

Public Safety**Projects Summary**

(\$ in thousands)

Project Title	Rank	Fund	Project Requests for State Funds			Gov's Rec	Gov's Planning Estimates	
			2026	2028	2030		2028	2030
BCA Bemidji Regional Office and Laboratory Expansion	1	GO	46,833	0	0	46,833	0	0
Total Project Requests			46,833	0	0	46,833	0	0
General Obligation Bonds (GO) Total			46,833	0	0	46,833	0	0

AT A GLANCE

- **Workforce:** Department of Public Safety (DPS) has over 2,400 employees
- **DPS operational divisions include:**
 - Alcohol and Gambling Enforcement Division (AGED)
 - Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (BCA)
 - Driver and Vehicle Services (DVS)
 - Emergency Communications Networks (ECN)
 - Homeland Security and Emergency Management (HSEM)
 - Minnesota State Patrol (MSP)
 - Office of Justice Programs (OJP)
 - Office of Pipeline Safety (OPS)
 - Office of Traffic Safety (OTS)
 - State Fire Marshal Division (SFM)
- DPS serves every resident of the state and partners with numerous public safety, governmental, and non-profit organizations

PURPOSE

The Department of Public Safety's (DPS) mission is serving all communities to build a safer Minnesota. DPS works to protect residents through activities that promote and support prevention, intervention, preparedness, response, recovery, education, and enforcement. This is accomplished with a focus on saving lives, providing efficient and effective services, maintaining public trust, and developing strong partnerships.

STRATEGIES

DPS fulfills its mission of serving all communities to build a safer Minnesota through the following strategies:

Children and Families

- Enhance safety for children and families through programs that focus on school and fire safety, teen driving, and domestic violence prevention.
- Support the Office of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Relatives as it implements solutions to reduce and end violence against Indigenous women and girls, including the Two-Spirit community.
- Support the Office of Missing and Murdered Black Women and Girls as it develops targeted strategies and interventions to support survivors and families impacted by violence against Black women and girls.
- Work to increase awareness of the needs of homeless children and families due to domestic violence.
- Work with community-based organizations on the implementation of Driver's License for All to increase equitable access to DVS information and resources.
- Support and assist administrators, faculty, and staff to help keep children safe at school through efforts by the Minnesota School Safety Center and the State Fire Marshal.

Safe and Thriving Communities

- DPS offers programs that focus on reducing deaths by firearm and violent crime by supporting the Making Minnesota Safe and Secure campaign, which has distributed nearly 80,000 free gun locks; dedicating investigative resources to support local law enforcement, including in the city of Minneapolis; leading

efforts to address street racing and car-jackings; conducting strategic traffic enforcement; and providing the critical air asset of the State Patrol helicopter making roads safer for everyone.

- DPS offers programs supporting traffic safety, such as the Towards Zero Deaths initiative and car seat safety education, and provides access to crime victim services and violence prevention and intervention programs. DPS is continuously improving efficiencies within Driver and Vehicle Services (DVS) to provide a streamlined identification card (ID) and driver's license (DL) application process, DL exams, and customer services.
- Homeland Security and Emergency Management (HSEM) helps communities prepare for and recover after disasters.
- DPS Community Affairs team engages communities around Minnesota in the following ways:
 - Visited 13 cities in summer 2024 making introductions with public libraries and community-based education programs.
 - Attended regular engagements at the consulates for Ecuador, Mexico, and El Salvador to provide information in Spanish to customers seeking safety and driver's license information.
 - Attended over 60 community events between January and September 2024.
 - Attended over 360 forums, roundtables, and community-based meetings between January - September 2024.
- State Patrol and Community Affairs collaborated to invite community members of Spanish, African, and Afghan-descent to the State Patrol Trooper Candidate School to participate in training scenarios with cadets in academy training.

Equity and Inclusion

- DPS prioritizes public engagement to inform the way the department delivers services and promotes equity and inclusion.
- Driver's License Manual distribution pilot project – 27 community partners are receiving printed manuals in multiple languages to share with community members participating in traffic safety workshops and classes to help them pass the driver's test.
- Established partnerships with statewide community-based education network reaching individuals from birth to 99 years old including: Society Women Education Leaders; school districts; leaders, principals, assistant principals, intracultural specialists; and community education such as Adult Basic Education and Early Childhood Education.
- DPS prioritizes language accessibility in communications with various communities and is developing public safety campaigns and communications that are visually and contextually inclusive and representative of Minnesota's diversity. DPS is refreshing the website for better readability, organization, accessibility, and plain language.
- DVS is committed to providing services that meet the needs of its customers. They offer in person, mail, phone, online, and kiosk services to customers to allow them to interact in multiple ways. DVS delivers communication in plain language and also allows for translation in multiple languages and engages with the community to understand and address community specific needs.
- DPS utilizes diversity and inclusion staff to provide intercultural support and education internally in order to increase DPS' internal cultural awareness to match the department's increased public engagement efforts.

