

# MnDOT District 7 Freight Plan

## Advisory Committee Meeting 3 Agenda

October 26, 2021 – 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM (2 hours)

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### Zoom Meeting Call Details:

URL: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86089515006?pwd=MWpUdXFIVUxBemNZQ0FkcHI4VDFCZz09>

Meeting ID: 860 8951 5006

Passcode: 839 512

Phone Number: 1-312-626-6799

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- 2:00 PM**      **Welcome & Introduction**  
Share your name, organization, and an investment of time or money that MnDOT could make to improve freight transportation in District 7.
- 2:05 PM**      **Review the Work Plan**
- 2:10 PM**      **Review and Discussion of SWOT Assessment Results**  
Questions/Comments:
- Which SWOT elements are most important to your work?
  - Do any of these SWOT considerations stand out as less important?
  - Did we miss any SWOT considerations that will be critical going forward?
- 3:00 PM**      **5 Minute Break**
- 3:05 PM**      **Preliminary Recommendation Discussion**  
Questions/Comments:
- Which recommendations are most helpful for your work?
  - Are there additional recommendations that we should investigate?
  - Are there any funding programs that are relevant for your work, or you believe are particularly helpful?
- 3:45 PM**      **Review of Approach to Project Feasibility**
- 3:55 PM**      **Next Steps**
- 4:00 PM**      **Adjourn**

# MnDOT District 7 Freight Plan

## Advisory Committee Meeting 3 Discussion Questions and Background Information

### Questions for Discussion

A summary of some of Working Paper 4’s major findings is provided below, and Working Paper 4 will be distributed to the Advisory Committee following the meeting. In advance of the meeting, please review the summary below and come prepared to discuss these three questions:

1. What is an investment of time or money that MnDOT could make to improve freight transportation in District 7?
2. Did we miss any SWOT considerations that will be critical moving forward?
3. Are there additional recommendations we should investigate?

### Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) Findings

Working Paper 4 contains a summary of SWOT factors that was created by reviewing stakeholder feedback as well as findings from data analysis. The SWOT factors were aligned with the major goal topics of the *Minnesota Statewide Freight System Plan*. The tables below summarize some of the major SWOT findings associated with each freight plan goal:

#### Support Minnesota’s Economy

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The continued success of the agricultural and manufacturing sectors</li> <li>• Efficient road and rail access to the Twin Cities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of intermodal transportation facilities</li> <li>• An aging rural population, with minimal in-migration</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continued development of biofuels and renewable energy resources</li> <li>• MnDOT can be proactive in working with the private sector to identify improvements and mitigate freight impacts of construction projects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Difficulty finding and retaining workforce, including truck drivers</li> <li>• Delayed or disrupted supply chains</li> <li>• Cost of raw materials continuing to rise</li> </ul>

#### Improve Minnesota’s Mobility

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited traffic congestion outside of Mankato</li> <li>• Sufficient road infrastructure conditions on trunk highways</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of intermodal transportation facilities</li> <li>• Low clearance bridges along major highways</li> <li>• Lack of truck size and weight uniformity</li> <li>• Bridge conditions</li> <li>• Local support for OSOW</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved consideration of freight movements during construction planning</li> <li>• Improved communication of construction and snow removal updates on 511</li> <li>• Improved efficiency of first/last mile freight connections</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Congestion in Mankato as the area develops</li> <li>• Ongoing truck driver shortage</li> </ul>

## Preserve Minnesota's Infrastructure

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relatively well-maintained trunk highways and bridges</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lower condition of county and local roads and bridges</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunity to identify freight projects that can help improve other aspects of the system (e.g., safety) and leverage non-freight funds (e.g., safety) to make improvements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of infrastructure improvement funding</li> <li>• Trunk highway condition is expected to decline in the absence of additional funding</li> <li>• Climate change impacts on road conditions</li> </ul>

## Safeguard Minnesotans

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relatively low at-grade crossing incident rate at actively-protected grade crossings compared to other Districts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relatively high count of crashes at passively-protected grade crossings.</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Geometric safety improvements (passing lanes, turn lanes, redesigned intersections, etc.) can provide freight benefits</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited funding available for safety improvements</li> </ul>

## Protect Minnesota's Environment and Communities

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relatively little conflict between land uses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Snow and ice control methods have a negative impact on water quality</li> <li>• Truck routing through downtowns</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrating freight transportation decarbonization into freight planning</li> <li>• Further supporting the wind energy industry</li> <li>• Balancing community needs (i.e. bicycling infrastructure and freight community impacts) with freight needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Climate change impacts on infrastructure and agriculture</li> <li>• MnDOT VMT goal of 20% less VMT by 2050</li> </ul>

### Preliminary Recommendations

Working Paper 4 provides a set of preliminary recommendations that can help address needs and issues, and unlock opportunities in District 7. The major preliminary recommendations for MnDOT include:

#### Policy Recommendations

- Incorporate information from the District 7 Freight plan into existing planning processes and future projects
- Prioritize maintenance of existing assets over the construction of new assets
- Collect information on potential infrastructure impacts of weight limit changes
- Ensure freight transportation needs are considered in complete streets projects

#### Partnership Recommendations

- Continue outreach to state and federal legislators to secure support for freight project funding
- Continue outreach to freight stakeholders
- Continue engagement with Iowa DOT, and South Dakota DOT to ensure good project timing
- Offer freight information resources or planning assistance to county and local governments
- Partner with local educational institutions to support truck driver training programs.

