Asset Management Intranet Page (<http://njdotintranet.dot.state.nj.us/about/asset/>) to learn more. And thanks to the good work of Dick Dunne, Pat Ott, and Sue Gresavage, we have added presentations (<http://njdotintranet.dot.state.nj.us/about/asset/>) regarding the Department’s Bridge Management System, Safety Management System, and Pavement Management System.

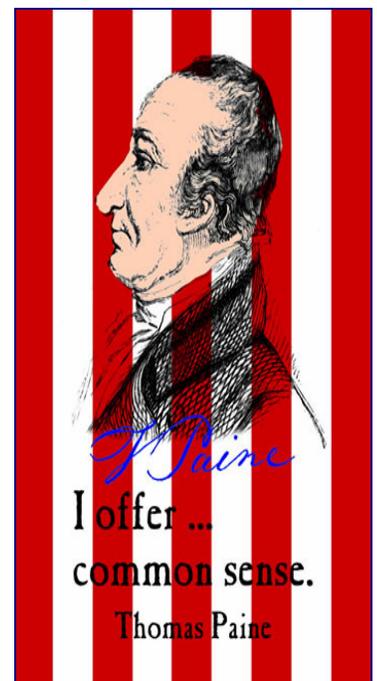
Steering Committee proposes six AM goals for NJDOT

The Department’s Asset Management Steering Committee approved six overall asset management goals for the Department on June 3, 2008.

“Asset management is about good business practices, and this is something that cuts across all divisions,” said Committee Chairman Steve Dilts. “These are reasonable and realistic goals for our agency, and our task will be to ensure timely implementation.”

“It’s important to the Committee’s work that we articulate a strategic direction for the Department,” said Committee Member Rick Hammer. “Attaining these goals will take varying degrees of time and effort, but each will reap dividends for the Department in how we do business.”

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Steering Committee proposes six AM goals for NJDOT.... continued

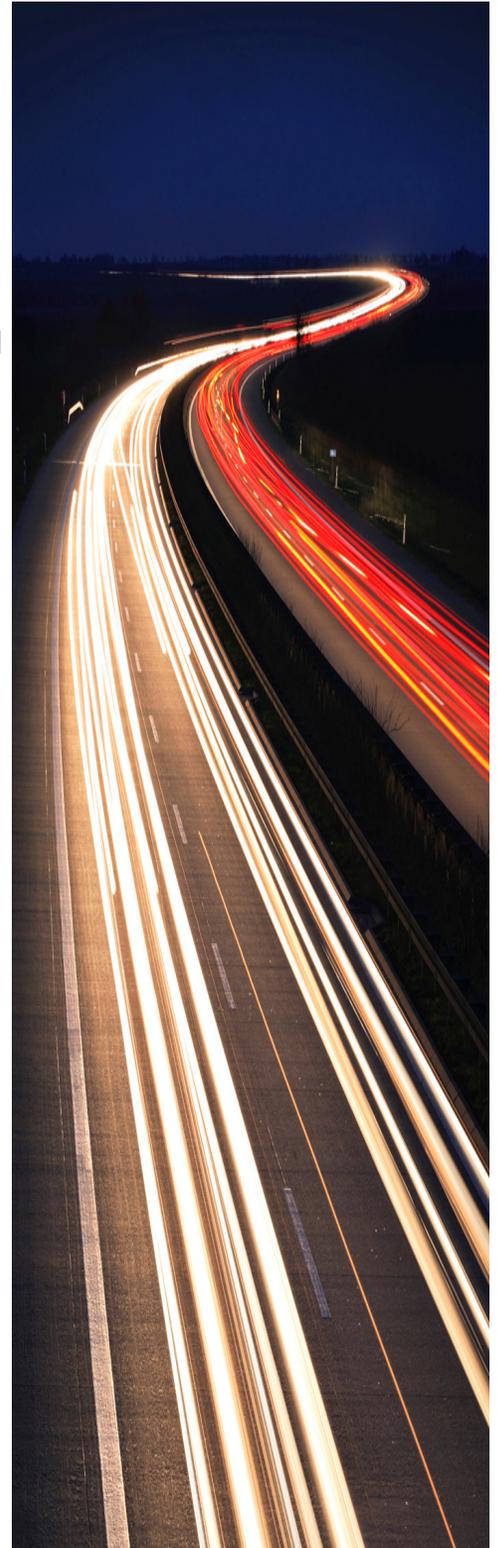
The six goals are:

- Institute a Departmental Asset Management Plan that articulates existing asset condition levels or system performance and establishes steps to maintain or improve them.
- Establish an easily accessible, on line, one-stop location to access data on asset conditions.
- Have a project delivery pipeline that contains the right quantity and mix of projects.
- Make project decisions that are data driven, but decided in close collaboration and coordination with Department staff and external stakeholders.
- Ensure that the Department's management systems support its decision-making needs.
- Foster greater knowledge and understanding of Asset Management best practices at NJDOT through educational opportunities and internal communications.

"Our next steps will be to develop specific objectives for each goal," said Committee Member Dave Kuhn. "And equally important will be to develop and meet a schedule for each one."

"However beautiful the strategy, you should occasionally look at the results."

— Winston Churchill



Crafting A Strategy



When it comes to advancing a Statewide Capital Investment Strategy (SCIS), Bob Harris is the Department's point person.

"The SCIS requires a great deal of teamwork," Harris said. "But there is always a sense of achievement when you're prioritizing, planning and programming transportation investments for safety, congestion relief, and bridge and roadway preservation."

The SCIS is a decision-making tool used to develop investment options for transportation program categories based on goals, objectives, and performance measures. It provides strategic direction in the formulation of the annual capital program, and determines the long-term effective-

ness of current and proposed capital programs in achieving statewide goals."

Under the direction of Commissioner Kolluri, it became a SCIS involving the NJDOT, the N.J. Turnpike, the South Jersey Transportation Authority, NJ TRANSIT, the FHWA, and the state's three Metropolitan Planning Organizations.

"Last year, it became a truly integrated investment strategy," Harris said. "As a result, the SCIS, for the first time, included investment in common categories across agencies, rather than separate strategies for each agency. This approach provided the foundation for understanding the total state investment needs, and it fostered a collaborative approach to making the best use of transportation funding."

The results were a truly unified investment strategy, and Bob's work did not go unnoticed. "Bob did a great job pushing the process toward results, and his work really contributed to the Department's overall asset management efforts," said Dave Kuhn, Executive Director of Capital Investment Strategies. "Bob's planning background and his ability to see the big picture made the effort a true success."

The Fiscal Year 2009 SCIS process has barely ended, and Harris is already leading the effort to develop the FY 2010 SCIS. "I really enjoy working in the field of transportation, which I think is sometimes taken for granted. Everything we do affects the public's quality of life every day. Being able to work with so many different people on this effort has been terrific," Harris said.

Harris has been with NJDOT for 26 years, and is currently a Project Manager in the Division of Capital Investment Strategies.

*"What separates the talented individual
from the successful one is a lot of hard work."*

- Stephen King



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