

Upper Midwest Freight Corridor Study
Steering and Advisory Committee Meetings
March 29-30, 2004
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Monday, March 29, 2004

This afternoon meeting brought the steering committee together to share experiences in freight issues, discuss the chosen supplemental roads for the study, and talk frankly about where this effort is going after the study. A summary of this meeting follows.

Sharing

Minnesota

- Gardner distributed a presentation to the group as a handout (available upon request, www.uppermidwestfreight.org), containing information on several elements of Minnesota DOT's approach to freight issues
 - Development of Statewide Freight Plan, which allowed the purchase of freight flow data
 - Minnesota Freight Advisory Committee
 - The committee is primarily shipper focused and they use the committee for feedback and partnership opportunities--some are industry specific
 - Met with this committee during the development of the freight plan to discuss bottlenecks
- Partnerships on a project by project basis, such as a port with container capabilities (Duluth)
 - Is part of the effort market surveys? Gardner answered that these were done specifically for the air cargo study and want to do it for port of Duluth/Superior
- Question: How do freight issues fit into overall priorities?
 - Gardner explained how this is a "new animal" and is being considered now
- Question: How will these efforts fit into the regional study?
 - Gardner responded that he hopes for the identification of bottlenecks that will be outside state lines, i.e., Chicago and international air shipment. Want to better understand the issues.
- Question: Are you doing statewide modeling of freight?
 - There is a model being developed in the Twin Cities that is working with Met Council (MPO) to identify flows

Wisconsin

- Beaupre' and Stanek distributed a presentation to the group as a handout (available upon request, www.uppermidwestfreight.org), containing information on several elements of Wisconsin DOT's approach to freight issues
 - Beaupre' discussed how freight issues are in the long-range plan
 - WisDOT is preparing a summary of comments from former Rail Plan
 - Current reorganization of WisDOT will impact how freight issues are handled
- Beaupre' brought forward the question of what can Wisconsin do, since some problems are out of borders (Chicago)? The group feels that the Upper Midwest Freight Corridor Study is one way that states can address this issue.
- Question: Do you see intermodal connection activities as being adequate? Is there something that needs change?

- Beaupre responded that there aren't sufficient intermodal capabilities and was not sure what the demand is. For Wisconsin, there were 5 facilities, 2 were closed by CN recently.

Illinois

- Sherman's presentation had a CREATE (Chicago area rail improvement program) emphasis, in which he did an overview of the program using their media guide. This guide had information on the regional benefits of the program.
 - Question: Will they entertain the idea of making changes to the plan once they go to get support from other communities? Unresolved
 - Question: How does it relate to the Midwest Regional Rail Initiative—can these two efforts work together, create synergies?
 - Some capacity relief in Union Station, also working to preserve the footprint of the MWRRI future needs
 - Questions: Where is the money coming from? Does IDOT have a strategy to address the funding issue?
 - Sherman responded that Congressman Lipinski introduced some legislation to set up a Rail Trust – there is a team in place to assist from IDOT. FHWA is really the only source of funding, but there is a feeling that something new will have to be put into place.
 - How does this relate to the study – if freight is expected to grow, this will continue to be a chokepoint – how much of the system is being repackaged and how much is staying put? This question was not resolved during discussions.

Indiana

- Beck discussed current freight related activities in Indiana involving the DOT
 - Agency is addressing CSX abandonment plans
 - Economic benefits of freight transportation being looked at by a consortium of research groups, including Indiana universities
 - Update of commodity flow data currently being worked on by Indiana University
 - Special projects office, led by Ron Thomas, has undertaken a freight advisory group with tours being one of their activities
 - Purdue University projects
 - Transportation/Distribution/Logistics study; commissioned by the Central Commission (businesses in central Indiana)
 - Jobs in transportation, how do their wages compare with other industries and the future trends of this area (Department of Workforce Development is involved with this effort)
 - Economic Impact Study on the burden of the time zone differences to logistics companies
- Sigman reported on the Ports summit; led by Ports of Indiana

Manitoba

- Chadha presented several projects related to freight in the Manitoba Ministry of Transport
 - Comprehensive planning efforts for all of Manitoba
 - National truck survey supplement
- Chadha also addressed some broad issues they are dealing with that are freight-related

- Question of fairness for how much they get back from federal sources (surface transportation)
- Environmental costs, etc are not included in the decision making process. There may be a need for "full cost accounting."