Fiscal Accountability, Customer Experience, and Measurable Results

- DPS conducts an annual risk assessment to ensure fiscal accountability and measurable results for the department.
- Financial management training is provided to grantees, who are then held to high standards to ensure the proper use of state and federal dollars.

- All agency projects have measurable milestones and detailed budgets.

Minnesota's Environment

- To protect Minnesota's environment, DPS actively participates in statewide sustainability workgroups.
- DPS has taken steps to reduce paper and added electric and fuel-efficient vehicles to the department's fleet while retaining performance needs for law enforcement.
- DPS supports climate resiliency efforts by providing federal funds for projects to protect communities and the environment from the effects of a changing climate.

By leveraging the expertise of the department's diverse workforce, the Department of Public Safety improves the lives of Minnesotans by engaging with community, tribal, and government partners to promote safety, service, and justice.

The Department of Public Safety's legal authority comes from Minnesota Statutes Chapter 299A (<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/?id=299A>).

AT A GLANCE

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The Department of Public Safety administers numerous critical functions of government across a wide range of divisions from providing funds for school safety and emergency services, to fire and criminal investigations, and reducing crashes through enforcement and educational programs. The goal of the agency is to deliver empathetic, respectful, timely, and high-quality customer service, whether the interaction is on a snow-packed roadside, with a crime victim, or at a Driver and Vehicle Services counter.

Factors Impacting Facilities or Capital Programs

The Department of Public Safety has ten externally facing divisions, each of which provides services to Minnesotans. As demand for many of the services the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (BCA) provides has significantly increased, the BCA has outgrown its current space at multiple locations including the headquarters in Saint Paul and the northern regional facility in Bemidji. Even with a new Mankato Regional Office that is expected to be completed in late 2026, the BCA will still be over capacity. An expansion of the Bemidji Regional Office is the next logical step to relieve these pressures for the BCA to continue to provide critical investigative and forensic testing services for Minnesota. The demand for BCA services has never been higher. An increase in crime and a shift in crime trends over the past decade have led to an exponential rise in the need for specialized investigative and forensic services.

Ongoing local and national conversations about policing and community relationships highlight the need to build trust and ensure safe communities for all. As public safety goals evolve to meet the demands of 21st-century policing, service delivery—especially in law enforcement—must become more community-centered, inclusive, and accessible.

Self-Assessment of Agency Facilities and Assets

Advances in technology and changes in criminal behavior have made forensic evidence testing an increasingly frequent demand of the State's criminal justice system. Testing of all sexual assault kits is now required by law, DNA evidence on everything from burglary to homicide cases are required to identify suspects from current crimes to cold cases. Additionally, digital evidence, which was unheard of even a decade ago, is now the basis for charging decisions. Crime trends have shifted and increased over the last decade: methamphetamine has continued to wreak havoc in our communities along with opioid abuse, and internet crimes have added to child abuse and human trafficking cases and must be pursued as BCA continues to respond to domestic homicides statewide. DPS is seeking improvements to better meet current demands. Some examples of the increased demand for services include:

- Evidence submissions for DNA analysis have increased five times in the last 20 years
- Controlled substance submissions have more than doubled since 2010
- The amount of evidence submitted to the BCA Bemidji Laboratory has more than tripled over the past 20 years

BCA Bemidji Regional Office and Laboratory

Built in 2001 to provide equitable services and timely responses in northern Minnesota, the Bemidji Regional Office has supported the region's criminal justice efforts for over two decades. However, as service demands have grown significantly in volume and complexity, the current facility is no longer adequate. Staffing has more than doubled, and the forensic laboratory has expanded from fewer than 10 full-time employees (FTEs) to 27 FTEs, now offering services in firearms, latent prints, biology, chemistry, and crime scene response. Evidence submissions have increased from approximately 5,060 items in 2003 to over 12,000 in 2024. The integration of Rapid DNA technology, a firearms database, digital and multimedia evidence analysis, and expedited screening has further strained the limited space. Renovation and expansion are necessary to meet current and future demands and to maintain cutting-edge law enforcement capabilities in the region. The expansion project will add space and resources to meet growing demands for criminal investigations and forensic analysis in northern Minnesota, while also expanding training capacity for law enforcement and community outreach statewide.

Agency Process for Determining Capital Requests

Department leadership reviewed pressure points in agency operations that could be alleviated with facility improvements. Those pressure points included having outgrown current space, service demands, complaints from the public and business partners around locating the divisions, and security concerns.

