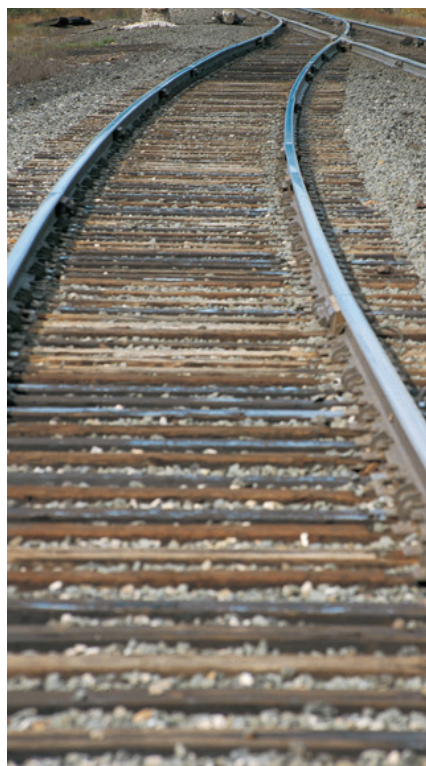




In this issue

- 1 MAFC Kicks off Regional Freight Plan
- 2 The More Things Change...
- 6 A Freight System Design for Urbanized Milwaukee
- 7 MAFC Outreach Materials
- 8 We're now the Mid-America Freight Coalition



MAFC Kicks off Regional Freight Plan

MID-AMERICA FREIGHT COALITION

REGIONAL FREIGHT PLAN



PLANNING MEETING

HILTON MILWAUKEE CITY CENTER
MILWAUKEE, WI ■ DECEMBER 9-10, 2010

On December 9-10, 2010, the MAFC Technical Committee met in Milwaukee, Wisconsin to begin the process of creating a regional freight plan for the ten states of the Coalition. MAFC Facilitator Ernie Wittwer led the meeting. Eight of the ten MAFC states sent representatives: Britt Edwards (Illinois DOT), Keith Bucklew (Indiana DOT), Eddie Dawson (Kansas DOT), Lynn Soporowski (Kentucky Transportation Cabinet), Jesse Gwilliams (Michigan DOT), John Tompkins (Minnesota DOT), Mark Locker (Ohio DOT), and Maria Hart and David Leucinger (Wisconsin DOT). Iowa and Missouri were unable to send representatives. CFIRE Researcher Bob Gollnik and CFIRE Communications Coordinator Steve Wagner also attended.

The group first met in plenum and considered the general objectives of a regional freight plan and how it would be useful for the ten MAFC states as well as the Coalition as a whole. These general objectives included:

- Uniformity and consistency applied to freight movements across the regions, especially regarding permitting, truck sizes and weights, and oversize/overweight rules.
- Development of major routes and corridors as regional entities that account for multi-modal and inter-modal aspects.
- The use of transportation and the movement of freight to support and encourage a regional approach to economic development.
- Identification of bottlenecks, particularly at intermodal connections, how they effect freight movements throughout the entire region, and how they might be alleviated.
- Identification of unused freight capacity in different areas and modes and how this capacity might be better used.
- Support for disaster planning, scenario planning, and incident management when a major node or corridor is crippled by forces of man or nature.
- Environmental considerations such as air quality, fuel efficiency, land use, and mitigation of invasive species.

Underlying all of these objectives lies the general consensus that a regional freight plan should provide the basis for fostering collaboration among the Coalition states, and well as for pursuing multi-state projects at the federal level.

After the group had identified these objectives, Ernie Wittwer folded them into a discussion of the results of the survey sent to MAFC states in preparation for this workshop and guided them in the isolation of a set of themes

Continued on Page 3...

The More Things Change...

Ernie Wittwer, MAFC Facilitator



We've made it through another election. Our present political leaders and candidates for election spent most of the past year lamenting the state of our economy. Unfortunately, with only a few exceptions, the solutions offered seemed to consist mainly of happy talk and statements about the terrible harm that government does to economic initiative. Happy talk has never solved anything, and all the negative comments about

government ignore the fact that government plays several key roles in supporting a healthy economy.

