

10.0 WATERWAYS PROFILE

There are no commercially navigable waterways in the study area. There are two commercially navigable waterways in Minnesota: the Great Lakes/Saint Lawrence Seaway and the Mississippi River system. Access to waterways that can carry freight vessels, e.g., barges and ships, is important to businesses in the region because of the affordability provided with waterborne freight.

Nearest access to the Great Lakes/Saint Lawrence Seaway is in Duluth/Superior. This 2,400-mile seaway comprised of the St. Lawrence River, St. Lawrence Seaway, and the Great Lakes and connects over 41 ports with roadways and rail lines, allowing freight to be shipped worldwide. Duluth/Superior is by far the largest port on the Great Lakes, and the 21st largest total tonnage port in the United States.

Nearest access to the Mississippi River system is at the head of the navigation channel in the Twin Cities metro area. There, the river system includes the Minnesota River and the Mississippi River. Freight travels 1,811 miles from the Twin Cities to the Port of New Orleans where it can be transloaded onto oceangoing vessels to reach global markets.