

September 2013



Long Range Transportation Plan for the Duluth- Superior Metro

It's time again for the Metropolitan Interstate Council (MIC) to update the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) for the Duluth-Superior metro area. Federal law requires an updated plan every four years, but this update is more than just a requirement; it provides an opportunity to reevaluate the needs and opportunities in our area and set the course for the next 20 years of transportation development in the Twin Ports.

For this update, the MIC is seeking to develop a plan that addresses the changing conditions, ongoing challenges and emerging opportunities for transportation in our area; everything from road repair to alternative funding sources. The MIC's approach to all of these issues, however, will be guided by a set of established goals and objectives.

And that is where you come in.

Citizens from both the public and private sectors can provide the MIC with input and help steer the direction of transportation planning in the Duluth-Superior metro. To learn more about opportunities to participate...

**Send your email address to
rwatson@ardc.org
to receive a link to the online
survey**

What are your transportation priorities for the Duluth-Superior metro area for the next 25 years?

For a Metropolitan Planning Organization like the Duluth-Superior MIC, every four years this area's long range transportation priorities need to be assessed to ensure that they result in goals and objectives that continue to address both the present and future opportunities and challenges of our area.



Coordinating federal, state and local goals

The primary function of the MIC is to facilitate local planning efforts that guide the investment of federal transportation funds, which requires coordination between local, state and federal jurisdictions. Policies at the federal and state level are the foundation upon which the transportation goals of the Duluth-

Superior metro area stand. Primary among these policies are the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) planning factors:

- **Support economic productivity**, efficiency, and competitiveness.
- **Increase safety & security** for motorized & non-motorized transportation.
- **Increase accessibility & mobility options** of all user groups.
- **Protect the environment, conserve energy**, and improve the quality of life.
- **Integrate and connect transportation modes** for people and freight.
- **Promote efficient management & operations** of the transportation system.
- **Preserve existing transportation infrastructure.**

Other legislation, such as the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, Clean Air Act amendments of 1990, and the Environmental Justice Order of 1997 also influence local transportation policy.

Identifying transportation objectives for the Twin Ports

Building on the foundation of federal and state policy, specific local objectives for transportation need to be established to address the mix of challenges and opportunities unique to the Twin Ports. For instance, given that this area has more roadway per capita than any other metropolitan area in Minnesota or Wisconsin,* should the preservation of existing transportation infrastructure be emphasized in Duluth-Superior over the building of new facilities? Is greater investment in transit needed to better connect workers to jobs and tourists to businesses? Is enough being invested in our port facilities to keep our area competitive in an expanding global market place? Asking questions like these is an important part of re-evaluating the transportation priorities of our metro area, and the MIC hopes to engage as many area residents and stakeholder groups as it can in helping to answer these questions.



* FHWA Highway Statistics Series - Table HM-712007



Devising strategies & targets to achieve transportation objectives

Employing effective strategies ensures that the transportation objectives identified for the Duluth-Superior area are accomplished. The MIC will work to track the success of each strategy over time, and, to the extent possible, use quantitative measures and performance targets to do so. One example of such measures and targets is the use of pavement quality indexing (PQI), which the MIC may pursue to help meet an objective to preserve the function of existing roads. PQI values (as defined by MnDOT or WisDOT) may be used as a quantitative measure, while a target might be to have less than 20% of Duluth-Superior roads with PQI scores less than 2.0 (“poor”).

The big picture

The ultimate transportation goal for the Twin Ports is to have a transportation system that successfully serves all user groups, is safe, moves both people and goods efficiently, and improves the quality of life for its residents and visitors. Federal, state and local policies are in place to provide us the direction, but efforts at the local level ultimately become the engines that get us there. During 2013 and 2014, the Duluth-Superior MIC will be updating this area’s Long Range Transportation Plan, which will spell out local transportation priorities, goals, objectives, and strategies. The MIC hopes to encourage all those interested to become involved in the process.



THE WAY TO GET INVOLVED:

Website

Visit www.dsmic.org to ask questions, leave comments, take a brief survey and find out about upcoming LRTP related meetings.

Email

Send your email address, or questions and comments to: rwatson@ardc.org

Telephone

(218) 529-7514

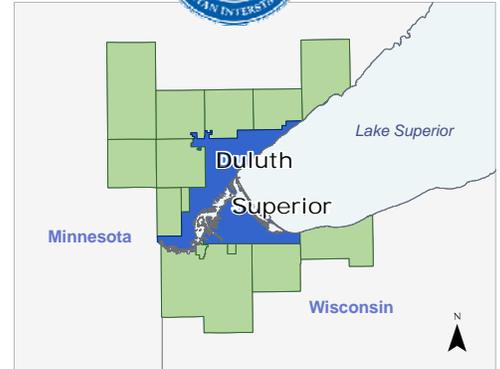
Mail

Metropolitan Interstate Council
221 West First Street, Duluth, MN 55802

Upcoming Meetings

Stay Tuned (to be announced)

What is the Metropolitan Interstate Council?



The MIC is the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization, or MPO. The function of an MPO is to provide the planning framework for how federal transportation dollars are spent in the area. The MIC carries out its responsibilities through the function of a Policy Board and four advisory committees:

MIC Staff:

Professional planning staff that facilitates the MIC’s functions, conducts research and makes planning recommendations.

MIC Policy Board (MIC):

Made up of representatives of each jurisdiction in the metro area, the MIC Board sets policy and grants final approval to decisions.

MIC Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC):

Consisting of traffic engineers and other local transportation professionals, the TAC provides technical oversight and guidance to the MIC.

Harbor Technical Advisory Committee (HTAC):

A stakeholder group representing diverse interests within the Duluth and Superior ports, the HTAC advises the MIC on harbor-related issues.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC):

A stakeholder group representing diverse interests within the Duluth and Superior ports, the HTAC advises the MIC on bike and pedestrian issues and facilities throughout the Twin Ports.