Upper Midwest Freight Corridor Study Proposal

Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Minnesota, Ohio, Wisconsin

Problem Statement

The Upper Midwest serves as a critical corridor for domestic and international freight moving in all directions. It is projected that these freight movements will increase significantly in the future. While both the private and the public sectors agree that this important issue must be addressed quickly, neither sector is totally prepared to deal with the anticipated impacts of this projected increase. Current practices will no longer be sufficient to meet the increased demands on the infrastructure and/or increased costs associated with freight transport.

Shifts in federal and public agency policy relative to infrastructure management and expansion, budgeting decisions and staff resource allocations have and will impact the safe and efficient movement of goods within the region. At the same time private sector interests insist on an approach that is equitable for all modes and allows industry to remain competitive in the region. Without proper collaboration and communication between the two sectors, and between the states and planning agencies of the region, the impacts of projected freight growth will pose an even greater challenge.

Vision

To establish a regional approach for improving freight transportation in the Upper Midwest based on a multi-state, multi-jurisdictional partnership of public and private sector stakeholder interests. This partnership will consider and address short- and long-term issues surrounding anticipated increases in freight movement within the region and the likely impacts on the region's infrastructure and economic health.

Mission

- Support improved efficiency of freight flows, mobility, access, security, and safety of freight transportation in the region
- Improve reliability and economic overhead, enhance competitiveness
- Recognize that freight transportation is modal agnostic and work to meet the changing needs of the freight shippers and carriers in the Upper Midwest

Goals

Short Term Goals **(those that are attainable during the initial study)**

- Compile and synthesize existing plans and efforts
- Create a setting for coalition building through regular communications and data sharing
- Identify and document the conditions and needs across all modes of freight transportation for the identified corridors in the region
- Understand the market activities that generate goods for shipping that impact this region
- Look at the possibility for applying standardized designs for key infrastructure – interchanges, weigh stations, or administrative practices

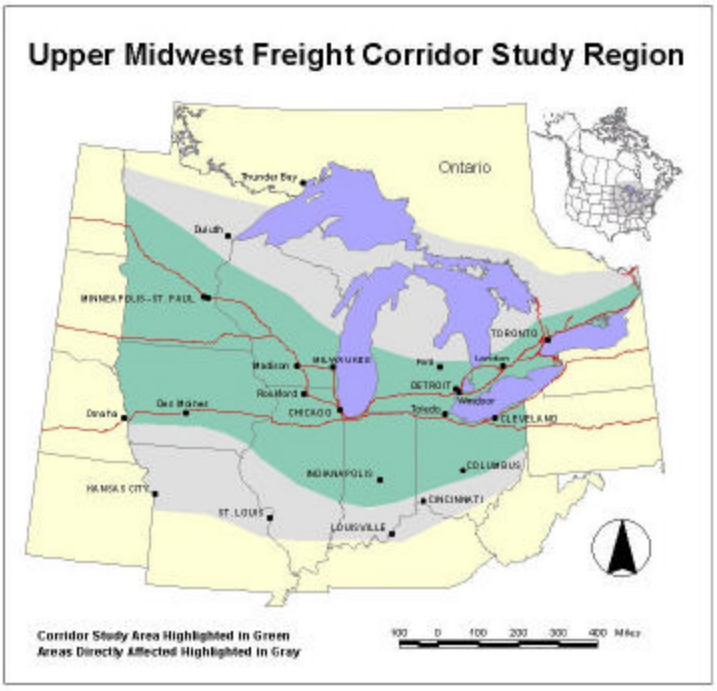
Long Term Goals **(those beyond the initial study, but would be helped from its efforts)**

- Coordinate existing plans and planning efforts of public and private sector stakeholders
- Build ongoing relationships among parties such that freight remains a forefront issue
- Establish a formal Upper Midwest Freight Coalition, if appropriate
- Place the region in a strong position to secure federal funds to enhance the corridor by earmarked funds and designation as a Corridor of National Significance

Study Area

I-94 / I-90 / I-80 : Links Ohio, Michigan, Ontario, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, Iowa and Minnesota

- The corridor study will be defined by the I-94/I-90/I-80 corridor that connects the Upper Midwest 7-state region as the starting point for the analysis.
- Feeder routes that are identified by states will also be analyzed.
- The area of analysis will include a regional assessment of the freight activities that impact this corridor. This means that all impacted modes and markets that generate and/or receive goods will be considered in the analysis.



