

Upper Midwest Freight Corridor Study

State Meeting Summary

October 2003-December 2003

Basic Meeting Structure

1. Study Overview
2. Key Dates
3. Sub-Project Details
4. Next Steps

General Participants: State DOT point person, FHWA divisional office contact, major MPO contact, other State DOT representatives (average about 4 participants per meeting, plus study management)

Comments from Overview

- Wisconsin: There is a need for a 1-2 page summary of the project to present to superiors
 - Timeline
 - Compress tasks
 - August meeting
- Illinois: The expectation is to get the states on a common ground (Illinois)
- Illinois: Administrative Issues-still a touchy issue, should not make recommendations
- Iowa: O'Riley discussed the state's concerns over giving up control over state freight decisions, but pointed out that the region can work together on those decisions

Comments on Key Dates

- Distance capabilities (WI, MN, IL, IN)
- Ohio: For the March meeting, have the right people there. Spell out what they are going to get out of that meeting.
- Illinois other people:
 - John Schaubach, IDOT, Bureau of Railroads (works with CREATE project)
 - Dick Smith, IDOT (possibly Milwaukee meeting)

Feedback for Sub-Projects

Capacity

- Need to review why Wisconsin has data incompatibility issues in the capacity area: Michael Erickson is willing to help
- Will data collected be on the website at the end of the project? Will it be accessible by the public? <end Wisconsin>
- Look at bottlenecks beyond the highways
- Examine more closely where capacity comes together, causing a bottlenecks
- What if an incident happened on the corridor, what would be the impacts?
- Railroad capacity also depends on the signaling and control systems used on segments in addition to the system "physical capacity"

- Mississippi River has excess capacity, approx. 2/3 of up-bound barge tows are empty <end Minnesota>
- Indiana explained their statewide model of travel demand. That led to their suggestion of using the NHS for the network analysis. ***This topic should be revisited at steering committee meeting.***
- Rail; rationalizing the capacity <end Indiana>
- Participants showed interest in how railroad capacity was calculated
 - Talk about their work from the pre-Conrail days
 - It's a lot more than the track and signals <end Iowa>

Demand/Usage

- Willingness to help out with whatever data issues we have
 - Rail accident data is available <end Wisconsin>
- Freight Analysis Framework: how does it fit in? Answer: we are using that data in the demand analysis. <end Indiana>
- Iowa does have Reebie data for their state
 - Base year (2001) vs. Forecasted (10 yrs. out)
- Lack of contact with Iowa on data, this will be relayed to the research team <end Iowa>

Performance Measures

- Additional resources
 - TRB Special Report 246
 - TRB Special Report 271
 - FHWA's Freight Planning List Serv, recent postings on performance measures <end Wisconsin>
- Minnesota continues to work on freight performance measures, with several iterations used since the release of the Freight Advisory Committee report on metrics (1999)
- At this time, there is influence from investment management on metrics
- There was discussion of the idea of tracking some of the performance measures and to involve the private sector with this <end Minnesota>
- Closer look should be examined for Washington state work on this topic
- Discussion on the response rate from the surveys. Quinn has experience with private sector surveys to be shared with research team.
- Discussion on performance measures used for capacity measurements, different measures explain different things. Goode explained confusion over measuring vehicle counts versus axle counts. <end Indiana>
- Iowa putting emphasis on performance measures in updated state transportation plan
 - 1997 plan called for performance measures to be used in future
 - Wittwer suggested NCHRP report to be useful for this effort, follow-up needed
- State plan will have a focus on freight
 - Creation of freight working group is assisting with this effort. This working group is made up of DOT people, utilizing the Reebie data and

Freight Analysis Framework. Also working with Barilla, a major freight center in Ames, Iowa. <end Iowa>