Major Capital Projects Authorized in 2024 and 2025

BCA Southern Minnesota Regional Office and Laboratory – \$67 million

Minnesota State Patrol Headquarters (2024) - \$22.5 million

Minnesota State Patrol Headquarters (2025) – \$97.026 million

(\$ in thousands)

BCA Bemidji Regional Office and Laboratory Expansion**AT A GLANCE****2026 Request Amount:** \$46,833**Priority Ranking:** 1**Project Summary:** The Minnesota Department of Public Safety (DPS) Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (BCA) is requesting \$46.833 million in general obligation bonds to acquire land, design, construct, furnish, and equip the renovation and expansion of the Bemidji Regional Facility located in Bemidji, Minnesota.**Project Description**

This project includes renovating the 26,000 square foot Bemidji Regional Office and Forensic Science Laboratory and a 27,000 square foot expansion. The renovation and expansion project will provide additional space and resources to support the increases in demand for investigatory and laboratory analysis for criminal investigations in the northern region of Minnesota. This project will also increase available training space for use by BCA training, local law enforcement, and for informational sessions to various groups and community members. Pre-design for this renovation and expansion was completed in 2021.

Project Rationale

The BCA is the state's criminal investigative law enforcement agency providing specialized investigative assistance in complex criminal cases, forensic laboratory testing and analysis, maintenance and dissemination of criminal justice information and records, and law enforcement training to local, state, and federal partners in all 87 counties statewide.

The BCA headquarters is in St. Paul, a regional laboratory and facility location is in Bemidji, and funding for construction of a new southern regional facility in Mankato was appropriated by the Minnesota Legislature in 2025. In addition, the BCA maintains 11 investigative field offices co-located with local law enforcement across Minnesota to provide support to criminal justice partners and an evidence drop-off and limited drug testing in St. Cloud.

The Bemidji regional facility was built in 2001 with the goal to provide equitable services and response times to those served in the northern portion of the state. Over the past 24 years, this facility has provided exceptional services in support of northern Minnesota criminal justice efforts. However, the existing facility is no longer adequate to address the needs of the region as the service demands continue to increase in volume and complexity. Staffing has more than doubled since 2001, and renovation and expansion of the existing facility is needed to continue providing critical services in northern Minnesota.

BCA anticipates the new Mankato facility will be at full capacity shortly after opening with

approximately 50 employees. Despite the additional space at the new location, the BCA is also over capacity at its headquarters location by more than 150 staff. There is a critical need for the renovation and addition in Bemidji so that the BCA can continue delivering essential forensic science services.

When the Bemidji facility first opened, the forensic laboratory was staffed with less than 10 full-time employees (FTE) and has since grown to 27 FTEs who provide forensic analysis in firearms, latent prints, biology, chemistry, and crime scene response. The demand for forensic services on this laboratory has grown from approximately 5,060 items submitted in 2003 to more than 12,000 items in 2024. The addition of Rapid DNA technology, the firearms database program, and digital and multimedia evidence analysis capabilities, as well as increased expedited evidence screening services, have further challenged the limited space for staff, equipment, and specialized space.

Crime labs throughout the nation continue to experience dramatic increases in requests for forensic science services. The BCA is no exception to this upward trend and is currently experiencing large backlogs due to the number of requests and reliance on forensic evidence in criminal investigations and court proceedings. The overall demand for forensic testing has increased over the last decade. For example, the demand for DNA analysis has increased steadily every year with an overall increase of five times in the last two decades; controlled substance submissions have become larger and more complex; and requests for analysis of digital media evidence, which was unheard of ten years ago, continue to exceed current capacity.

The BCA Investigations Division currently has ten special agents and four analysts located in the Bemidji regional office. These agents work closely with all law enforcement agencies in the northern portion of the state. Currently, this office lacks an interview room, secure evidence vault, and polygraph room. There is a critical need to expand digital evidence examination, but there is no space available to expand these services. This expansion would allow specialized investigative functions such as polygraph exams, facial reconstruction, digital evidence examination, audio/video enhancement, and 3D scanner data review and preparation, to be conducted within this new facility.

With the recent formation of the Force Investigations Unit, the BCA has shifted resources to northern Minnesota to be more efficient and responsive when it's requested to investigate an officer involved shooting or use of force case. This unit should remain physically separated from local law enforcement so that there are no conflicts of interest when called upon to investigate these crimes.

The BCA is also statutorily responsible for providing law enforcement training throughout the state of Minnesota. Although the Bemidji facility has some training space, it is too small for most training classes. The pre-design planning of a renovated and expanded Bemidji facility includes a significant increase in space allotted for training activities. By expanding BCA training opportunities, the BCA would be able to accommodate local law enforcement more efficiently by significantly reducing costs associated with lodging, drive time, and duty backup coverage associated with required continuing education.

