

# Minnesota Freight Advisory Committee (MFAC) February 19, 2010

## Meeting Summary

### **I. Minnesota Comprehensive Statewide Freight and Passenger Rail Plan**

*Dave Christianson – Freight Planning and Development (Mn/DOT)*

The Plan provides guidance for rail initiatives and investments in the state, and is included in the State Transportation Plan. Develop an overall vision for effective utilization of the state's rail network and its future development. It was adopted February 2010. The Plan addresses the following areas:

- Develop an overall vision for effective utilization of the state's rail network and its future development
- More clearly define private and public sector roles, including the role of the State of Minnesota, and the integration of those roles into the planning, coordination, and use of rail in the state's transportation system.
- Identify priority rail corridors, programs, and projects that will offer effective improvements or expansion for passenger travel in and out of Minnesota.
- Enhance freight access to markets and efficient, competitive services to rail customers, as well as improvements to overall freight flows and logistics.
- Develop practical and usable performance measures and investment guidelines for public development of rail assets and services.
- Be compliant with federal planning and funding requirements in order to expedite the participation of Minnesota initiatives in national programs and resources.

Link to Mr. Christianson's presentation:

<http://www.dot.state.mn.us/ofrw/PDF/PresChristianson20100219.pdf>

Link to State Rail Plan Web Site: <http://www.dot.state.mn.us/planning/railplan/index.html>

### **II. Panel on Transportation Legislative Issues for 2010**

*Moderated by Scott Peterson – Government Affairs Director, (Mn/DOT)*

*Margaret Donahoe, Legislative Director, Minnesota Transportation Alliance* – Discussed their transportation bonding request for \$75M for local bridges, \$100M for local roads which in routes of regional significant and freight corridors, rural road safety and dollars for the trunk highway corridor account.

Link to Ms. Donahoe's presentation:

<http://www.dot.state.mn.us/ofrw/PDF/PresDonahoe20100219.pdf>

*John Hausladen, President, Minnesota Trucking Association* – Discussed area of address in the current legislative session: Productivity, Funding, Permitting, Environment, Safety and Liability. *Productivity* – not proposed increases in truck size or weight. Matters concerning truck escorts. *Funding* – not proposing fuel tax increase. Concerns over utility fee increase, traffic fee and authority for overweight permits will be addressed. *Environment* – Concerns over low carbon fuel and issue of the 5% diesel requirement for Number 1 diesel. *Safety* – Concern in proposed distracted driver legislation and truck staying in the left lane. *Liability* – Issues such as quick clearance, definition of motor vehicle, state patrol checklist and campaign finance.

Link to MTA 2010 Legislative Agenda:

[http://www.mntruck.org/newsroom/mtanews\\_files/4ab56ef9ce2041b0c037c7bf21b0becd-11.html](http://www.mntruck.org/newsroom/mtanews_files/4ab56ef9ce2041b0c037c7bf21b0becd-11.html)

*Mark Wegner, President, TC&W Railroad* – Emphasized the importance of the Minnesota Comprehensive Statewide Freight and Passenger Rail Plan and expressed support for proposed legislative funding for the Minnesota Rail Service Improvement Program. He also mentioned a rail interest in support truck escort of oversize/over-weight loads in Minnesota.

*Kevin Walli, Director, Minnesota Ports Association* - Discuss the evolution of the Minnesota Port Improvement Program its importance. Expressed support for continued funding of the multimodal improvement bonding bill.

*Scott Peterson* wrapped up the panel discussion and outlined Mn/DOT's current and future legislative focus impacting freight: Quick Clearance for truck on the roadways, Truck weight proposals; 2<sup>nd</sup> round of federal stimulus; Construction management; and innovative finance..

### **III. Demographic, Economic and Competitiveness Issues for Minnesota**

*Neal Young, Economic Analyst, Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development*

An overview was given on Minnesota's Economy, discussing the state's Gross State Product, industry base, key sector (Manufacturing), exports, and a growing diverse population. Mr. Young also discussed current economic conditions, long term project and Minnesota's future.

Link to Mr. Young's presentation:

<http://www.dot.state.mn.us/ofrw/PDF/PresYoung20100219.pdf>