One of the things government must do is build and maintain public infrastructure: roads, bridges, public transportation, airports, water systems, and so on. You don't have to accept the annual ratings of the American Society of Civil Engineers to understand the state of our roadways. They often assign grades—C-, D, and F—for the condition of our public infrastructure that we would find unacceptable if our kids brought them home from school. Really all you have to do is get in your car and drive almost any freeway in the country. The vibrations and shocks that reach you through the steering wheel and the seat will tell you the pavement is in poor condition. Of course, in too many cases the vibrations will not be a problem because the congestion is so bad that you'll never reach posted speeds.

If the drive alone doesn't convince you of the problem, get off the freeway and on to a two-lane highway or a street and stop at a bridge. Take a moment to stop and look under that bridge. The chances are very good that you'll see exposed rebar, pock marks in the underside of the deck where concrete has fallen, or steel girders that are well rusted.

The simple truth is that we have used up the investments made by my parent's generation—the so-called Greatest Generation. We have failed to invest adequately to even maintain what they left us, let alone extend it for our children and grandchildren. Yet our leaders are unwilling or unable to understand the tie between that infrastructure and economic well-being of the United States. Many of those leaders like to talk about the growing competition from China, India, or Brazil. What they don't talk about is the huge investment that these and other countries are making in their infrastructure, transportation and otherwise, to support their economic growth. Those same leaders often speak about the need for a "level-playing-field" for American companies and workers. Typically, they mean labor laws and environmental

protections. They never seem to understand that an efficient, reliable infrastructure is the foundation of that level-playing field.

So what are we doing about this? Nearly nothing. The last federal surface transportation bill expired more than fourteen months ago. Some financial slight of hand or a tax increase will be needed to support another continuing resolution to keep the federal aid programs moving at 2009 levels. It now seems unlikely that anything more than stop-gap measures will be considered before the 2012 elections.

Even those few people who are talking about transportation are focused on funding and revenue. None seems concerned about the issue of nationwide transportation policy for the country. The ongoing saga of higher-speed passenger rail should demonstrate the need for such a national approach. After fifteen years of effort by the Midwestern states and many others, the federal government finally came up with real money, as a part of the economic recovery program, to support the construction of passenger rail. Now the Governors-elect of two of those Midwestern states have declared their intention to not accept passenger rail funding. While you may not agree with me that passenger rail would be a good investment, it's clear that offering individual states the option of opting out is a really bad way to accomplish any national initiative.

We as a country have to come together and invest in those things that separate us from third-world countries: transportation infrastructure, water systems, and energy grids. Those of us in the transportation industry must do a better job of demonstrating the importance of that investment to elected leaders. Those of us who pay the taxes must stop thinking that we can have all the benefits of a developed country without paying the taxes that are needed to support that developed country. If we can do these two things, perhaps our elected leaders will begin to take the steps that are critical for our collective future.

—Ernie

Continued from Page 1...

that would in turn drive the discussion for the rest of the workshop.

- Stakeholder involvement
- Economic development
- Performance measurement
- Data
- Environment

Groups of two to three dealt with each of the themes. They later reported the results of their discussion to the rest of the group. This brought the first day of the meeting to a close. Wittwer then combined the results of the small-group discussions with a draft plan of approach that he had previously circulated to the group; this formed the basis of the second day of discussions.

Stakeholder Involvement

Engaging a diverse and representative group of stakeholders is critical to the regional freight plan. This group outlined a multi-prong approach for gathering information and feedback. The Coalition will work through industry associations such as the American Trucking Association, state trucking associations, the Council of Supply Chain Management, as well as state, metropolitan, and regional chambers of commerce. Researchers will also contact and interview a diverse set of individual carriers and shippers, with a special focus on the larger companies that operate regionally and nationally within the MAFC region. In addition to state DOTs, the group will also seek input from a diverse cross-section of metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs), to gather both feedback and localized freight planning and industry information. Researchers will also seek to identify and gather input from geographically prominent industry clusters such as timber, automotive parts, agricultural commodities, extractive industries, and energy producers. In order to gather this information most effectively, the Coalition will use a combination of tools: a targeted online survey, individual scripted interviews with key stakeholders, and an online community for ongoing discussion and engagement.

