

MnDOT Metro District: Urban Freight Perspectives Project



Objectives

MnDOT's Urban Freight Perspectives Project will gather information and feedback from freight-dependent businesses along key Twin Cities transportation corridors. MnDOT staff is conducting face-to-face interviews with businesses at their facilities to learn about their priorities and concerns regarding freight movement and the metro-area transportation system. Business input will inform MnDOT's service delivery and long-range planning. During the interviews, MnDOT also will provide information about current major construction projects that will interrupt traffic flow and impact freight mobility. The first phase of this effort, currently underway now, is focused primarily on parts of the I-94 corridor, in the heart of the Metro.

Businesses

MnDOT has identified "freight districts," where freight-dependent businesses are concentrated. MnDOT staff will interview businesses in and around these zones, with a focus on manufacturers, wholesalers, and firms in the transportation and warehousing industry. These businesses generate freight and are located near five significant metro-area construction projects affecting travel on I-94, I-35W, and Highway 47 during 2018.

Interview content

Interview questions cover topics important to freight-dependent businesses, including congestion management, intersections and interchanges, safety, pavement conditions, signage, ongoing road maintenance, and communications. The businesses interviewed will have the opportunity to provide MnDOT with substantive, actionable information about their priority transportation issues and needs. MnDOT staff also will share information about the five significant construction projects and about how businesses can get updated information on each of those projects throughout the construction season.

Background

The Urban Freight Perspectives Project is a metro-area adaptation of MnDOT's Manufacturers' Perspectives (MP) Project, carried out over the last few years in Greater Minnesota. MnDOT has completed one of these projects each year since 2013, in MnDOT Districts 8, 4, 2, 1 and 6, meeting with over 400 businesses across the state. The goals are to:

- Understand the business-specific freight transportation requirements of traded industry clusters – made up of businesses that sell to customers outside of Minnesota and provide stable, higher-paying jobs.
- Identify low-cost/high-value opportunities for making Minnesota's transportation system more responsive to freight needs, focusing on infrastructure, maintenance, communication, permitting, and policy.
- Build multi-organizational, long-term relationships to support economic strength regionally and statewide, working with economic development staff, county and city engineers, other state agencies, and the University of Minnesota.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, please contact Laurie Ryan at (651) 366-3658 or Laurie.Ryan@state.mn.us or visit the project website: www.dot.state.mn.us/ofrw/mps.html.