



Minnesota Department of Transportation District 7 Freight Plan

Working Paper 1: Communication Plan

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Definition
AC	Advisory Committee
DOT	Department of Transportation
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
LTL	Less-than-Truckload
LUG	Local Unit of Government
MFAC	Minnesota Freight Advisory Committee
MN	Minnesota State Route
MnDOT	Minnesota Department of Transportation
PMT	Project Management Team
OTSM	Office of Transportation System Management
RDC	Regional Development Commission
STIP	State Transportation Improvement Plan
TAC	Transportation Advisory Committee
TT	Technical Team
US	United States

1 Contact List

1.1 Project Management Team Contacts

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MnDOT District 7

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2 About the District 7 Freight Plan

MnDOT District 7 covers South-Central Minnesota including 13 counties: Blue Earth, Brown, Cottonwood, Faribault, Jackson, LeSueur, Martin, Nicollet, Nobles, Rock, Sibley, Waseca, and Watonwan. The District makes up 9.6% of Minnesota’s area and is home to 5.1% of the state’s population, making it the third most densely populated District. Major cities include Mankato, New Ulm, Worthington, St. Peter, and Fairmont. Much of the region is flat plains and well-suited for agriculture.

District 7’s freight transportation system includes key highways such as I-90, US-169, US-14, and MN-60. Major railroads in the District include the Canadian Pacific, and Union Pacific, with the Minnesota Prairie Line serving several communities in the District.

The District 7 Manufacturers’ Perspectives on Minnesota’s Transportation System report (2019) notes that District 7 has more than 500 manufacturing and 400 trucking firms.

Figure 1 highlights District 7’s “strong” traded clusters, or industry groups with uniquely high levels of employment, which trade with regions outside of District 7. These clusters indicate some of District 7’s industrial specializations and competitive advantages. Other major industries in the District include lighting and electrical equipment, nonmetal mining, chemical products, and construction products and services. Analyses such as this will be further refined and expanded in the development of the District Freight Plan.

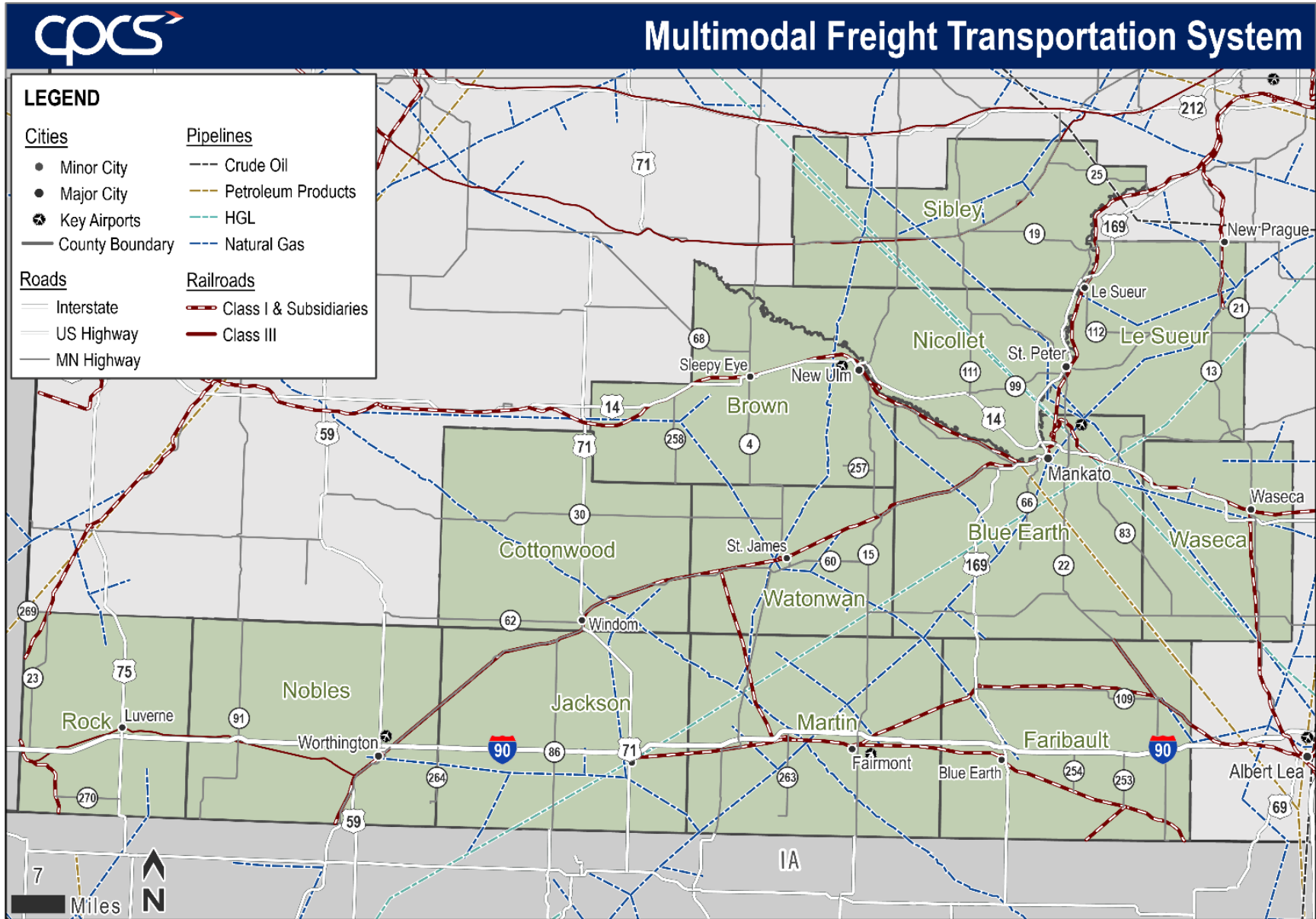
Figure 1: District 7’s Top Freight-Related “Strong” Traded Industry Clusters, 2017



