Develop and Disseminate Outreach Materials for MAFC States

CFFIRE MAFC-08
June 2011

National Center for Freight & Infrastructure Research & Education
Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering
College of Engineering
University of Wisconsin–Madison

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Supported by the Mid-America Freight Coalition

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.
### Technical Report Documentation

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<td>16. Abstract</td>
<td>The general public across the region and the policy makers of the region are generally ill informed on subjects related to freight, its importance to our economy, and the fragility of our freight transportation system. The project will develop stories that will resonate with policymakers at the federal and state levels. These stories might include successes where improved transportation has had a positive impact on an industry’s competitive position and the region’s economic development. Ideally, a number of stories would be developed that might strike a chord with policymakers across the region. This project will develop creditable, illustrative, understandable materials that would assist the general public across the region and policy makers of the region better understand freight and communicate the importance of freight investments to the region’s economic competitiveness and well-being. These materials are published on the Mid-America Freight Coalition (MAFC) website: <a href="http://midamericafreight.org/outreach/">http://midamericafreight.org/outreach/</a></td>
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<td>Outreach, freight, Midwest, economy, investment</td>
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Background

The Mid-America Freight Coalition (MAFC) is a regional organization that cooperates in the planning, operation, preservation, and improvement of transportation infrastructure in the Mississippi Valley region. The ten states of the Mississippi Valley region share key interstate corridors, inland waterways, and the Great Lakes.

Together, the states of Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio, and Wisconsin play an integral role in goods movement throughout the entire United States. This is in part due to the access to East, West, and South markets provided by its central location, but also due to the historically large consumer base and manufacturing capacity. The combined population of the MAFC represents about 22 percent of the country’s overall population. The region has traditionally had a major role in bulk goods such as coal and agricultural products, but also in automotive and large machinery production. Higher value goods such as pharmaceuticals, electronics, and furniture have also gained traction in the region.

According to US Department of Transportation’s Bureau of Transportation Statistics 2007 Commodity Flow Survey statistics, the MAFC states represent a sizable portion of the country’s freight movements. In US, trucks transport 70 percent of total tonnage, and 71 percent of the total value of goods. This modal split is similar in the MAFC, with trucks carrying 69 percent of total tonnage and 77 percent of value in the region.

In relation to the entire United States, the MAFC states combine to transport 56 percent of total truck tonnage, and 63 percent of US rail tonnage. By value, the MAFC is responsible for 56 percent of US truck value, and 56 percent of rail value.

While transportation professionals are familiar with these types of statistics, the general public across the region and the policy makers of the region are generally ill informed on subjects related to freight, its importance to our economy, and the fragility of our freight transportation system. This project was designed to develop creditable, illustrative, understandable materials that would assist the aforementioned better understand freight and communicate the importance of freight investments in the region’s economic competitiveness and well-being. It includes written materials of various kinds (PDFs downloadable from MAFC website), and data, graphics, and information appropriate for transportation officials to use at speaking opportunities for transportation officials to use in responding to questions. The project aimed to develop themes and stories that resonate with policymakers at the federal and state levels.

Project Tasks

The primary tasks to accomplish the project’s objectives were as follows:

1. Collect available public survey information from the states, industry trade groups, and other sources.
2. Work with the states (advisory committee) and freight industry to develop and define the information that should be made available to policymakers and the public, building on commodity flow information (and reauthorization positions) regarding each commodity group.
3. Conduct at least two focus groups with members of the public to further define the information and materials that the public might benefit from having.
4. Define specific messages that should be contained in outreach materials aimed at decision makers and the general public.
5. Review the results steps one through four with technical committees and agency communications staff and refine the messages as appropriate. Consult relevant private sector representatives as necessary.
7. Ask state agencies to review and comment on outreach materials prior to publication.
8. Make revised materials available to agencies electronically via the MAFC website and DOT sites as applicable
9. Conduct electronic workshop, or utilize a portion of the annual MAFC meeting, with agency staff to help them to understand the materials.

