

MARKET RESEARCH



The Market Research Unit conducts quantitative and qualitative research for MnDOT to ensure the voices of our customers are used to inform and improve MnDOT's planning, programs and decisions. Market Research staff:

- Design and manage large research projects, such as MnDOT's annual statewide public opinion omnibus survey, or a survey of the 8-county Twin Cities metro area conducted every five years for the Regional Transportation Management Center to understand public perceptions of the effectiveness of MnDOT's traffic management tools (MnPASS, changeable message signs, 511, etc.).
- Assist, offices, divisions and the department with research and evaluation needs, such as developing and conducting employee/customer/stakeholder surveys, evaluating department-wide efforts and analyzing and reporting results.
- Evaluate MnDOT's public engagement and communication efforts by conducting post project surveys of the communities and stakeholders most affected by projects.

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Omnibus Public Opinion Survey

The Market Research Unit conducts a public opinion survey called the "Omnibus" at the end of every calendar year.

A representative sample of more than 1,000 Minnesota residents are asked to reflect back over the past year and rate MnDOT's products, services and performance and provide input on key areas to influence future decision-making.

In 2016, MnDOT conducted an "alternative Omnibus" to explore new content areas, which aided the design of the 2017 survey. While the public's perceptions of MnDOT have been fairly stable and positive over the years, the Market Research Unit keeps the study fresh by exploring new content each wave while also looking for emerging trends among a consistent set of items, such as public trust and confidence.

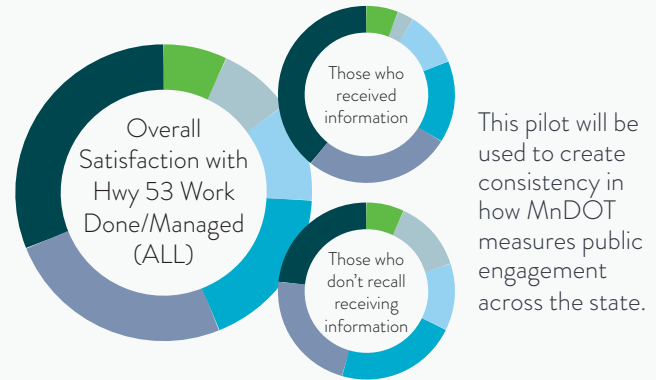
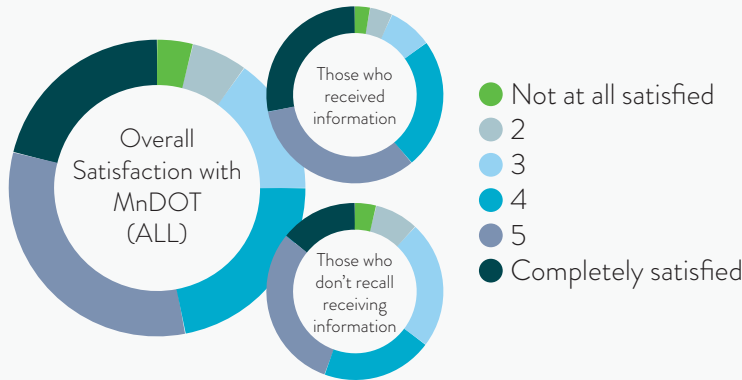
Some of the new areas included in the 2017 wave are: ways in which the public engaged with MnDOT in 2017, frequency of using various modes of transportation, and level of preference for various options to generate additional transportation funding. Final results of the 2017 survey will be available May 1, but a few highlights are provided on the next page.

2017

Evaluating MnDOT's Public Engagement & Communication Efforts

The Market Research Unit piloted a post-project survey in 2017 to evaluate MnDOT's public engagement and communication efforts that took place during the Realignment of Highway 53 project. The survey measured several different components: level of awareness and engagement, methods and tools used to engage, communication processes and project work done or managed, and assessed how each one affects perceptions of the project and MnDOT, overall.

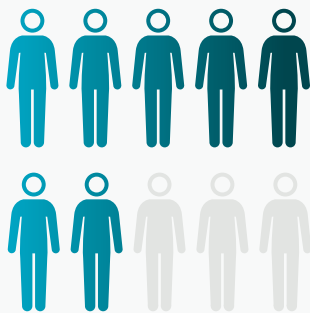
Results of the pilot survey reveal that engaging with the public definitely pays off! In fact, the participants who received information about the project and felt content with the level of feedback they provided were more satisfied with the project and MnDOT overall than those who did not recall receiving information about the project and were not aware of the feedback opportunities.



This pilot will be used to create consistency in how MnDOT measures public engagement across the state.

Omnibus Survey 2017 Highlights

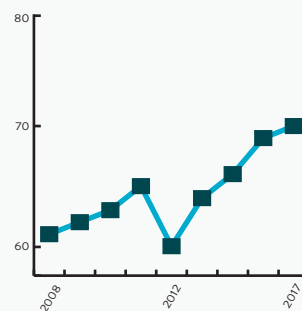
Seven in 10 Minnesotans are satisfied with MnDOT's performance of their mission.



Though 85% of Minnesotans agree that MnDOT should involve the public when developing long-range plans and road improvement projects, about 66% of residents feel involved.



Public confidence in MnDOT's ability to communicate accurate information continues an upward trend since 2012.



Minnesotans perceive their community to be safer for bicycling in 2017 than in 2014, but less safe for pedestrians.



Streamlining State Aid Office's Locally-Initiated Cooperative Agreement Program and Process

The Market Research Unit assisted the State Aid Office in using the C3 (Customer Centered Culture) process to streamline the locally-initiated cooperative agreement program to better serve district offices and local municipalities. The process involved conducting focus groups in every district to collect input from district staff, consultant agencies, and city and county engineers to understand their frustrations and desired outcomes of the program. After gathering feedback and ideas for program improvements from more than 200 participants, recommendations were presented to MnDOT's Senior Leadership Team for approval and are currently being implemented with support from PECS staff.

This is what Greg Coughlin from MnDOT's State Aid Office had to say about the role of the PECS Office: "The PECS Office helped us to facilitate focus groups and understand the importance of engaging and listening to our customers ... to help create and/or foster our department image; to think about data, what the market is telling us, and what customers are saying; and understanding the importance of relationships."