Source: CPCS Transcom analysis of US Cluster Mapping data. Harvard Business School. 2020.

District 7 recently completed its Manufacturers’ Perspectives study in 2019, which identified common freight-related needs and issues, such as concerns regarding navigating roundabouts and j-turn intersections, insufficient truck parking, and pavement quality’s effect on vehicle maintenance. Additionally, some businesses noted that inconsistency and inflexibility in vehicle weight restrictions, especially in relation to Iowa or South Dakota, reduced the efficiency of interstate freight movements. Other potential improvements include the addition of more intersection warning signs, widening lanes, and adding bypass and passing lanes, particularly on truck routes.

Figure 2: District 7 Freight System



Source: CPCS analysis of National Transportation Atlas data, 2020.

2.1 Project Objectives

MnDOT and its partners in District 7 have recognized the importance of freight transportation for local businesses and the need to inventory and address key issues that limit their productivity. This District 7 Freight Plan aims to build on past efforts, including the Minnesota Statewide Freight System and Investment Plan and the Manufacturers’ Perspectives Study, to quantify and close information gaps to:

Provide a clear understanding of the multimodal freight system, how local industries use the system, and their needs and issues, so MnDOT’s policy and programming decisions can be better informed in the District.

In line with MnDOT’s scope of work, the District 7 Freight Plan will include:

- Economic and freight profiles (including descriptions of freight infrastructure and how local industries use it)
- Identification of multimodal freight system needs, issues, and opportunities
- A summary of possible next steps for Central Office and District 7 planners and engineers
- A list of specific projects that should be considered for future freight-related investment, and
- Conceptual design and cost information for a list of specific projects that should be considered for future freight-related investments.

2.2 Project Structure

Key Questions

To achieve the project objective, MnDOT and the project team will work to address several “key questions.” We have framed this series of questions to respond to all items in the Scope of Work and Deliverables. Figure 3 lists these key questions and their relationship to the major tasks of the District 7 Freight Plan.

Figure 3: District 7 Freight Plan Key Questions

Task / Questions	
Task 1 – Stakeholder Engagement	
1.	Who are the District’s freight system stakeholders and how should they be engaged?
2.	What are the key transportation needs and issues for freight stakeholders?
Task 2 – Existing Document and Process Synthesis	
3.	What findings from other statewide, regional, and local plans and research should be further explored and advanced in each District freight plan?
Task 3 – Data Analysis	
4.	What are the District’s economic profile and key industries?
5.	What are the District’s key freight corridors and how are they used?
6.	What are the most pressing safety, condition, and performance issues in the District?
Task 4 – Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats	