Workshops and feedback

The project team held workshops for this project at the 2010 and 2011 MAFC Annual Meetings to fulfill project tasks as well as to fine-tune the project’s scope. The first event was to gauge feedback on the team’s proposed direction for the project, and to solicit additional ideas from MAFC members. Attendees were asked to rank a number of issues based around three ideas: Who will be the users of the information? Who will be the consumers of the information? And, What should the information’s message be. The figure below summarizes the responses:

Table 1. 2010 Outreach Workshop Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Highest-rated Responses</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Who will be the primary users of outreach materials?</td>
<td>State and local transportation planners, state legislators, and staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who will be the primary consumers of outreach materials?</td>
<td>Policy-makers, businesses, chambers of commerce (received overwhelming majority)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What should the message of outreach materials be?</td>
<td>Stories, origination/destination of goods, infrastructure investment importance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on this feedback, the project team formulated an outreach concept, including data and information, which was presented at the 2011 workshop. At this point researchers had assembled the majority of the project’s content, and were looking to attendees for input as to the best means of presenting and distributing the information. A website format was proposed that covered each of the primary points and offered interactive features and the ability to download data and documents. The group was asked to consider the proposed website architecture, shown in the following graphic, and identify any missing elements or provide other thoughts. It was explained that in the broad sense, the site provides an overview of freight importance in the MAFC along with a suite of state-specific pages that drill-down to more detail and offer links to freight-related documents and plans. The site will be supported by downloadable data (spreadsheets and GIS files) along with narrative content (PDF).
The group had a lengthy discussion about several aspects of the site, and had several key conclusions:

- The ‘Grab and Go’ accessibility of the high-level and state maps will be a useful feature for presentations and high-level overviews.
- NAFTA and trans-border data would be a useful addition given the MAFC states location along the NAFTA corridor.
- Additional traffic data—particularly truck traffic counts and congestion points—should be added.
- ‘Emerging industry’ content would be beneficial for neighboring states to gauge regional freight needs.
- State-specific industry content could be supplied by DOT staff and would provide useful supplemental material for MAFC members.
- Major freight generators, such as KC Smartport, could be highlighted to emphasize freight importance in the region.

MAFC members also requested the project team to add the following to the website:

- Additional data/information requested (traffic, transborder, etc.)
- A section on the MAFC website to house all of the materials collected for the outreach project.
- An area of the website to solicit feedback and tweak as necessary.
- An area for submission from state and MPO representatives to maintain current information.
- Periodic contact with state technical representatives to solicit current information, data, and content.
Outreach Website Overview

The intent of the website is to provide user-friendly access to freight-related data and information for the region. To this end, the project team incorporated Tableau software (http://www.tableausoftware.com/) into the MAFC website. Tableau is an analytical software tool that allows users to create and publish interactive data via a web-based system. With this tool, users are able to customize maps and graphics for download as PDFs or spreadsheets for incorporation into their own emails, documents, or presentations.

Using the architecture shown in the above graphic, the website is structured for a general-to-specific feel. Users are shown broad, regional information on the homepage and can explore state-specific content from there. This section describes provides an overview of the content, while a specific list of the content is included in the Appendix. The homepage (Figure 2) includes two interactive commodity flow maps in which the user can specify commodities and origins and destinations, by state. One map depicts value of goods, while the other shows tonnage.

Structure

The site is designed to both highlight freight’s collective importance to the region as well as to highlight freight trends in each of the ten MAFC states.
Outreach Page

The Outreach page serves as a home page for this section of the MAFC website and contains an overview of the region, complete with an introduction and background, as well as customizable commodity flow maps, and links to individual state pages. There are also links to two documents entitled “The Economic Importance of Freight” and “The History of Freight in the Region.” These documents provide an extensive synopsis of research done in the respective areas and assist in providing a complete picture of how freight came to be in the region, and how freight flows continue to impact the daily lives of the region’s residents.

The freight history piece traces the development of key trading routes from Native Americans through present day, beginning with water routes and correlating the establishment of the Interstate system in the 1950s. Noteworthy points from the economic section include:

- Ton-miles of freight moved correlates closely with changes in gross domestic product (GDP).
- Logistics (transportation and warehousing) costs our economy nearly $4,500 per person per year.
- The transportation sector accounts for more than 10 percent of the US economy.
- Supply chains compete for market share, increasing the importance of efficiency in the overall system.
- The keys to supply chain efficiency lie in both the private and public sectors.
- The volume of freight can be expected to grow over the coming decades, causing greater congestion on our highways and railroads.
- The trucking sector will see a slight growth in its share of overall tons and value.
- Rail and water will see a slight increase in their share of ton-miles.
- The increase in freight is driven by several factors:
  - As our population grows, consumption and production increase. The US population is projected to increase from 308 million in 2010 to 420 million in 2050.
  - International trade is a growing component of our economy.
  - Modern supply chain management strategies substitute transportation for inventory, increasing the number of trips.