Project Timeline

Pre-design: Completed June 2021

Design: September 2026 to May 2027

Bidding and award: June 2027 to August 2027

Construction: September 2027 to August 2028

Occupancy: September 2028

Other Considerations

None.

Impact on Agency Operating Budgets

This project will add an additional 27,000 square feet of space. The projected lease rate for FY 2027 for current BCA space is \$29.45; this rate could increase once the expansion is completed. Using the existing lease rate, DPS estimates the lease costs to increase by an additional \$795,150 per year at a minimum. In addition, the Department of Administration will charge a debt service rate for the construction of the facility which will increase the BCA's operating costs at that time. Lastly, DPS estimates an additional \$200,000 one-time for lab supplies and equipment and \$100,000 in annual ongoing operating costs. It is expected that the Department of Administration will pay all utilities as part of the lease rate.

Description of Previous Appropriations

2024 Governor Recommendation - \$4.061 million

2025 Governor Recommendation - \$4.203 million

Project Contact Person

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Governor's Recommendation

The Governor recommends \$46.833 million in general obligation bonds for this request.

Public Safety

Project Detail

(\$ in thousands)

BCA Bemidji Regional Office and Laboratory Expansion

PROJECT FUNDING SOURCES

Funding Source	Six Prior Years	FY 2026	FY 2028	FY 2030
<i>State Funds Appropriated and Requested</i>				
General Obligation Bonds	\$ 0	\$ 46,833	\$ 0	\$ 0
<i>State Funds Pending</i>				
<i>Non-State Funds Already Committed</i>				
<i>Non-State Funds Pending</i>				
TOTAL	\$ 0	\$ 46,833	\$ 0	\$ 0

TOTAL PROJECT COSTS

Cost Category	Six Prior Years	FY 2026	FY 2028	FY 2030
Property Acquisition	\$ 0	\$ 571	\$ 0	\$ 0
Predesign Fees	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
Design Fees	\$ 0	\$ 3,641	\$ 0	\$ 0
Project Management	\$ 0	\$ 934	\$ 0	\$ 0
Construction	\$ 0	\$ 33,227	\$ 0	\$ 0
Relocation Expenses	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
One Percent for Art	\$ 0	\$ 208	\$ 0	\$ 0
Occupancy Costs	\$ 0	\$ 2,497	\$ 0	\$ 0
Inflationary Adjustment	\$ 0	\$ 5,755	\$ 0	\$ 0
TOTAL	\$ 0	\$ 46,833	\$ 0	\$ 0

IMPACT ON STATE OPERATING COSTS

Cost Category	FY 2026	FY 2028	FY 2030
IT Costs	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
Operating Budget Impact (\$)	\$ 0	\$ 1,990	\$ 1,790
Operating Budget Impact (FTE)	0	0	0

SOURCE OF FUNDS FOR DEBT SERVICE PAYMENTS

	Amount	Percent of Total
General Fund	\$ 46,833	100 %
User Financing	\$ 0	0 %

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

The following requirements will apply to projects after adoption of the bonding bill.

Has the project owner requesting state funds reviewed and agree to meet the applicable capital requirements listed in the “Statutory Requirements” below and in the “Capital Budget Requirements” section of the MMB Capital Budget Instruction documents?	Yes
Is this project exempt from legislative review under M.S. 16B.335 subd. 1a?	No
Predesign Review (M.S. 16B.335 subd. 3):	
Does this request include funding for predesign?	No
Has the predesign been submitted to the Department of Administration?	Yes
Has the predesign been approved by the Department of Administration?	Yes
Will the project design meet the Sustainable Building Guidelines under M.S. 16B.325?	Yes
Will the project designs meet applicable requirements and guidelines for energy conservation and alternative energy sources (M.S. 16B.335 subd. 4 and 16B.32)?	Yes
Have Information Technology Review Preconditions been met (M.S. 16B.335 subd. 5 & 6)?	Yes
Will the project comply with the targeted group purchasing requirement (M.S. 16C.16 subd. 13)?	Yes
Will the project meet public ownership requirements (M.S. 16A.695)?	Yes
Will a use agreement be required (M.S. 16A.695 subd. 2)?	No
Will program funding be reviewed and ensured (M.S. 16A.695 subd. 5)?	Yes
Will the matching funds requirements be met (M.S. 16A.86 subd. 4)?	N/A
Will the project be fully encumbered prior to the Cancellation Deadline (M.S. 16A.642): December 31, 2030?	Yes
M.S. 16A.502 and M.S. 16B.31 (2): Full Funding Required	Yes
M.S. 473.4485: Guideway Project	
Is this a Guideway Project?	No
Is the required information included in this request?	N/A