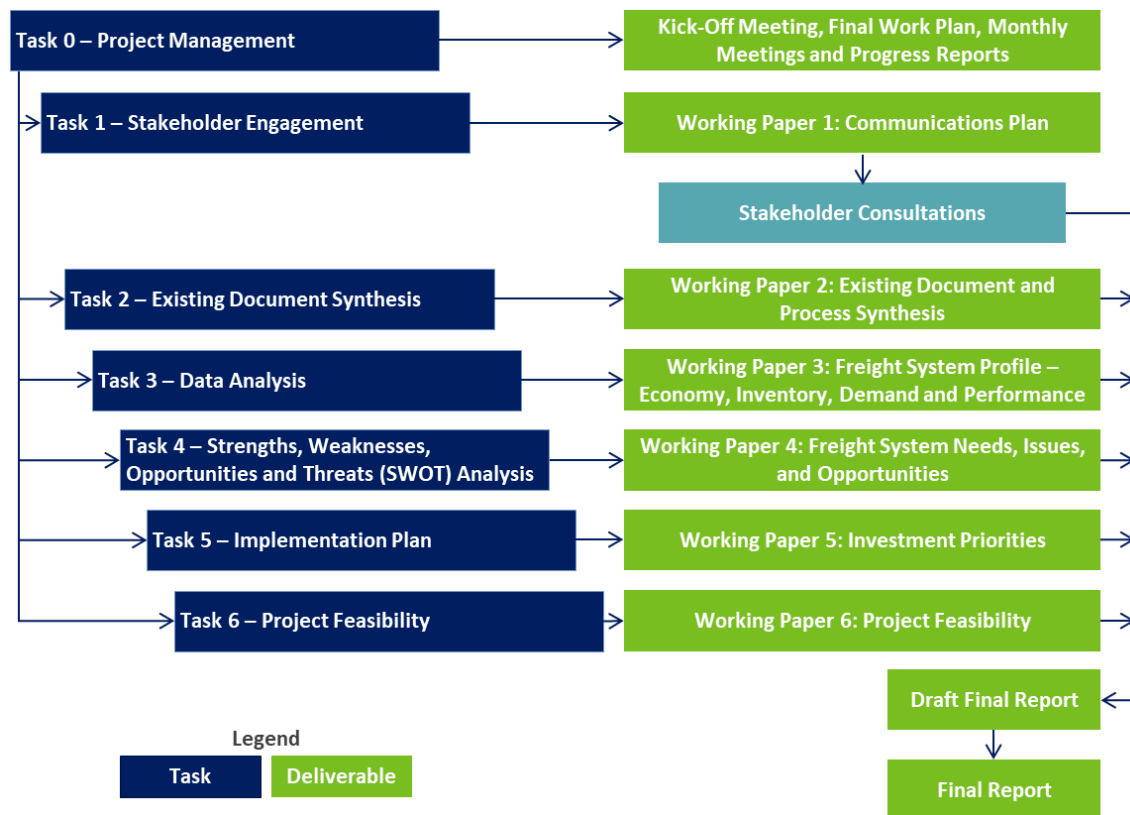
Task / Questions
7. What are the common needs, issues, opportunities, and challenges identified from stakeholder outreach, previous plan review, and new data analysis?
8. What strategies (projects, programs, policies, or partnerships) should be advanced to mitigate the threats and weaknesses, and take advantage of the strengths and opportunities of the District’s freight system?
Task 5 – Implementation Plan
9. Which projects or project concepts meet the District’s overall goals, address the needs and issues identified, and/or leverage or unlock new opportunities?
10. Based on MnDOT’s scoring framework and the District’s unique needs and interests, what project concepts (new projects) warrant advancement to pre-feasibility and scoping?
Task 6 – Project Feasibility
11. What are the potential environmental, social, economic, and engineering challenges associated with each of the advanced project concepts?
12. What is the order of magnitude costs of these projects?

Source: CPCS

Work Plan Overview

In line with the Key Questions, the following figure presents an overview of tasks for developing the District 7 Freight Plan. Each of these tasks will be informed by stakeholder insights, as further described in this Communications Plan.

Figure 4: District 7 Freight Plan Work Plan and Deliverables



Source: CPCS

3 Communications Goals and Expected Outcomes

3.1 Introduction Goals

Stakeholder engagement aims to meaningfully engage a broad array of public and private sector stakeholders to guide the development of the Plan. Specifically, engagement seeks to gather their perspectives on the freight system, how freight-dependent industries use the system, current needs and issues, and potential opportunities.

This Communications Plan has been developed as a proactive and transparent guide for public and private freight stakeholder engagement activities related to developing the District 7 Freight Plan. The goals for communication during Plan development are to:

- Maintain regular contact with stakeholders to inform them of Plan development and findings,
- Provide opportunities for stakeholders to participate in the planning process and influence recommendations,
- Enable MnDOT and the Project Team to hear and respond to stakeholder concerns and incorporate them as appropriate, and
- Build support for Plan recommendations.

3.2 Expected Outcome

The intended outcome is that public and private freight stakeholders will have actively participated in the planning process and assisted MnDOT in shaping the District 7 Freight Plan.

4 Target Audiences and Key Stakeholders

4.1 Target Audiences

Not every audience shares the same level of interest or commitment to the planning process. As a result, it is important to offer opportunities for different levels of involvement. Some audiences desire to simply be informed of the Plan, while others need a greater level of involvement due to their role in plan implementation. The general audiences listed below require participation levels customized to their unique needs consistent with the Communications Plan goals.