Economic Development

Fostering economic development lies at the heart of the regional freight plan. Researchers will begin by documenting the MAFC region's high-level demographic, land mass, population, and share of Gross Domestic Product (GDP). They will then consider what makes up this GDP to identify

the reach of industry-related inbound and outbound commodity flows, as well as through-movements for the region. The group will examine freight flows from the point of view of corridors as well as nodes in order to bring state-level planning into a broader, regional context. Research in this area will also focus on the identification of bottlenecks, choke points, and how shippers and carriers and key industries are adapting to or tolerating these problems. This analysis will approach regional freight planning from an industry-specific point of view by identifying the major industries for the region, as well as how they are interconnected and how they support and sustain the economy of the MAFC region and the United States in the global market. This industry-oriented approach will inform the structure of the entire MAFC regional freight plan.

Performance Measurement

Performance measurement is crucial to understanding whether projects and the investment of time and money are having the desired effect. The group will leverage industry best practices from AASHTO, the MAFC states, the US DOT, and specific federal initiatives to create a set of performance measures that are substantive, usable, and understandable to key stakeholders in both the public and private sectors. The group will work to establish both a key set of measures as well as a common understanding of what each measure means. Researchers will begin by considering the US DOT's key strategic objectives (safety, state of good repair, economic competitiveness, livable communities, environmental sustainability), as well as accessibility, reliability, speed, and benefit-cost.

Data

Reliable and comprehensive data is required for both freight planning and for performance management. This requires high-level data about the region itself, as well as about freight movements, commodity flows, and transportation infrastructure. In order to establish consistency across state borders, researchers will mine readily available national sources for high-level demographic and economic data (BEA, BLS, NASS, Department of Commerce, etc.), commodity flows (FAF3, etc.), and freight movements (BTS, ATRI traffic data, etc.) to create a regional picture. Raw traffic data sources such as automatic traffic counters, weight-in-motion data, and ITS data will also be evaluated. The group will then focus on key industry and commodity types and work with state technical contacts, and state and academic experts to identify, gather, and collate the datasets to form a

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more precise and specific picture of these industries and the movement of freight in the region. Researchers will rely on the substantial database developed by University of Toledo for cataloguing physical infrastructure in the region.

Environment

A number of environmental considerations must be included when constructing a regional freight plan. The group agreed that environmental matters should be included as matters of policy. Researchers will consider issues of air quality, fuel efficiency, truck size and weight, emission controls, and modal share, as well as land use, protected species, invasive species, and compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The plan must also consider questions of environmental justice in land use and transportation planning regarding minority and disadvantaged communities.

Having outlined the direction of the MAFC regional freight plan, the group discussed the tangible products that would make up the plan itself, and identified the following deliverables:

- A regional freight network that cross-walks facilities, infrastructure, and industry groupings.
- A well-defined set of performance metrics and a plan for maintaining them.
- Policy objectives for the Coalition and its member states.
- An inventory of priority corridors and recommendations for corridor development activities.
- A catalog of bottlenecks and choke points, with recommendations for amelioration.

- An explanation of the process of creating and producing a regional freight plan.

These products will be published on the MAFC website as a series of documents (including white papers and case studies), a collection of interactive, data-rich maps and graphics, and materials that individual states can use for their own planning, policy, and legislative purposes. The MAFC regional freight plan will serve as a policy document that can form the foundation for or be integrated into other local, state, and federal level policy documents. The plan targets key stakeholders in both the private and public sectors, including agency executives, policy makers, legislators, carriers, shippers, and industry experts.

The MAFC Technical Committee has set an ambitious time line for creating this regional freight plan; as such, work will begin immediately. MAFC staff will formulate a work plan and a schedule for review by the group in January of 2011. MAFC Facilitator Ernie Wittwer will give an overview of the freight planning activities of the MAFC to key state policy makers in February of 2011, with outreach support from the state representatives. The Coalition will also nominate a number MPO representatives for inclusion in the Technical Committee during this same period. MAFC staff will also provide state representatives with a series of one-page briefing documents to aid their outreach efforts within their own organizations.

For ongoing information about the MAFC regional freight plan and other MAFC activities, visit midamericafreight.org.



Clockwise from upper left: Bob Gollnik, John Tompkins, Lynn Soporowski, Mark Locker, David Leucinger, Jesse Gwilliams.