State Pages

Each individual state page includes interactive commodity flow maps (Freight Value and Freight Tonnage) along with links to relevant state and MPO freight plans. The project team also highlighted a specific commodity for each state and conducted interviews and an analysis of that industry. A summary document is linked to each state. As available, other relevant links are included for the state. For example, on Minnesota’s page (Figure 3), direct links are available for both the Minnesota Department of Transportation Freight Planning Office, and the University of Minnesota Center for Transportation Studies.
Additional Content

Lastly, the website contains additional content as a resource for state planners and policy-makers. This content is a blend of GIS shapefiles with MAFC-generated content (data points, infrastructure, etc.), spreadsheets with MAFC data, and miscellaneous other data that has been collected over the course of MAFC projects and research. There are also links to common data sources for freight-related data such as National Transportation Atlas Database, US Census, and Freight Analysis Framework. This content allows freight transportation practitioners access to MAFC raw data and quick reference to national data sources that may be of use to them.
Appendix A: Data and Resources

The following list summarizes the specific data sources and links that are currently incorporated into the MAFC outreach website

**Freight Plans**

**Illinois**


Published in December 2004 by Chicago Metropolis 2020, a “business-backed civic organization,” with funding from a variety of charitable, civic, and business organizations.

The report argues that Chicago’s status as “North America’s freight capital” is central to the region’s economic success, but rail and highway congestion, as well as dispersed land use patterns, lower shipping costs, and inefficient routes through suburban Chicago, threaten that status.

The report recommends creating a Regional Policy Board to develop a comprehensive plan for freight transportation, protecting existing freight centers, establishing variable user fees on congested highways to reduce peak-hour congestion, and investing $4.5bn in the region’s highway and rail systems over 25 years.

**Indiana**

Indiana Multimodal Freight and Mobility Plan: [http://www.in.gov/indot/files/FreightMobilityPlan.pdf](http://www.in.gov/indot/files/FreightMobilityPlan.pdf)

Published in July 2009 by Cambridge Systematics on behalf of the Indiana Department of Transportation.

The plan describes a “freight transportation crisis” brought about by high demand, insufficient rail capacity, congested highways, and other challenges, and provides recommendations on improving the system with attention to economic development opportunities as well as impacts on passenger transport.

The plan’s recommendations included strengthening the link between freight and DOT planning, improving communication between policymakers and the private sector, exploiting untapped funding sources to support freight investments, and improving specific freight corridors.


Published in July 2009 by Cambridge Systematics on behalf of the Indiana Department of Transportation.

Supplements Multimodal Freight and Mobility Plan with recommendations specific to freight and passenger rail.

**Iowa**

Iowa Railroad System Plan: [http://www.iowadot.gov/iowainmotion/rail.html](http://www.iowadot.gov/iowainmotion/rail.html)

Published in 2009 by the Iowa Department of Transportation.

The plan is intended to guide decision-making for both passenger and freight rail issues; of the latter, primary areas of concern include improving safety and security; increasing system funding, accessibility, and capacity; and “upgrading branch lines to handle increasingly heavier rail cars.”

The plan calls for investments in rail crossing safety and monitoring, improving physical infrastructure and service quality, increasing DOT participation in planning and regulatory activities,
coordinating between agencies and industries, and mitigating negative social and environmental impacts of rail transportation.

**Kansas**

Kansas Statewide Freight Study:

Published in 2009 by Cambridge Systematics on behalf of the Kansas Department of Transportation.

The study finds that while Kansas’ freight transportation infrastructure can accommodate existing demand, expected growth in demand will strain the capacity of rail and highway freight corridors, and a lack of regulatory, funding, and data-gathering instruments on the part of the state DOT will hinder efforts to accommodate this growth.