Minnesota Department of Transportation

The District 7 Freight Plan is a plan for the State of Minnesota. As the state's transportation agency, MnDOT plays a critical role in implementing the direction outlined in plans such as this. It is important that MnDOT's Office of Freight and Commercial Vehicle Operations and other linked staff (e.g., investment planners, data analysts, public outreach, etc.) be engaged in the planning process, so they have input into the process and will be in a position to effectively advance Plan recommendations.

Freight Stakeholders

As the ultimate beneficiary of this update, Minnesota's broad range of public and private sector freight stakeholders will play an important role in assessing and forming recommendations for the District 7 freight system. Like MnDOT, there are partner agencies and organizations that will play a key role in advancing Minnesota's freight system towards plan goals and outcomes. These include freight shippers and carriers, manufacturers, facility owners/operators, economic development organizations, City and County governments, the Minnesota Freight Advisory Committee (MFAC), and RDCs (Regional Development Commissions), and many others. Section 4.2 lists a comprehensive set of initially identified stakeholders; stakeholders will continue to be added to these lists as the project evolves and as specific needs are identified.

General Public

The general public is a key audience that the plan intends to reach. The interests of the general public may be less specific than that of freight stakeholders, but are no less important. Those with any level of interest should have the opportunity to learn about the Plan and provide input. Several outreach techniques will be used with the goal of reaching a broad audience.

4.2 Key Stakeholders

The District 7 Freight Plan will engage a variety of internal (MnDOT) and external public and private sector stakeholders. Target audiences have been grouped into five key stakeholder categories that are tied to the techniques used to engage them during Plan development. These categories are:

- Project Management Team, and other key staff to keep apprised of ongoing project management activities
- Advisory Committee
- Technical Team
- Freight Stakeholders (one-on-one consultation targets)

- General Public

Project Management Team

The creation of this Plan will be a coordinated effort led by a Project Management Team (PMT) comprised of the individuals shown in the following figure. The PMT will be responsible for overseeing all tasks associated with developing the District 7 Freight Plan and coordinating tasks with the broader project team.

Figure 5: Project Management Team

Organization	Contact
MnDOT Central Office	Andrew Andrusko Robert Clarkson
MnDOT District 7	Angela Piltaver Samuel Parker
Project Team – CPCS	Erika Witzke Eric Oberhart Eddie Wytkind
Project Team – SEH	Chris Hiniker
Project Team – ZAN	Tom Holmes Rebecca Lieser

Source: CPCS

Advisory Committee

The Advisory Committee (AC) will guide plan development, in particular as it relates to keeping “the big picture” in focus regarding policy direction or strategic recommendations. The AC will be provided copies of the Working Papers and Freight Plan report and may provide written comments or verbal comments during AC meetings. The PMT will determine how to address the comments provided.

Membership

The AC will have multidisciplinary, executive-level membership reflecting leadership both within MnDOT, but also at other state agencies and organizations with freight interests. As AC members are identified, they will be added to the following table.

Figure 6: Advisory Committee Membership

	Organization	Contact
1	MnDOT District 7	Greg Ous, Peter Harff, Ronda Allis, Sam Parker, Angie Piltaver
2	MnDOT Office of Freight	Andrew Andrusko Robert Clarksen
3	DPS – Commercial Vehicle Enforcement	Lt. Jean Cemensky
4	FHWA	Bobbi Retzlaff
5	Southwest Regional Development Commission	Rosemary Bruce-White
6	Mankato/North Mankato Area Planning Organization (MAPO)	Charles Androsky

	Organization	Contact
7	Region Nine Development Commission (RNDC)	Kristian Braekkan
8	District 7 Area Transportation Partnership/Cottonwood Co.	Nick Klisch
9	District 7 Area Transportation Partnership/Fairmont	Troy Nemmers
10	Blue Earth County	Ryan Thilges
11	Nicollet County	Seth Greenwood
12	Greater Mankato Growth	Ryan Vesey
13	Wind Energy Representative - Westwood	Jeffrey Wetmore
14	Minnesota Biofuels Association	Tim Rudnicki
15	Minnesota Pork Producers Association	David Preisler
16	Minnesota Soybean Mankato	Kim Nill
17	Minnesota Corn Growers Association	Amanda Bilek
18	Taylor Corporation	Jay Parker
19	Guardian Energy	Chad Larson
20	Knewtson Soy Products	Wayne Knewtson
21	Specialty Soya and Grains Alliance (MFAC member)	Bruce Abbe
22	Minnesota Valley Regional Rail Authority	Julie Rath
23	Twin Cities & Western Railroad, and Minnesota Prairie Line Railroad	Mark Wegner Dave Long

Technical Team

The Technical Team (TT) will provide technical perspectives and a logic check during Plan development. During plan development, select TT members may be individually consulted to delve deeper into technical issues related to their areas of expertise. The TT will be provided copies of the Working Papers and Freight Plan report and may provide written comments or verbal comments during TT meetings. The PMT will determine how to address the comments provided.

