

# MFAC Recommendations

## MFAC Activities

The MFAC Working Group recommends that the Minnesota Freight Advisory Committee carry out the activities below on a regular basis:

- Monitor and report on the implementation of the Statewide Freight Plan and its Action Agenda, including the development of recommendations for any revisions and updates to the Plan.
- Create an annual report for the MnDOT Commissioner that includes a “state of freight,” an overview of trends and important issues, and reports on the activities of the Freight Advisory Committee from the past year.
- Review significant MnDOT initiatives and activities and provide freight impact and benefits comments.
- Direct the preparation and dissemination of “white papers” on freight transportation issues important to Minnesota’s economy.
- Advocate for needs of freight transportation to the public, elected officials, and other public agencies and organizations.
- Suggest research initiatives and tools supporting the economic vitality of the state

However, MFAC cannot carry out these activities without a better defined membership and a more developed organization with resources to fully carry out the mission.

## MFAC Membership and Leadership

Membership: Members will be strategically recruited/selected to represent all modes and all MnDOT districts. The Working Group recommends the following:

- Limit members to no more than 30 to be representative of “private sector shippers, and carriers; industry associations, academia; and economic development agencies (local).”
- State agency participants, MnDOT and others, will be Ex Officio Members.
- Others, in or related to the freight sector beyond the limited set above may be Associate Members and receive information and communications and participation in meetings.

Leadership: The Working Group recommends the following:

- There should be a Chair and Vice-Chair with terms of two or three years (renewable) with the Vice-Chair succeeding the Chair.
- An “Executive Committee” should be formed to include the Chair, Vice-Chair and three to five additional members to serve as the leadership and communications group for MFAC.

## MFAC Meetings and Communication

- MFAC should continue the practice of holding quarterly meetings. Two of the meetings should be held in the Twin Cities and two elsewhere in the state. (Opportunities for private sector hosting should also be developed.)
- One or, if possible, two of these meetings should incorporate a freight site visit.
- A meeting schedule should be developed in advance for the full year, showing dates and locations of the year’s meetings, as well as identifying themes or particular activities and functions to be conducted at each meeting.

## **Communication**

- Create a MFAC stand-alone website and keep it updated with information about upcoming meetings, agendas, minutes, and other relevant, up-to-date freight-related information for both MFAC members and external interested parties using various social and professional networking tools .
- Use the web-site as central location for information about other freight-significant organizations, activities and events.
- Incorporate the Statewide Freight System Plan into the MFAC web site and provide information concerning the implementation of the Freight Action Plan.

## **MFAC Relationships**

### Industry

MFAC should become a communications nexus -- a hub of information exchange on organizations in the state that are significant for freight. This could be through a list of organizations on the website or other, more in-depth activity. The committee should function as a “one-stop-shop” for identifying other organizations that deal with freight and what they are doing.

### Sub-state

MFAC should incorporate sub-state interests by having representation from each District as either members or “ex officio”/“associate” members.

- Rotate quarterly meetings among Districts.
- Include District reports as regular item on agendas of quarterly meetings.

### MnDOT

- The connection between MFAC and MnDOT should be expanded and strengthened by creating a MnDOT-MFAC liaison team to include the Office of Freight and Commercial Vehicles as well as staff from other MnDOT units, such as planning and operations.
- To the extent possible, MnDOT executive-level commitment to MFAC should be demonstrated by participation from the Commissioner and other high level MnDOT executives in MFAC meetings and activities.

## **Success Factors**

The Working Group recommends that the MFAC Executive Committee, in consultation with MnDOT, should identify three to five performance measures that allow for continual evaluation of engagement from members and outputs of the committee. Members and others should be surveyed on a regular and systematic basis concerning MFAC, its activities, organization, etc.

## **Resources**

It is important to acknowledge and understand that increased resources available for the support of MFAC will be needed to carry out expanded activities and responsibilities recommended, such as meeting and site visits around the state, new/expanded web site, MFAC Annual Report, and freight-issue white papers. Before moving forward it should be determined what resources will be needed and how they will be secured. Private and academic sources of support should be also investigated.