

Minnesota Statewide Rail Plan

OPEN HOUSE ROUND 1 SUMMARY – ST. CLOUD, MN

A public open house for the Minnesota Statewide Rail Plan was held in St. Cloud, MN on Wednesday, November 5, 2014 from 5:00 PM – 7:00 PM at the St. Cloud City Hall. Materials available included Rail Plan display boards, a Rail Plan presentation, a Freight Plan station, an online survey, comment forms, and project handouts. The purpose of the open house was to introduce content and educate attendees on the MN Statewide Rail Plan and provide opportunities for participants to influence Plan development.



Open House participation included:

- 19 attendees signed-in
- 2 attendees filled out comment forms

Comments

Participants were asked to provide comments on Minnesota's rail improvement needs, passenger rail planning, and any other feedback. The following summarizes participant responses.

- **Rail Improvements:** One participant noted that scheduling improvements are needed to reduce train congestion. Questions were raised regarding double-tracking projects and rail car upgrades in Minnesota.
- **Passenger Rail:** Support was expressed for both passenger rail service and a Northstar expansion between St. Cloud and the Twin Cities. The question was raised as to how this would impact other modes of travel, especially air travel to and from St. Cloud.
- **General:** Other comments received included the importance of recognizing the property value and quality life impacts of rail in St. Cloud.

Questions

In addition to the written and verbal comments summarized above, participants asked questions during the Question and Answer period.

- **Are there plans to turn rail bank trails back into active rail corridors?** MnDOT is not aware of any plans to re-active rail service on any state rail bank corridors.
- **What is the status of requirements for railroads to upgrade cars transporting crude?** The United States Department of Transportation is considering rules to phase out some old tank cars hauling hazardous materials.