The study recommends that Kansas focus on linking transportation and economic development strategies, identify freight corridors and bottlenecks, expand planning and data-gathering activities, and improve permitting and public-private communications processes.

**Kansas City Regional Freight Outlook Study:**
[http://www.marc.org/transportation/freightoutlook/documents.htm](http://www.marc.org/transportation/freightoutlook/documents.htm)

Published in 2009 by the Mid-America Regional Council and SmartPort, with consulting by TranSystems and funding by the Kansas and Missouri Departments of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, and Federal Transit Administration.

The report has a generally positive outlook on Kansas City’s freight capabilities, predicting continued competitiveness in transportation-related industries and an ability to draw business to the region.

The report’s primary findings and recommendations included improving the region’s data collection and transportation/land use planning efforts, creating public-private partnerships, and continuing to invest in rail and intermodal freight infrastructure.

**Kentucky**

Kentucky Statewide Intermodal Freight Plan:

Published in 2006 and updated in 2007 by the Division of Planning of the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet.

The plan “focuses on addressing highway congestion and bottlenecks while promoting other modes to divert freight traffic from highways” as well as analyzing other modal options and developing a framework to “compare investments between modes.”

The plan identifies the creation of a “Freight Focus Network,” data-gathering, analysis of existing routes and intermodal options, and funding for non-highway freight modes as priorities for transportation planning in Kentucky.

**Michigan**

Published in 2006 by the Michigan Department of Transportation with assistance from Wilbur Smith Associates.
The plan describes commodity flow information with an emphasis on trade with Canada, identifies general obstacles and opportunities for Michigan’s freight networks, and makes broad predictions about future trends.

**Minnesota**

Statewide Multimodal Freight Flows Study:

Published in 2000 by Cambridge Systematics on behalf of the Minnesota Department of Transportation.

The study was intended to “determine how goods move in the state” in order to better target freight corridor improvements and support Minnesota businesses, especially export-oriented industries.

The study recommends expanding the capacity of all major freight modes along critical corridors, expanding intermodal facilities, developing public-private partnerships and expanding cooperation between different state agencies, and creating and improving comprehensive freight plans.

**Missouri**

Published in 2009 by the Mid-America Regional Council and SmartPort, with consulting by TranSystems and funding by the Kansas and Missouri Departments of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, and Federal Transit Administration

The report has a generally positive outlook on Kansas City’s freight capabilities, predicting continued competitiveness in transportation-related industries and an ability to draw business to the region.

The report’s primary findings and recommendations included improving the region’s data collection and transportation/land use planning efforts, creating public-private partnerships, and continuing to invest in rail and intermodal freight infrastructure.

**Ohio**

Published in 2002 by Cambridge Systematics on behalf of the Ohio Department of Transportation.
The study was intended to inform the state’s comprehensive transportation planning activities, and focuses on maintaining and improving freight corridors while supporting economic development and integration with the global economy.

The study recommends increasing spending on freight corridors, relieving highway bottlenecks with capacity expansions and congestion management techniques, expanding freight planning and modeling, and increasing cooperation with neighboring states and coalitions.

Published in 2006 by the Ohio Department of Transportation.

The report outlines existing and potential freight issues and trends, describes state and regional approaches to freight transportation planning, and proposes an evaluation framework for freight-specific projects.

**Wisconsin**

Wisconsin Rail Issues and Opportunities Report:

Published in 2004 by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation.

The report provides an overview of the state’s existing rail network and identifies freight (as well as passenger) rail issues—including congestion in the Chicago area, a need for intermodal facilities, and low demand for certain publicly and privately owned routes—in the context of expected future increases in transportation demand.

The plan makes no specific policy or research recommendations.