MID-AMERICA



FREIGHT COALITION

SAVE THE DATE!

2011 CONFERENCE & ANNUAL MEETING

MARRIOTT ST. LOUIS UNION STATION

ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI ■ APRIL 26-28, 2011



MIDAMERICAFREIGHT.ORG ■ CFIRE@ENGR.WISC.EDU



The Mid-America Freight Coalition (MAFC) is a regional organization that cooperates in the planning, operation, preservation, and improvement of transportation infrastructure in the Midwest. The ten states of the AASHTO Mid-America Association of State Transportation Officials (MAASTO) share key interstate corridors, inland waterways, and the Great Lakes. The MAFC is funded by the National Center for Freight & Infrastructure Research & Education and the DOTs of the ten member states.

A Freight System Design for Urbanized Milwaukee

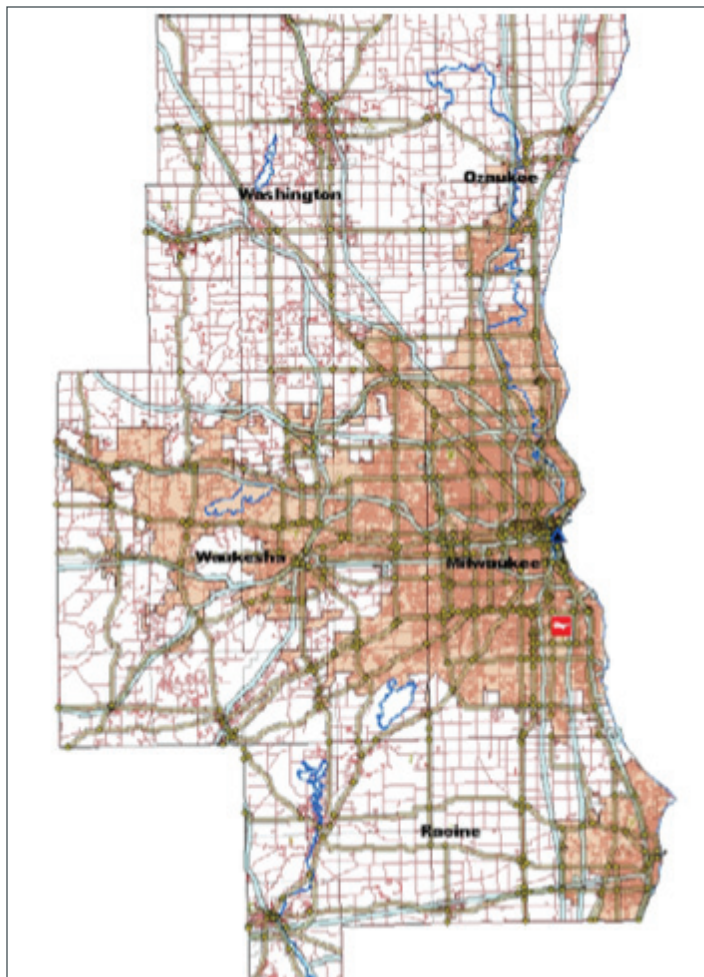
Alan Horowitz, University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee

In the Spring of 2006 a highly motivated group of graduate students at the University of Wisconsin—Milwaukee (UWM) embarked on an ambitious class project to write a freight system plan for the city of Milwaukee and adjoining communities. The students knew that only few metropolitan areas had stand-alone freight plans and that there was no consensus as to what such a plan should contain. They also knew that they had a very compressed time schedule and could not expect help from local planning agencies, who had not done much with freight planning at the time.

Perhaps the greatest contributions of this effort were the documentation of multiple needs for enhancing the freight system in Milwaukee from a public perspective and a broad list of suggestions on how those needs may be met. All of these suggestions were cognizant of the political, institutional, and financial environments. In retrospect, these environments have only become more relevant since the report was writ-



Milwaukee area rail system



Freight Corridors in the Milwaukee UZA

ten. Reviews were undertaken of the freight stakeholders, the history of freight transportation, freight infrastructure, the local economy as it relates to freight, evolving logistics practices, laws and regulation, sustainability, and freight security. Obvious success stories in Milwaukee were highlighted. These reviews reinforced the need for continuing emphasis on freight planning in Milwaukee, which is still thought of as an older manufacturing hub.