Administrative Issues

- Interview suggestion: Bill Gardner of Wisconsin Southern RR
- Hickman: Within an MPO, the ITS architecture should be the same
- I-35 corridor should be on CVISN, possible contact is John Whited in Iowa
- Need contact with GCM Corridor: John Berg
- Also need contact with WisDOT: consultant working with Phil Decabooter
- Tomah sign to be fed information from multiple states
- 511 is another ITS project with multiple states
- **Just providing what each state is doing on ITS may be enough for this project** <end Wisconsin>
- Mn/DOT is aware of the concerns and issues surrounding the differences in Truck Size & Weight regulations from state to state within the corridor.
- Northwest Passage Pooled Fund, MN was the lead state on that effort
- Should take a closer look at the I-35 efforts to develop a clearinghouse or web portal of ITS architecture and efforts, also permitting needs. (North American International Trade Corridor Development Plan – work completed in December 2001 by Booz Allen Hamilton, et al.)
- Should get the private sector to elevate an issue, such as CVISN and the problems of no standards for ITS <end Minnesota>
- Trucking industry has been innovative with ITS (even small company in small town Ill.) <end Illinois>
- Indiana has program where rest area kiosks share information, funded by private sector such as hotels. <end Indiana>
- Discussed the need to really understand the business to understand the administrative issues that go with it. There is a lack of clear understanding of the business in Iowa, due to the fact that they see this as a federal issue.
- Nebraska
 - Found a way to work with the railroad sector
 - Pay for RR improvements from RR sources
 - Tax on rail fuel to pay for grad-crossings
 - Crossing fee
 - Car-mile fee
- Iowa's Railway Finance Authority
 - Created after several railroad bankruptcies in the 1980s
 - Bonding power not utilized
- Discussion on Wisconsin's property tax on rolling stock <end Iowa>

Synthesis

- Suggested that data issues be made a element to focus on
 - Use of data
 - Management of data
 - How to get this to decision makers
 - How do we apply the data to actual improvements

- How does the government structure affect planning? <end Wisconsin>
- Quinn emphasized that this area should look at how the region can work together, how does the region implement across the states?
- The Gary-Chicago-Milwaukee Corridor
 - Never funded from FHWA
 - All cooperative within the states and metros
 - Top-down planning or bottom-up? This led to discussion on how these groups come together through planning and decisions, but then diverge on issues of funding. (see diagram on notes)
- Heartland Intermodal Partnership (encouraged to work with this group)
- Purdue study: Does transportation drive manufacturing, or other way around? <end Indiana>
- Other corridor studies, need to inform these groups, need to use their findings
 - I-35
 - I-29
 - Red River
 - Northern Great Plains
 - Toward New Horizons, www.ngplains.org, Northeast-Midwest Institute, Crookston, MN
 - NASCO: North America's Superhighway Coalition, www.nasco-itc.com

Next Steps/How does this move on?

- There should be a federal role in championing this project
- Economic representatives should be included in talks about our efforts, if economic issues are a reason for this study.
- What's the prevailing interest? Who will have the beneficial interest in recommendations that may come from the study, i.e., private sector interests, modal interests, community interests, etc. (Minnesota Air Cargo study, as example)
- Need to identify/emphasize the on-going rationale to continue to pursue a corridor approach to these issues.
- Recommendations:
 - Incentives to be a corridor coalition
 - Needs to have a clear public benefit objective and demonstrate a positive cost-benefit to the states. <end Minnesota>
- The states must come to the table; this should not be treated as just another consultant study and get shelved.
- Any possibility to work with Re-Authorization?
- Spell out the link between results and next steps, detailing what the states should do next
- For the March meeting, have the right people there. Spell out what they are going to get out of that meeting. <end Ohio>
- Forecasting with capacity versus demand, giving examples to the policy makers. This could lead to items such as:
 - Compelling pictures
 - Economic impacts
- How do we present this to the higher level? Maybe these items give us a start. <end Indiana>

- Understand the nature of the issues of the problems
- What if we don't do anything; what are we facing?
- Economic development
 - Involve the economic development people
 - Economic impacts
 - Address the political side, have to sell it
- Inform and educate
 - The general public don't know what it takes to get the goods they demand
 - Negative connotation must change
 - How bad can it be?
- Improvements in state don't matter as much if they don't have regional compatibility
- Hope to use this study as a springboard; it would be a lot of money just to collect data
- Get planners to work together
- Again, don't tell the states what to do, rather have the states work together

Other

- Wisconsin: Will the individual reports or pieces of the study go out to the steering committee before they are released?
- Minnesota: Truck only lanes have been researched in other areas for their capabilities to decrease traffic in other lanes, handle increased loads, and even be open to tolls – is this an area for possible exploration in the study?
- Minnesota: Getting Chicago fixed for rail would help MN. What can we do to improve or maintain the link to Chicago?
- Ohio: Quicker modal interfaces: methodology for interface of truck and rail around 30 minutes
 - Steel highway
 - Reduces cost
 - Economic feasibility
- Ohio's Short Line Railroad project
 - Cataloging of industries and their distribution patterns
 - Matching a short line railroad with that industry
- Indiana: Toll facilities, how do we work with this group?
- Iowa: DM&E contact - Lynn Anderson