Membership

The TT members are “the implementers;” staff that will largely be responsible for following through with Plan recommendations. The TT will have a multidisciplinary membership, but will largely be representative of MnDOT Central Office and District 7 technical staff, and select public sector staff such as regional development commission staff. As TT members are identified, they will be added to the following table.

Figure 7: Technical Team Membership

Organization	Contact
MnDOT Office of Freight and Commercial Vehicle Operations	Andrew Andrusko
MnDOT District 7	Nick Ollrich, Sam Parker, Angie Piltaver, Lisa Bigham, Ronda Allis, Andrew Lawver
Southwest Regional Development Commission (SRDC)	Rosemary Bruce-White
Region Nine Development Commission (RNDC)	Shawn Scholesser

Freight Stakeholders

Freight stakeholder engagement will be important to Plan development for several reasons. Engagement will supplement quantitative data on freight system use, including the type and volume of goods moved, key modes and routes used, and their origins and destinations. Information from engagement will also be used to identify relevant needs and issues and possible stakeholder solutions; and help validate our data analysis, helping to explain patterns in the data, such as major interchange nodes or traffic flows.

It is desired that a list containing a cross-section of public and private sector freight stakeholders involved in, or impacted by, the movement of goods in District 7 be established. The Project Team will discuss with MnDOT if there is a reason to newly meet and engage with any of the businesses previously contacted in the 2019 Manufacturer’s study. The following figure displays a sample consultation list, which will be reviewed with MnDOT before conducting consultations.

Figure 8: Freight Stakeholders for Consultation

Type	Targets
Public Agencies	
1	Greater Mankato Growth
2	Iowa DOT
3	Mankato – North Mankato Area Metropolitan Planning Organization
Rail Stakeholders	
4	Union Pacific
5	Canadian Pacific
6	Ellis and Eastern Railroad
7	Minnesota Prairie Line
Manufacturers and Shippers	
8	Walmart Distribution Center (Mankato)
9	NextEra Wind
10	Wells Concrete
11	Coughlin Companies (North Mankato)
12	Alumacraft (St. Peter)
13	Winco Generations (Le Center)
14	True Value Distribution Center (Mankato)
15	Coloplast (North Mankato)
16	3M (Fairmont, New Ulm)
17	AGCO (Jackson)
18	Blue Star (North Mankato)
19	Newport Laboratories (Worthington)
Agribusiness and Food Processing	
20	Michaels Foods (Gaylord)
21	Kraft (New Ulm)

Type	Targets
22	Crystal Valley Coop
23	Dairy Farmers of America (Winthrop)
24	Christensen Farms (Sleepy Eye)
25	CHS (Mankato, Fairmont)
26	ADM (Mankato)
27	Minnesota Soybean Processors (Brewster)
28	Comfrey Farms (Windom)
29	Big Gain (Mankato)

General Public

Broad stakeholder engagement will be conducted to involve all parties that may be interested in District 7 freight planning efforts, including the general public, and will be accomplished via a targeted online public open house and other general engagement techniques. These activities will largely be led by MnDOT, with key information and select support provided by the Project Team.

5 Outreach Techniques

5.1 Techniques

The Project Team plans to use several techniques to engage with a broad array of stakeholders during the development of the District 7 Freight Plan. These techniques will include:

- Regular progress meetings
- Advisory Committee (AC) and Technical Team (TT) Meetings
- One-on-one freight stakeholder consultations
- Public Open Houses
- Broad engagement and information sharing

Regular Progress Meetings

The PMT will regularly meet (approximately monthly) via conference call to continually monitor progress toward Plan development.

Advisory Committee and Technical Team Meetings

The AC and TT will meet throughout Plan development in a roundtable or online setting suitable for open discussion.