As a starting point the project identified existing freight plans and policies in Milwaukee, which were few, and elsewhere to serve as useful examples. Directions for future policies relate to conventional infrastructure and future technologies. The directions derive from those societal values that pertain to freight transportation and from several goals and objectives for the plan itself. Initially, the plan listed more than four dozen projects, policies, planning techniques, and operational strategies that could be implemented over the next several years. Planning techniques were included because of the identified need to build awareness of and capabilities for freight planning among the various stakeholder groups.

Specific recommendations pertain to freight roadway pricing, near-term technological improvements, emissions reductions, better real-time communications between public and private entities, and enhanced driver information. The plan document concluded with descriptions of futuristic ideas that may become practical beyond the typical planning horizon.

The plan can be found at: <http://bit.ly/mkefsd>.

MID-AMERICA FREIGHT COALITION

Autumn 2010

Quarterly Newsletter

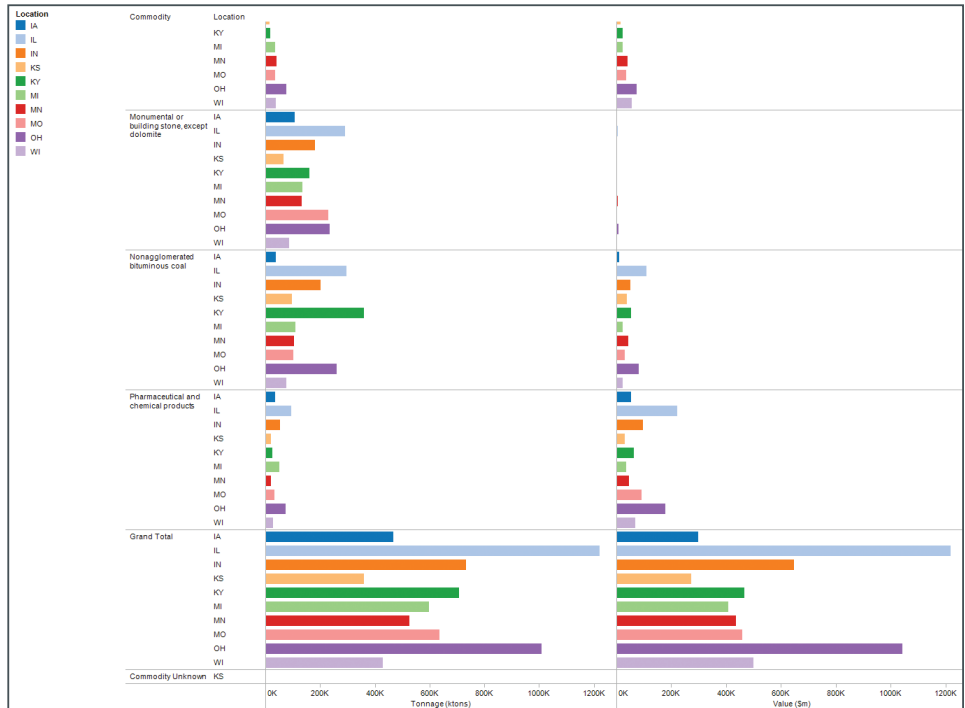
Number 10

MAFC Outreach Materials

As part of the current MAFC work plan, CFIRE researchers are assembling a set of outreach materials assist the general public across the region and policy makers of the region better understand freight and communicate the importance of freight investments in the Region's economic competitiveness and well-being.

Here's a preview of some of the interactive, data-rich materials we'll be including.

- The *commodity summary* displays the tonnage and value of one or more commodities for one or more of the Coalition states, as well as for the entire Coalition.
- The *tonnage and value summary* displays the tonnage and value for one or more states for one or more freight transportation modes.