**Case Studies**

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# Data Points

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<td>Grain Elevators</td>
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<td>U.S. Soymeal InfoCenter</td>
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<td>Ethanol Plants</td>
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<td>Terex Corporation</td>
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<td>Wheat</td>
<td>Production (bushels)</td>
<td>2008 USDA NASS County Crop Data Files</td>
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<td>Soy</td>
<td>Production (bushels)</td>
<td>2008 USDA NASS County Crop Data Files</td>
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<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>Total Value of Shipments (dollars)</td>
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<td>Machinery</td>
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<td>2002 U.S. Census Bureau Economic Census</td>
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<tr>
<td>Auto</td>
<td>Total Value of Shipments (dollars)</td>
<td>2002 U.S. Census Bureau Economic Census</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail</td>
<td>Total Sales (dollars)</td>
<td>2002 U.S. Census Bureau Economic Census</td>
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### Interviews

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<th>Commodity Group (State)</th>
<th>Interviewee</th>
<th>Position/Organization</th>
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<tr>
<td>Retail (Indiana)</td>
<td>Grant Monahan</td>
<td>President/Indiana Retail Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail (Indiana)</td>
<td>Gary Darnell</td>
<td>Communications Manager/Wal-Mart Logistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auto (Michigan)</td>
<td>Pete Lukszys</td>
<td>Professor of Supply Chain Mgmt./University of Wisconsin-Madison; Former Consultant/Ford Motor Co.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soy (Minnesota)</td>
<td>Bob Zelenka</td>
<td>Executive Director/Minnesota Grain and Feed Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wheat (Kansas)</td>
<td>Bill Spiegel</td>
<td>Communications Specialist/Kansas Wheat</td>
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<td>Wheat (Kansas)</td>
<td>Sarah Bowser</td>
<td>Director of Member Services/Kansas Grain and Feed Association</td>
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<td>Corn (Illinois)</td>
<td>Jeff Adkisson</td>
<td>Executive Vice President/Grain and Feed Association of Illinois</td>
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<td>Ethanol (Iowa)</td>
<td>Lucy Norton</td>
<td>Managing Director/Iowa Renewable Fuels Association</td>
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## Other Contacts

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<th>Commodity Group (State)</th>
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<th>Organization</th>
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<td>General Agriculture (Wisconsin)</td>
<td>John Petty</td>
<td>Executive Director/Wisconsin Agri-Service Association</td>
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<td>Bill Bodine</td>
<td>Director of External Relations/Illinois Farm Bureau</td>
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<td>General Agriculture (Iowa)</td>
<td>Craig O’Riley</td>
<td>Team Leader/Iowa DOT Office of Systems Planning</td>
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<td>General Agriculture (Indiana)</td>
<td>Don Villwock</td>
<td>President/Indiana Farm Bureau</td>
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<td>General Agriculture (United States)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Soy (Michigan)</td>
<td>Kathy Maurer</td>
<td>Financial and Creative Director/Michigan Soybean Promotion Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soy (Illinois)</td>
<td>Mark Albertson</td>
<td>Director of Marketing and Special Projects/Illinois Soybean Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soy (Iowa)</td>
<td>Karen Long</td>
<td>Project Coordinator/Iowa Soybean Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auto (Ohio)</td>
<td>Mark Vonderembse</td>
<td>Professor of Info. Op &amp; Tech. Mgmt./University of Toledo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## General Data Sources


State-Specific Resources:

Illinois
- State DOT: http://www.dot.state.il.us/default.asp

Indiana
- State DOT Freight Mobility Page: http://www.in.gov/indot/2719.htm

Iowa
- State DOT: http://www.iowadot.gov/
- Center for Transportation Research and Education: http://www.ctre.iastate.edu/

Kansas
- Kansas University Transportation Center: http://www2.ku.edu/~kutc/cgi-bin/index.php
- Kansas City Regional Freight Outlook Study: http://www.marc.org/transportation/freightoutlook/

Kentucky
- Kentucky Transportation Center: http://www.ktc.uky.edu/

Michigan
- State DOT: http://www.michigan.gov/mdot/

Minnesota
- State DOT Freight Planning Page: http://www.dot.state.mn.us/ofrw/freight.html
- UM Center for Transportation Studies: http://www.cts.umn.edu/index.html

Missouri
- Kansas City Regional Freight Outlook Study: http://www.marc.org/transportation/freightoutlook/
- Mid-Missouri Regional Transportation Plan: http://www.mmrrpc.org/library/Internet%20Version%20Transportation%20Plan%201%2020%202010.pdf
Ohio

- State DOT: http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Pages/Home.aspx
- Central Ohio Freight Fact Book: http://www.morpc.org/transportation/freight/freight_fact.asp

Wisconsin

- State DOT: http://www.dot.state.wi.us/
- Wisconsin Transportation Center: http://www.wistrans.org/