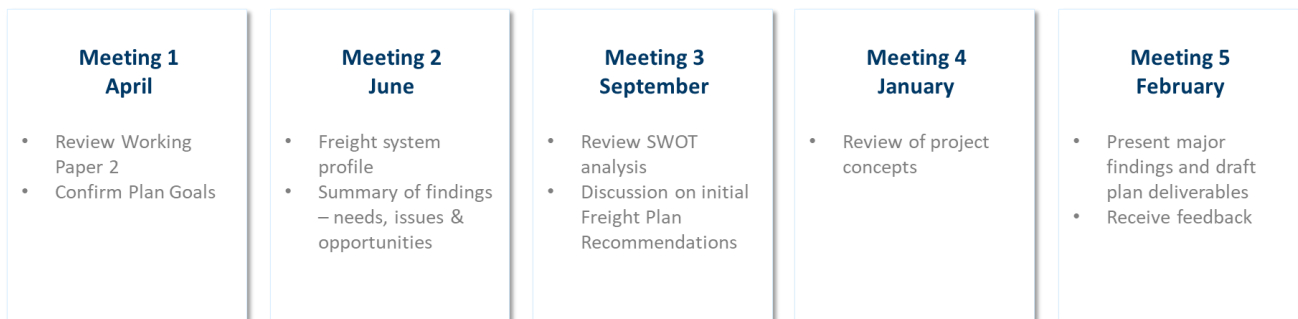
During the duration of COVID-related social distancing requirements, meetings will be conducted via online webinar tools such as GoToMeeting or Zoom. If social distancing restrictions are removed and in-person meetings are deemed safe, it is possible that in-person meetings will be held in MnDOT District 7, at venues coordinated by District staff.

It is important to communicate meeting information early and consistently so that the large number of stakeholders to be engaged can appropriately mark their calendars and arrive to the discussion prepared. Meeting information will be transmitted to the AC and TT members approximately 2 weeks in advance of each meeting.

Advisory Committee Meeting Schedule and Topics

The AC is slated to meet four times during plan development. Preliminary agenda topics for the AC meetings have already been identified and will be kept at an executive level.

Figure 9: Proposed AC Meeting Agendas



Technical Team Meeting Schedule and Topics

The TT is slated to meet five times during Plan development. In addition to these set meetings, a subset of TT members may also meet on an ad-hoc basis to drill deeper into select technical topics. Preliminary agenda topics for the TT meetings have already been identified; unlike the AC, this group will dig into and discuss Plan details, including the project approach and analysis techniques. These meetings may be conducted in-person or online.

Freight Stakeholder Consultations

Up to thirty (30) one-on-one consultations, conducted via phone or online webinar application, will supplement quantitative data analysis during Plan development. The approach to stakeholder consultations consists of four primary steps:

1. **Develop Stakeholder List.** A list of public and private sector stakeholders involved in, or impacted by, the movement of goods in District 7 will be established in coordination with MnDOT (see Section 0).
2. **Develop Consultation Guide(s).** A series of open-ended questions based on the type of stakeholder consulted, e.g., private vs. public, key industry vs. carrier, etc. will be developed. This will also ensure that stakeholders have the opportunity to identify and speak about issues that may not have been picked up by the data. The preliminary consultation guide is provided in **Appendix A**.
3. **Conduct Outreach.** One-on-one consultations with direct, open-ended questions will be conducted using phone interviews. Up to 30 consultations are targeted, to augment the interviews conducted during the 2019 Manufacturer's Perspectives study.
4. **Document Findings.** Consultation findings will be documented in a consistent format (completed questionnaires) which will be shared between the team to ensure relevant knowledge is transferred and built upon in subsequent consultations. For the avoidance of doubt, completed consultation notes will not be shared with MnDOT; stakeholders are often less open in interviews if they have concerns that the information they provide will not be kept confidential. However, a summary of the key information we learn from stakeholders will be developed in a consolidated/anonymized format and included as part of Working Paper 4: Freight System Needs, Issues, and Opportunities.

Public Open House

In lieu of a traditional public open house, there will be two major public outreach points during the plan development, in Months 6 and 14.

The first outreach point in Month 6 will provide an opportunity for the general public to learn about the project and provide feedback on freight-related needs and issues in District 7.

The second outreach point in Month 14 will provide an opportunity for the general public and District 7 freight stakeholders to review plan recommendations and provide comments before finalizing.

The format of this outreach will be determined in collaboration between the Project Team and MnDOT staff. Potential approaches for outreach at these points include publishing project information on the project website (including recorded webinars describing the project) and collecting feedback via MetroQuest or similar interactive survey tools.

The Project Team will work with MnDOT on any follow-up required based on any comments received during these public outreach efforts.

Broad Engagement and Information Sharing

This Plan will also consider other broad engagement and information sharing activities.