Benefits of Participation

- Initiate the first step toward establishing a formal regional coalition that works collaboratively to address regional and national freight flow issues;
- Help place the region in a stronger position to solicit federal funding support for enhancement of the corridor through several mechanisms such as applying for earmarked funding, and applying to designate the corridor as a Corridor of National Significance;
- Enable both sectors to leverage the resources and strengths each has toward developing a comprehensive approach toward freight;
- Share our understanding of the processes and practices employed by neighboring states relative to freight;
- Consider project planning and delivery using a collaborative approach;
- Bridge the gap between the public and private sectors relative to decision making practices; and,
- Build on existing studies and efforts to ensure that duplication of efforts is avoided or at least minimized.

Phase 1: Inventory

Timeline for completion: 14 months

Proposed Study Approach

- Research is divided among participating Universities
- Subcommittees from the Steering and Advisory Committees are formed around these inventory areas as appropriate
- Preliminary results to be presented at a **meeting scheduled 2-3 months into this phase**. This meeting will include Steering and Advisory Committee members, and other invited participants to discuss the results and any desired modifications to the focus and direction of the study, as well as identification of next steps.
- Further results to be presented at a **meeting 9-10 months into this phase**. This meeting will include the same participants as the earlier meeting.
- A **workshop scheduled at the end of this phase** will present findings from the inventory and ask participants to identify next steps. The Steering Committee will also vote on continuing efforts to work as a region on freight transportation issues.

Inventory

- **Performance Metrics**
  - Analyze what states in the region and other regions are using to evaluate improvements related to freight transportation. This part will also involve a survey of stakeholders to look at alternative measures for freight transportation projects. If resources allow, analysis of current benchmarking procedures in the region will also be done.

- **Synthesis of Related Projects**
  - Identify other multi-jurisdictional projects related to freight transportation in order to capitalize on past experience. The expected deliverable would be a summary of best practices from these projects, with the possibility of translating them now or later into the Upper Midwest Freight Transportation Corridor Study.
  - Identify all freight transportation planning related projects in the corridor region. This will include statewide plans, MPO plans, multi-jurisdictional plans or recommendations from other sources that deal with the improvement of freight transportation in the region. This summary could be useful for identifying duplicative efforts or gaps in planning.

- **Demand**
  - Collect existing freight flow data from various sources, such as state DOTs or the federal government. Data to be used will be reliable and accurate for the uses of our study. If there are gaps in the data for parts of the corridor, this will be noted to the Steering Committee before analysis.

- Analyze the data collected from sources. The objective of the analysis will be to give the stakeholders of the study useful information on how goods move to, from and within the region. If resources and existing data allow, future growth in freight movements will be looked at.

- **Capacity**
  - Work with public agencies and the private sector to identify capacity levels for all modes of transportation along the corridor and feeding into the corridor where appropriate. This information will be analyzed to identify areas of congestion that disrupt the flow of freight.
    - Highways - truck volumes, condition assessments, intermodal connectors, level of service as defined by DOTs
    - Rail - number of trains/day, typical cargo
    - Ports and river system - volume of freight moved through top ports in the region
    - Airport - volumes of freight and passengers for top airports in the region

- **Administrative**
  - Research the current regulations in each state of the corridor, specifically
    - Hazardous Material transportation
    - Load and size limits
  - Summarize these regulations and the processes that go with them for each state. Priority will be given to surface transportation modes, although air and water transportation regulations in the above three areas will be looked at also. The researcher will also examine the possibility for applying standardized designs for key infrastructure and administrative practices.

Timeline-Phase 1

Project duration: 14 months

Proposed start date: August 1, 2003

Proposed end date: September 30, 2004

Date	Events/Meetings	Program Management	Research Projects
2003			
February			Research Work Meeting (Chicago)
March		Website Registered Advisory Committee Development	
April		MOUs signed and returned to ODOT Pooled Fund Setup Website Redirection Advisory Committee Development (cont.) Prepare for Committee Meeting in June	Research Contract Setup
May		Pooled Fund Setup (cont.) Prepare for Committee Meeting in June (cont.) Website Skeleton	Research Contract Setup (cont.)
June	Steering/Advisory Committee (1 day)	Website Full Pooled Fund Setup (cont.) Prepare for Committee Meeting (cont.)	Present at Steering/Advisory Committee Meeting Research Contract Setup (cont.)
July	Mississippi Valley AASHTO Conference		Research Contract Setup (cont.)
August		Newsletter	Begin Contract Work
September			
October			
November	Ohio Transportation Engineering Conference (1 day)		
December		Prepare for Committee Meeting in February Newsletter	
2004			
January	TRB, Washington DC	Prepare for Committee Meeting in February (cont.)	
February	Steering/Advisory Committee (1 day)		Present at Steering/Advisory Committee Meeting
March		Newsletter	
April			
May			
June			Draft Report Due
July	Workshop/ Decision to Continue (2 days)		Present at Workshop (ALL)
August		Newsletter	Final Reports Deadline
September		Final Reports	

