

**MINNESOTA STATEWIDE FREIGHT SYSTEM PLAN
STRATEGIC FREIGHT NETWORK AD HOC WORKING
GROUP MEETING #1**

MEETING MINUTES

December 3, 2014

1:30 PM

ATTENDEES:

John Tompkins, MnDOT
Bobbi Retzlaff, MnDOT
Brad Utecht, MnDOT
Jason Junge, MnDOT
Philip Schaffner, MnDOT
Tim Spencer, MnDOT
Peter Dahlberg, MnDOT

David Tomporowski, MnDOT
Kathleen Mayell, MnDOT OTSM
Erika Witzke, Cambridge Systematics
Elaine Mckenzie, Cambridge Systematics
Andy Mielke, SRF
Chris Ryan, SRF

This meeting was the first of three that are scheduled for the Strategic Freight Network (SFN) Ad Hoc Working Group. The focus of this meeting was to discuss the goals and purpose of the SFN and start to identify the highway components of the network. The consultant team presented information about the Minnesota Statewide Freight System Plan and a general overview of Minnesota's existing freight systems.

The team then presented some of the currently identified "freight" systems that exist in Minnesota. These included the following:

- MAP-21 Primary Freight Network
- National Highway System (NHS)
- Interregional Corridor System (IRC)
- National Truck Network (NTN)
- Minnesota Twin Trailer Network (TTN)
- Minnesota conceptual 10-Ton Network
- Oversize/Overweight (OSOW) preferred routes

The presentation also included a brief analysis of the overlap between some of the networks as well as many of the gaps.

Open discussion items posed at the end of the presentation included the intent of the SFN, the appropriate size and scale of the network, design and policy implications, and what additional information would be helpful in identifying the SFN. The following notes are a summary of the discussion items and comments collected during this conversation:

- The SFN should emphasize connections to major freight facilities and access points to and from Minnesota such as ports and border crossings.
- From the standpoint of managing the SFN, it could be easier if it followed an existing network rather than becoming its own distinct network.
 - The appropriate size of the network will be dictated by the purpose of the SFN. If project funding is the only purpose, a smaller network may be preferred. If other purposes exist, a larger network may be appropriate (e.g., if being on this network provided eligibility to funding, etc.).
 - The NTN/TTN is likely too extensive for the purposes of the SFN. The IRC plus Supplemental Freight Routes may be a better starting point, but it was questioned whether this was extensive enough. There were also comments about the current IRC mobility performance measures; as some within MnDOT are not comfortable with these measures. A freight-related performance measure could potentially be substituted for this measure.
 - A question was asked if the IRC connect to all airports, ports, and other facilities important to freight movement.
 - Some consensus was gained around pursuing the Enhanced NHS network as a starting point for the identification of the SFN. One advantage to using the NHS network is that required travel time data is already being collected for mobility measures. This data could be used to create a freight performance measure without requiring any additional data collection.
 - The Enhanced NHS is currently being reviewed by MnDOT to determine which Principal Arterials should be included in the network. This will be submitted to the FHWA in early 2015.
- The harmonization of truck size and weight restrictions between Minnesota and bordering states is a frequently cited issue by freight manufacturers and shippers.
- Does the Twin Cities Metro Area require special consideration for freight? Should it be a separate network entirely or should it be excluded from this analysis, similar to the IRC system? Should the Metro Area network simply reflect the “Principal Arterials” designation?
- A map of the major manufacturers would be helpful in guiding this discussion.

Meeting #2 for the Ad Hoc Working Group will focus on the non-highway components of the SFN. This meeting will be held in January. It was noted that it will be important to include representatives from ports, railways, and other non-highway freight stakeholders in this next meeting.