

Statewide Ports & Waterways Plan

Objectives and Background

The first-ever Statewide Ports and Waterways Plan is an opportunity to communicate meaningful information about Minnesota ports and waterways to citizens and stakeholders. Scheduled for completion in spring of 2014, the plan will:



- Provide an overview and history of the waterway systems in Minnesota.
- Identify the current use and economic benefits of marine transportation to Minnesota’s economy.
- Provide an understanding of how ports and waterways can inform multimodal planning activities in Minnesota.
- Identify strategies to improve effectiveness and efficiency.

Key Findings and Issues

- Minnesota’s river and lake ports, commercially navigable waterways and related infrastructure provide high-capacity, low-cost, and energy efficient movement of numerous commodities in bulk.
- Access to the Mississippi River and Great Lakes systems supports economic sectors throughout the state now relying on rail and highways, while connecting Minnesota to the global marketplace.
- Waterway systems are important components of the state’s multimodal freight transportation system — relieving the congested on highway and rail systems.
- Invasive species and land use encroachment present threats to the viability of marine transportation.



Strategies

- Support the Ports Association in pursuing consistent, adequate, and predictable funding source(s) for the Minnesota Port Development Assistance Program to address needs for maintenance and development.
- Integrate waterways planning into multimodal planning efforts.
- Coordinate with neighboring states and provinces to support improved waterways maintenance and utilization, especially with federal partners.
- Coordinate and support applications to TIGER, TED, and other programs to enhance funding for marine freight projects.
- MnDOT and local governments should identify beneficial uses of dredge materials.
- Strengthen partnership and coordination with key stakeholders in ongoing planning activities, including conservation and environmental stewardship partners.
- Support the approval and implementation of federal legislation for and funding of the marine system by educating legislators as to the importance of a robust freight transportation system.
- Support the Council of Great Lakes Governors in implementing the strategies identified by the Great Lakes - St. Lawrence River Maritime Initiative.

April 2014

For More Information and Frequently Asked Questions

[Visit our website](#)

Contact: Patrick Phenow, Program Coordinator, Freight & Commercial Vehicle Operations, MnDOT, 651-366-3672, Patrick.Phenow@state.mn.us