

New on the Web: Mn/DOT's Interactive BaseMap for viewing spatial data

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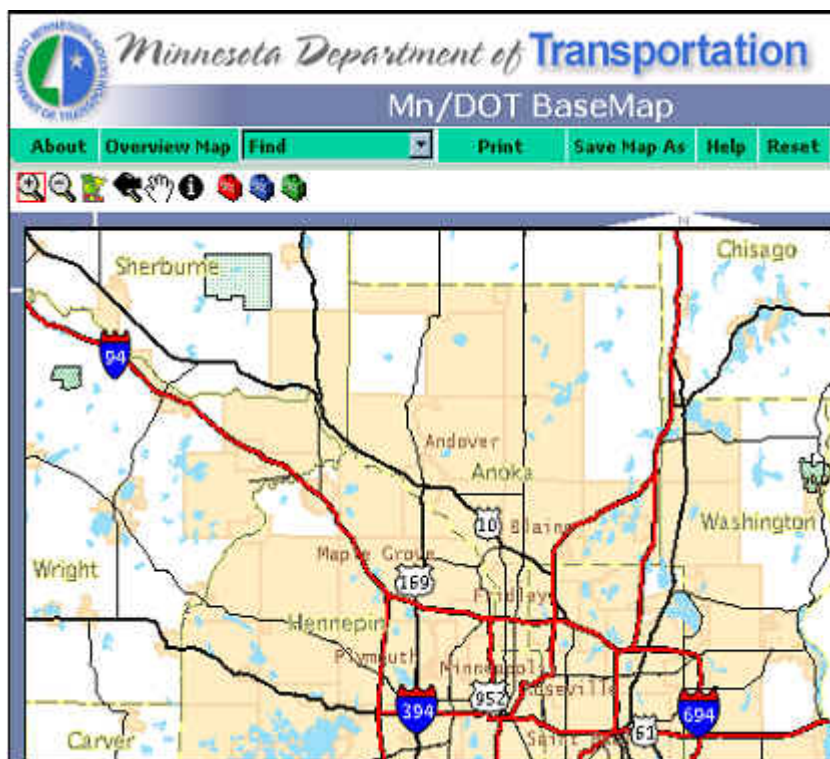
Minnesota Department of Transportation planners, designers, project managers and others now have another digital tool to help them do their jobs: Mn/DOT's new Interactive BaseMap Web service. Although built primarily for internal use, the tool will also serve Mn/DOT partners and the public.

Mn/DOT's BaseMap, which has been around since 1995, is a set of transportation-related data developed specifically for use in a geographic information system. The BaseMap includes both transportation data (public roads, railroads, airports and navigable waters) and boundary information (state, county, city, township, state and federal parks, forests, reservations, streams and lakes). The data is displayed at a scale of 1:24,000.

Previously the BaseMap data was static, updated yearly and accessibly only by CD-ROM. Now, the data is continuously updated, and the new website allows users to view core spatial data in a browser or load the data service in their own software, e.g. ArcGIS or ArcExplorer. Users also may view, save and print maps.

"The data is provided through an easy-to-use web browser and offers the ability to use the service outside of the browser making it easier and faster for Mn/DOT employees and external customers to access the data and helps Mn/DOT work better," said Dan Ross, supervisor, Office of Information Technology.

The new tools help Mn/DOT be more efficient and serve our internal and external customers better. The Interactive BaseMap serves as a core template and is reusable for offices to build upon for their own business area needs. In the future, we will see customized versions of this site display right-of-way data, rail grade crossing data, bikeways data, and Metro District road construction data.



How it works

The Interactive BaseMap opens with a statewide view showing county boundaries and interstates. Basic tools are provided to zoom in and out, to pan and to identify information. When you zoom into a district or county, more roadway features automatically appear.

You can also turn on additional spatial data layers. For example, you can turn on color aerial imagery to provide background information or you can view the annual average daily traffic values on a highway.

Advanced tools are provided for users to query, select, mark up and measure using the graphic user interface. For example, you can locate specific wetlands that are within a specified distance (buffer) of any roadway. You can also add lines, polygons and text to markup an analysis area. The map can then be printed and shared with your customers.

Development of this web service was collaborative, with project initiation and support from the Office of Land Management, application development from the Office of Information Technology, and statewide core BaseMap layers from the Office of Transportation Data and Analysis.

For more information

- Try out the new Interactive BaseMap, at www.dot.state.mn.us/maps/gisweb/
- If you have any questions or comments, contact gis.info@dot.state.mn.us
- See also: *Enhanced Mn/DOT BaseMap information now available online* at www.newsline.dot.state.mn.us/archive/01/sep/12.html#6 (Mn/DOT Newsline, Sept. 12, 2001)

http://www.mngislis.org/newsletter/issue45/MNDOT_Interactive_BaseMap.htm