

What is a Freight Plan?


With the passage of the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) in 2012, states are encouraged to develop comprehensive State Freight Plans to outline immediate and long-range plans for freight-related transportation investments. MAP-21 also encourages states to build performance-based and multimodal programs to address the many challenges facing the Nation's transportation system. These challenges include improving safety, maintaining infrastructure condition, reducing traffic congestion, and improving efficiency of the system and of freight movement. Minnesota's first-ever Statewide Freight Plan was completed in 2005, and is now undergoing an update. The Freight Plan will include a Freight Action Agenda, which will identify high-priority freight initiatives and projects and serve as a guide for implementation.


freight [freyt] Noun.


1. goods, cargo, or lading transported for pay, whether by water, land, or air. *Merriam-Webster*


How Does Freight Move Through Minnesota?


Each freight mode plays a key role in moving goods efficiently. In Minnesota, these major modes are:

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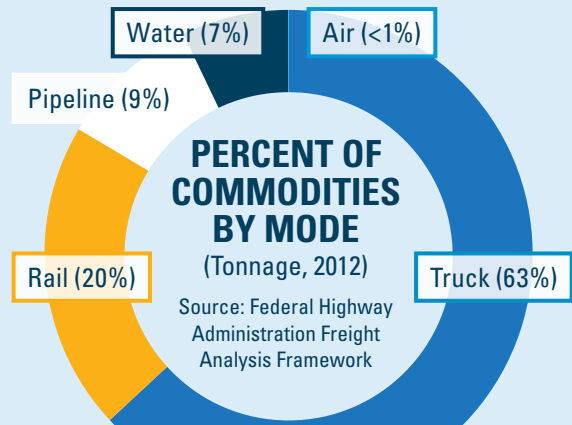
HIGHWAY: Over 63% of goods (by volume) moved in Minnesota are carried by truck. *Top goods:* cereal grains, gravel, and animal feed.
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RAIL: Over 20% of goods (by volume) moved in Minnesota are carried by rail. *Top goods:* metallic ores, cereal grains, and coal.
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WATER: Over 7% of goods (by volume) moved in Minnesota are carried by water. *Top goods:* iron ore, food products, and aggregates.
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AIR: Less than 1% of goods (by volume) moved in Minnesota are carried by air. Air movement accounts for a greater percentage when measured by value (over 5%). *Top goods:* electronics, precision instruments, and machinery.
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PIPELINE: Over 9% of the goods (by volume) moved in Minnesota are moved by pipeline. *Top goods:* Coal – n.e.c., crude petroleum, and gasoline.



Percentage of commodities by mode illustrates the relative use of each transportation mode, by weight carried in 2012. Freight is dependent on Minnesota's freight network to move to, from, and within the state. (Does not include through traffic.)

Why is the Freight System Important?

The freight system drives Minnesota's economy. It brings products to our stores and food to our tables. It brings birthday gifts to our front steps and equipment to our hospitals. It transports crops and minerals all over the country and the world. If it costs more to transport these goods, those costs are passed on to consumers. If it takes too long for them to get there and if the system is not reliable, industry cannot count on it, and opportunities are missed and revenues are lost. We should all care about the cost, speed, and reliability of the freight system, because it affects our daily lives and the health of Minnesota's economy.