Budget-Phase 1

Timeframe	Item	Subtotal	Totals
	Project Management		
Entire	MRUTC	50,000.00	
Project	University of Toledo	10,000.00	
	Project Management Total		**60,000.00**
	Inventory		
	Performance Metrics	20,000.00	
14 Months	Synthesis of Related Projects	25,000.00	
(3/03-4/04)	Demand	100,000.00	
	Capacity	100,000.00	
	Administrative	70,000.00	
	Inventory Total		**315,000.00**
	Meetings & Workshop		
April 2003	Steering/Advisory Committee Meeting	5,000.00	
	Steering Committee Travel Support	5,000.00	
November 2003	Steering/Advisory Committee Meeting	5,000.00	
	Steering Committee Travel Support	5,000.00	
May 2004	Workshop on Identifying Needs from the Final Inventory	10,000.00	
	Steering Committee Travel Support	7,500.00	
	Meetings & Workshops Total		**37,500.00**
	Phase 1 Total		**412,500.00**

The funding for this initial study would come from a pooled fund, which would consist of a contribution of $60,000 from each participating state. The balance of the budget ($52,500) would be covered by the Midwest Regional University Transportation Center.

It should also be noted that both the Midwest Regional University Transportation Center at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and the Intermodal Transportation Institute at the University of Toledo have contributed a considerable amount of resources and staff time to the formation of this initial study.

Proposed Study Management Organization

Membership

Steering Committee

- Membership contingent on equal funding contribution
- Membership on this committee limited to public agencies (similar to a pooled fund approach)

  State Department of Transportation (with voting rights)
  - One representative from each participating state/province

  Federal Highway Administration (ex-officio, with no voting rights)
  - One representative from each participating state

  Project Management Team (ex-officio, with no voting rights)
  - Midwest Regional University Transportation Center at the University of Wisconsin-Madison
  - University of Toledo Intermodal Transportation Institute

Advisory Committee

Members will include potential representation from the following and others:

Metropolitan Planning Organizations
Port Authorities
Army Corp, Coast Guard, other military
Private Sector (*Such as:* rail, intermodal provider, barge, motor carrier, air, industrial, retail, highway user groups, associations)
Academic

Roles and Responsibilities

Steering Committee

- Guide study focus and set direction
- Get buy-in from stakeholder interests within their jurisdictions
- Vote on actions and decisions relative to the study
- Meet monthly via conference call, meet face-to-face three (3) times during study
- Members of this committee and the Advisory Committee may form smaller subcommittees around specific areas of the inventory if appropriate
- NOTE: if invited Advisory Committee members opt to contribute funding toward the study in equal shares to State DOTs, they will be given voting rights on the Steering Committee

Project Management Team

- Organize and coordinate efforts of study
- Disseminate information relative to decisions and activities of the Committees
- Actively participate in Steering Committee Meetings (as non-voting members)
- Manage contracts and projects for each phase of the study
- Coordinate Workshops and other outreach efforts

Advisory Committee

- Participate in Steering Committee Meetings
- Provide perspective, expertise, and ideas on proposed direction of the study
- Members of this committee and the Steering Committee may form smaller subcommittees around specific areas of the inventory if appropriate

Deliverables

Reports

- Inventory Reports
    - Performance Metrics, summary of what is being done and possible alternatives
    - Synthesis of related multi-jurisdictional projects, with best practices highlighted
    - Synthesis of freight transportation plans, projects and recommendations within the corridor's region
    - Demand analysis
    - Capacity analysis
    - Hazardous Materials regulations and processes for each state in the region
    - Load and size limits regulations and processes for each state in the region

Meetings/Conferences

- Monthly Steering Committee Conference Calls
- Steering/Advisory Committee Meetings
- Final Workshop

Communication

- Quarterly Newsletters
- Website development and maintenance - giving updates to the efforts
- Minutes from all meetings
- Others as needed