

# Minnesota State Rail Plan

## Why the need for a statewide passenger and freight rail plan?

The Minnesota State Rail Plan is MnDOT's modal plan for the state's freight and passenger rail system. The primary purpose is to establish guidance and priorities for state transportation decisions — ensuring that efficient, competitive services are available to rail customers and that freight access to local and global markets is enhanced.

The Plan will align with MinnesotaGO, the Statewide Multimodal Transportation Plan, the Minnesota State Highway Investment Plan, and other relevant planning documents.



## What do we hope to accomplish?

The **Minnesota State Rail Plan** now in process for its required five-year update will provide an overall vision for effective use of the state's freight and passenger rail network and its future development.

The plan will identify priority rail corridors, programs, and projects that offer effective improvements or expansion for passenger and freight travel in and out of Minnesota.

## How will this be accomplished?

- **Communication plan to build relationships in public and private sectors** will be executed, involving key decision-makers and stakeholders in Plan development. This outreach will both enhance MnDOT's understanding of critical issues facing organizations and develop a set of prioritized needs.
- **Minnesota's passenger and freight rail improvement strategy** will be detailed, including Minnesota's passenger and freight rail impact on the economy, the state's ability to meet national passenger and freight rail goals, and the economic factors that increase growth and competitive edge.
- **An assessment of Minnesota's current rail system demand** will include an overview of the current system's condition and performance (e.g. bottlenecks, performance and safety) and an evaluation of current freight transportation assets such as freight modal facilities and border crossings.
- **An assessment of Minnesota's future rail system demand** will forecast the state's ability to handle projected freight and passenger growth. A 20-year forecast will identify trends, needs and issues and analyze strengths and weaknesses.
- **Performance-based metrics** will measure performance of the overall infrastructure and evaluate the effectiveness of Minnesota's freight and passenger rail system to serve passenger and shipper needs (e.g. profiles for districts).
- **Options for private passenger rail development and expanded public private partnerships** will be evaluated for feasibility and sustainability.
- **Federal Railroad Administration guidelines and MnDOT Plan Development Guidelines** will be used to maintain compliance and uniformity with federal and departmental plans and policies, and with MAP-21.
- **Best practices in national freight planning** will be used, such as:
 

Metro area coordination and issues	Private sector participation
Long range planning	Multi-jurisdictional coordination
Organizational structure	Other States
Data and analytical tools	Funding

## What is the timeline?

Begin work June 2014. Complete by February 2015.

May 2014

For More Information and Frequently Asked Questions, [Visit our website](#)

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