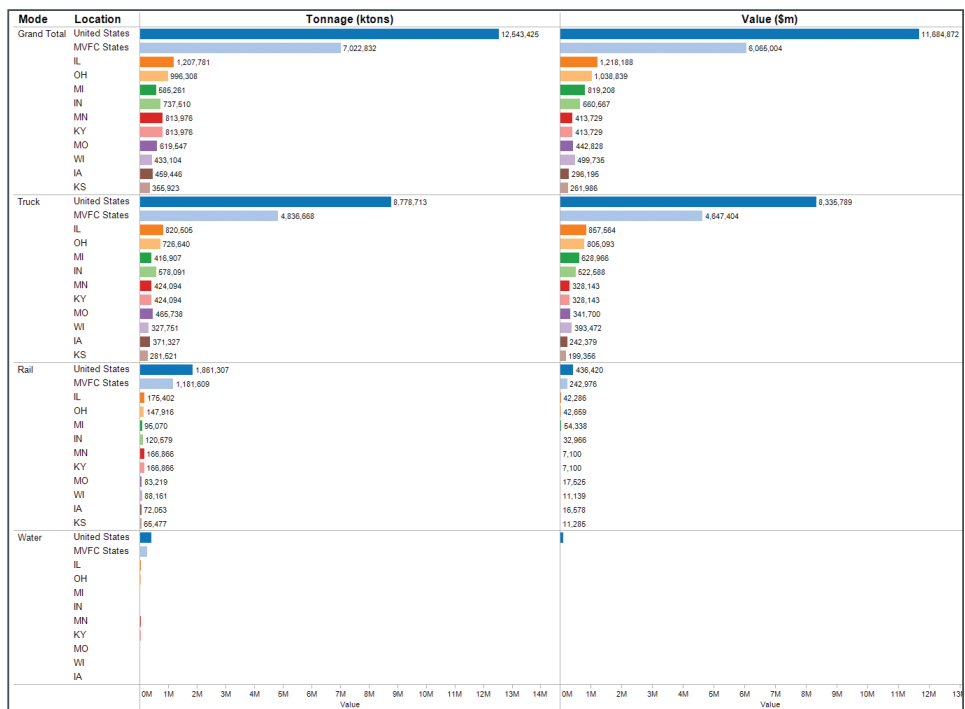
Commodity Summary

All of these interactive graphics are also downloadable in a variety of formats.

In addition to these graphics, the outreach materials will include maps, case studies, links to state-level freight plans, and other materials related to the history and importance of freight in the Midwest.

These outreach materials will form an entire section of the Mid-America Freight Coalition website. Look for these materials to start appearing in draft form in January 2011. We look forward to your comments and feedback.

For more information, visit midamericafreight.org.



Tonnage and Value by Mode

MID-AMERICA FREIGHT COALITION

Autumn 2010

Quarterly Newsletter

Number 10

We're now the Mid-America Freight Coalition

The Mississippi Valley Freight Coalition (MVFC) is now the Mid-America Freight Coalition (MAFC). The coalition's Technical Committee voted on October 26, 2010 to change the name of the coalition to the Mid-America Freight Coalition (MAFC), effective immediately. This change is consistent with the new name of the American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO) region to which the coalition's ten member states belong. Formerly the Mississippi Valley Conference (MVC), this AASHTO region is now known as the Mid-America Association of State Transportation Officials (MAASTO).

The MAFC is staffed by the National Center for Freight and Infrastructure Research and Education (CFIRE) and coordinated in conjunction with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT).

"CFIRE is committed to working with the coalition state DOTs. The MAFC provides us with rich opportunities for research, education, and outreach activities of our national UTC," said CFIRE Director Teresa Adams.

The Mid-America Freight Coalition began in 2002 as the Upper Midwest Freight Corridor Study, operated as the Mississippi Valley Freight Coalition from 2006 to 2010, and has been authorized and funded through 2012. During the coming two-year period, the coalition will focus its research and outreach efforts on commercial vehicle operations training, economic analysis training, and the creation of a regional freight plan. The departments of transportation of the ten member states provide two thirds of the \$750,000 funding for the 2011-2012 MAFC program; one third is provided by CFIRE.

"The members and staff of the Coalition are energized to begin developing a regional freight plan that will combine the efforts of each of the states to define a vision of how freight could move through the region," said MAFC Facilitator Ernie Wittwer.

Even though the name of the coalition is changing, its mission remains the same. The MAFC will remain focused on the planning, operation, preservation, and improvement of freight transportation infrastructure and networks in the coalition's ten member states.

For more information, visit midamericafreight.org.

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