

INTRODUCTION TO THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

The Department of Transportation Commission directs the Department of Transportation's activities concerning the implementation, construction, maintenance, and repairs of our state's transportation network. Within its scope of authority, the Commission is charged with (1) developing the long-range Statewide Transportation Plan and the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program, (2) establishing and maintaining a priority list of projects to be undertaken, (3) allocating funding from the Nonfederal Aid Highway Fund for the preservation and improvement of the existing state highway system, (4) awarding federal enhancement grants, (5) approving the Department's annual budget, (6) authorizing certain contracts, and (7) approving requests for resurfacing, installation of new signals, curb cuts on primary roads, bike lanes, and construction projects under ten million dollars. The priority list of projects and the request approvals must be made using objective and quantifiable factors.

The Commission is composed of eight commissioners, one from each of the seven congressional districts and one from the state at-large. Members of the General Assembly who are residents of a particular congressional district elect the commissioner representing that district. The Governor appoints the at-large commissioner.

Before an interested person may be elected to serve on the Commission, the candidate must be screened, investigated, and reviewed by the ten-member Joint Transportation Review Committee. The screening process allows the JTRC to evaluate each candidate's qualifications and present findings to the appropriate congressional district delegation before the election. The qualifications that the JTRC considers include, but are not limited to: whether a candidate has a baccalaureate or more advanced degree, or a background of at least five years experience in any combination of the following fields: transportation, construction, finance, law, environmental issues, management, or engineering.