Iowa

- O'Riley reported on several freight-related initiatives
 - Updating long-range transportation plan (Iowa in Motion)
 - Definite railroad component, new perspective that a business doesn't need to be sitting on a rail line to be served by rail
 - O'Riley also reported on "focus groups" within the state
 - Purchased 2001 Reebie data with 10 year forecast, verifying that data with road counts

Ohio

- Rhodes of Ohio DOT grouped her state's efforts into five distinct categories (research, long-range plan, education and training, partnerships, and projects and funding)
- Research
 - NEXUS Ohio: Study of the ports in Ohio (inter-agency cooperation)
 - Cleveland/Canada ferry study (short sea shipping)
 - Air Cargo Study of smaller airports
 - Truck only lane study
 - Intermodal connectors
 - NE Ohio study to look at what improvements can be made to bring back the lost manufacturing jobs
 - Roadway Impacts of Freight study
- Long-Range Plan
 - Almost every chapter has freight component, the introduction even has a freight example
- Education and Training
 - Forum in 2002 regarding the Roadway Impacts study
 - FHWA Training course
 - Ohio Transportation Engineering Conference
 - NEOTC
 - MPO exchange on freight (Philadelphia—Columbus)
- Partnerships
- Projects and Funding
 - Short line rail opportunities
 - Educating the leadership
 - Norfolk Southern double stack initiative from Chicago to Norfolk

Open Discussion

Do any of the states have activities that join the transportation agency with the trade or development agencies?

- Minnesota: no integrated process with transportation and economic development agencies
- Illinois: some connection because each has infrastructure funds, but the economic development agency can be more speculative

- Wisconsin: Most of the highway improvements helped strengthen the urban centers – not necessarily addressing freight issues – Wisconsin's Corridors 2020 is focused on economic development – transportation is almost always a separate animal
- Iowa: works more with local governments than with the department of economic development – certain pots of money are in certain hands

Corridor Selection

Comments

- There was discussion on the exclusion of interstates 70 and 74 by the steering committee. Cater and Dysard said that I-74 serves as the only alternative for going around Chicago and would like to see the entire stretch of I-74 included in the study. Rhodes led a group that wanted to have I-70 included in the study network of roads.
 - Kawamura and other researchers maintained that roads were either included or excluded by a combination of factors, such as percentage of trucks, daily truck traffic, and freight flows using GeoFreight. **The only road that would be reviewed after the meeting would be I-74.**
 - Gardner asked if value of flows was used for the analysis. Kawamura responded that this data is not available.

Next Steps

Comments

- Regarding the lack of private sector interest, the group agreed that they need action items get them involved
 - What are we giving them? Their resources are constrained too, asking a lot to attend multi-day meetings. Show them benefits in their bottom-line from participating at this stage.
- Need to have Michigan and Federal Highway Administration come to the table
- One participant asked how are we dealing with improvements that are already in the planning stages or implementation stages? Research team responded that we can incorporate current improvements that are certain.
- Sigman noted that he found out about CREATE through our meetings and this prompted him to meet with those representatives. He said that we facilitated this bi-state cooperation.
- Who's going to sell this? It's very political
 - Get a couple of CAO's to buy in
 - The executive summary needs to be very simple, not more than a page. Possibly, take that summary and turn it into a short presentation.
 - Mississippi Valley AASHTO presentation
- Some key questions from the stakeholders for the research team to think about in the near future
 - What will be the impact to my state?
 - Can we quantify the benefits of freight improvements in terms of jobs and dollars?
 - If I fix this problem, how will it help my state?
 - Where is this report going to go?