- **Project Website.** The Project Team will work with MnDOT to engage stakeholders online via a dedicated District 7 Freight Plan webpage on the MnDOT website, or as a stand-alone website. This webpage will be a place to post Working Paper deliverables and other relevant Plan information such as maps, surveys, and information on upcoming public and stakeholder meetings. The information shared on the project website will be in plain language to be more accessible to the general public so more people can provide meaningful feedback. The webpage will include a “comments” section to collect input throughout Plan development. Comments will be monitored and managed by MnDOT, with Project Team support, as needed, in responding to comments received. The Project Team will follow MnDOT’s branding and style guidelines for project website and map development and ensure documents on the website are compliant with the Americans with Disability Act (ADA).
- **Use Established Channels of Stakeholder Communication.** There are several existing stakeholder meetings/events/platforms that may be used, as needed, to disseminate information on the Plan throughout development, including:
 - Area Transportation Partnership (ATP) Meeting (audience may include city and county engineers, county commissioners, transit representatives, elected officials, economic development professionals, and some local public health professionals).
 - Regional Development Commission (RDC) Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) Meetings (audience is city & county engineers, some industry representatives, some township officials, some county commissioners & some local businesses).
 - County Board & Local Unit of Government (LUG) State Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP)/Capital Highway Investment Plan (CHIP) outreach presentations (audience is full county boards & city staff).
- **Other Engagement Activities.** The Project Team will work with MnDOT to ensure that baseline project information, assumptions, and findings are openly shared with interested parties and that they have an opportunity to comment (as desired). Several techniques will be used specifically during months 6 and 14 (in lieu of a formal open house), but may also be used at other points during Plan development, including:
 - Press releases about the Freight Plan sent to local news outlets
 - Google Voice phone line
 - Facebook & Twitter posts and targeted ads
 - Direct mailing or flyer in City utility bill mailing
 - Information table at an in-person community event

5.2 MnDOT and Project Team Roles in Communication

Communications for the District 7 Freight Plan are a shared responsibility between MnDOT and the Project Team. The Project Team will drive the development of the deliverables, and MnDOT will aid the Team in ensuring this information is communicated with Plan stakeholders, as appropriate. Figure 10 outlines MnDOT and Project Team roles during Plan development.

Figure 10: MnDOT and Project Team Roles

Activity by Key Stakeholders	Description	MnDOT	Project Team
Project Management Team			
Monthly Calls	Set monthly calls and agenda. Convene meetings.	Participate	Lead
Advisory Committee and Technical Team			
Membership	Identify and confirm membership of the Advisory Committee and Technical Team.	Lead	Support
Member Communications	Provide timely information to members via email. Receive and filter comments and share with the Project Team, as needed.	Lead	
Meeting Logistics	Coordinate meeting rooms/facilities, provide refreshments (as needed), and other day-of meeting activities.	Lead	
Meeting Materials	Develop meeting agendas, presentation materials, discussion guides, displays, etc.	Support	Lead
Freight Stakeholders			
Roster	Develop a roster of stakeholders for one-on-one consultations.	Support	Lead
Consultations	Conduct consultations, including contacting stakeholders, setting meeting time/location, providing discussion guide in advance, processing information, etc. for inclusion in the Plan.	Support (as appropriate)	Lead
General Public			
Plan Webpage	Develop and maintain a MnDOT or stand-alone webpage to house information during Plan development.	Support	Lead
Webpage Content	Develop information to post on the webpage (e.g., Working Papers, meeting information, etc.).	Support	Lead
Contact Information	Provide a comment box, email, and/or phone contact information on the webpage. The contact will receive and filter comments and share with the Project Team, as needed.	Lead	Support
Open House	Update website content, develop MetroQuest survey and presentation, record and edit presentation recording, etc.	Support	Lead
Established Stakeholder Channels	Share opportunities for public feedback through stakeholder networks (advisory committee, technical team, etc.)	Lead	Support
Other Broad Engagement	Additional broader communications and engagement activities (e.g., social media posts, press releases, Google Voice phone line, etc.)	Support	Lead

6 Public Involvement Schedule

6.1 Project Schedule

As shown in the following figure, the District 7 Freight Plan has an approximate 15-month project timeline, beginning in January 2021 and ending by March 31, 2022. Several outreach touchpoints are shown on the figure, aligned with project tasks. Formal meeting time points have been identified in **Dark Blue** (specific meeting dates will be set collaboratively with MnDOT and key stakeholders). An effort was made to group meetings together to conserve time and budget resources.

The Communications Plan will be updated, as needed, should the schedule or desired approach to engagement change during plan development.

Project Management Team

The PMT meetings will be convened monthly to track overall Plan progress. These meetings will be held via conference call.

Advisory Committee

The AC is slated to meet five times, during months 4, 6, 9, 13, and 14.

Technical Team

The TT is slated to meet five times during months 4, 6, 9, 12, and 13. In addition to these set meetings, a subset of TT members may also meet on an ad-hoc basis to drill deeper into select technical topics.

Public Open House

Online outreach efforts in lieu of traditional open houses are slated for months 6 and 14.

Broad Engagement

Online engagement will occur throughout the Plan development process.

Figure 11: District 7 Freight Plan Project Schedule

Number	Description	Time Period (Months)														
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Task 0	Project Management															
Subtask 0.1	Project Kick-Off Meeting (and ongoing project management)															
Subtask 0.2	Literature Review and Initial Data Collection															
Subtask 0.3	Revise Work Plan, as Needed															
Task 1	Stakeholder Engagement															
Subtask 1.1	Public Engagement Plan															
Subtask 1.2	Advisory Committee and Technical Team Meetings				Both		Both			Both		TT	Both	AC		
Subtask 1.3	Freight Stakeholder Consultations															
Subtask 1.4	Broad Stakeholder Engagement															
Task 2	Existing Document and Process Synthesis															
Subtask 2.1	Existing Document and Process Synthesis															
Subtask 2.2	Data Collection, Initial Mapping and Analysis															
Task 3	Data Analysis															
Subtask 3.1	District Freight System Profile															
Subtask 3.2	Freight System Demand (Use)															
Subtask 3.3	Freight System Safety, Condition, and Mobility															
Task 4	SWOT Analysis															
Subtask 4.1	Synthesis of Freight System SWOT															
Subtask 4.2	Develop Freight System Recommendations															
Task 5	Implementation Plan															
Subtask 5.1	Evaluate Infrastructure Projects															
Subtask 5.2	Establish Project Rankings															
Subtask 5.3	Project Concept Selection															
Task 6	Project Feasibility															
Subtask 6.1	Preliminary Design and Project Description															
Subtask 6.2	Planning Level Cost Estimates															
Task 7	Final Report															
Subtask 7.1	Final Report															
Deliverables																
Draft Working Papers		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Draft District Freight Plan						3			4			5		6		
Final District Freight Plan														D		F

Work Activity
 Meeting
 Deliverable

7 Evaluation of Efforts

7.1 Evaluation

Stakeholder outreach will be evaluated by the project team quarterly. Evaluation of techniques will be based on the following (example) criteria.

Quantitative

- How many formal stakeholder meetings have taken place? What was the attendance?
- How many stakeholder consultations have taken place?
- How many hits on the project website? How many downloads of project documents?

Qualitative

- What kind of feedback was received from the stakeholder meetings and other opportunities?
- Were the formats of the meetings appropriate?
- Have stakeholders expressed any particular challenges regarding their participation in the process?
- Have multimodal freight interests been represented? Different geography?
- Have key demographic groups (e.g. Title VI and EJ populations) been represented?

The evaluation of all outreach activities will be summarized and documented as part of the Draft and Final District 7 Freight Plan.

Appendix A: Preliminary Consultation Guide

The following is a preliminary guide to prompt discussion during freight stakeholder consultations.

Consultee Information

Date	
Contact Name/Title	
Contact Details	
Organization Type (Truck-TL/LTL, Rail,) add specifics as available	
Permission to Attribute?	

Background Questions

1. Please provide an overview of your business, including:
 - Where you operate (e.g. national/international regions, states, or cities).
 - The commodities you handle.
 - The transport modes you use.
2. Does your business have expansion or other plans for the future? (District 7-specific, if possible).

Key Issues and Obstacles

3. From your perspective, what are the three most significant transportation issues in District 7? How do these impact the movement of freight?
 - Physical Infrastructure Issues and Obstacles – Examples: Congested locations, access to other modes/regions, safety issues, geometric issues (e.g., tight turning radii, lane drops, low clearance restrictions), truck parking, or other issues.
 - Policy Issues – Examples: Delivery restrictions, route restrictions (e.g., truck-prohibitive bridge weight limits, truck route restrictions), transportation system funding, hours of service requirements, available/skilled workforce, business incentives, or other issues.
4. From your perspective, what are the top three transportation system improvements/solutions to these issues (physical or policy related) in District 7 that would help improve the movement of freight, and how would these help?
5. Do you see a need for a construction project that would improve the flow of freight in the region?
6. From your perspective, what are the top three non-transportation issues in District 7 and what policies might improve these issues?
7. What transportation policies or assets are working well in District 7, or what should MnDOT make sure it does *not* change in the future?

Key Routes

8. What are the most heavily relied-upon routes and corridors for long-distance movements (i.e., interstates or other non-interstate principal routes) and why are those routes important?
9. What are the most heavily relied upon routes and corridors for local delivery within District 7 (i.e., first/last-mile routes critical to getting to points of drop-off/pick-up) and why are those routes important?
10. What are the most critical connections to other modes in District 7 (e.g., grain elevators)?

Other Comments

11. What technological, policy, or other trends do you see impacting the freight system?
12. Please comment on any other issues that may be pertinent to this project?
13. Who else should we consult with during this project?