

# FHWA Talking Freight: State DOT and MPO Freight Planning Coordination

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# Purpose

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- AASHTO Freight Committee Year 1 task
- What DOTs are doing?
- What MPOs want?
- California Efforts
- Opportunities and Interests

## Process

### State DOTs

- Developed an 8-question survey
- Administered survey to State DOTs (AASHTO members) via SurveyMonkey
- Asked DOTs to provide contact information for three (3) MPOs

### MPOs

- Contacted MPOs via email asking them to participate in our initiative through a phone/email survey.
- We reached out to about 30 MPOs and invited them to participate. After receiving responses, we set up a time for a phone call to gather information or sent out an email with 15 questions

# We Asked...

## DOTs:

- How often does your DOT engage with MPOs? What are some successful examples of engagement you use? Do you conduct public outreach in collaboration with your MPO partners?
- Are MPOs well represented at each FAC?

## MPOs:

- How often is your MPO contacted by state DOTs for freight related activities?
- Are you invited to participate/ collaborate with your DOT at outreach events?
- What are the three biggest concerns relating to freight for your MPO? How does the DOT work with you to mitigate or solve these concerns?

# Examples of What State DOTs Are Doing:

## Wisconsin DOT

“Region staff are members of the MPO Policy boards for the MPOs that are Transportation Management Areas (TMA). WisDOT also holds quarterly MPO Directors meeting which include BPED, Region, FHWA, FTA, and MPO staff. These are very useful in collaboration between all agencies.”

## Michigan DOT

“MPOs are represented on MDOT's task teams in the development of their long-range transportation plan/freight plan. MDOT and MPO staff attend public outreach meetings associated with each agency's long-range plans or other studies.”

## Tennessee DOT

“We created an Office of Community Transportation (3 reps in each of the 4 regions) that communicate and collaborate with the public MPO's, RPO's and TPO's.”

## North Dakota DOT

“We have a position dedicated to MPO outreach. Additionally, roughly 8 people meet with the MPOs at least 2 times per year, formally, at a joint meeting. Public outreach with the MPOs is generally done on a project basis for specific corridor, sub-area, area, regional, or statewide studies and plans.”

# MPOs' Challenges/Concerns:

- “We are missed in statewide efforts and meetings regarding freight funding and planning. As a small MPO, we may be overlooked. However, on some facilities, at least 60% of the traffic is freight. I believe the issues are that these siloed entities within the DOTs, simply do not know we exist. As a result, I often find out about freight related work by accident – scanning through legislators websites or newspaper articles.”
- “There are no regular meetings between the DOT and us specifically related to freight planning. It mostly occurs on an “as needed” basis at this point.”
- “We would like to have more communication.”
- “Would like to see more ongoing conversations and scheduled meetings. We’d like to find the role of MPO and local government within the state.”



## Best Practices: MPOs and DOTs

“We do often reach out to DOTs to see if they have anything to present at subcommittee meetings. And vice versa. Reaching out and trying to get them on agenda creates a good relationship. Creating a social aspect to enhance personal relationship works well.”

“We have a good relationship with our DOT, currently. I think it really has to do with the personalities of the people we work with. Really, it does seem to come down to how well the people can get along with one another.”

“A lot of it is attitudinal – respect and value one another; keep communicating; when you disagree with one another, work together in good faith to resolve it. It’s not much different than being married.”

“We engage with MPOs formally on a monthly basis (through attending their Technical Committee and Policy Board meetings) and quarterly (through a DOT-led meeting of all state MPOs and regional planning affiliations). We engage informally on a weekly or daily basis to discuss specific plans, projects, or efforts.”

We have dedicated staff to coordinate with MPOs. Furthermore, monthly conference calls provide a great way to collaborate on various topics of common interest, e.g. data sharing, performance target setting, and general federal guidance Q&A, etc.”

# California

~40 million population

58 Counties

12 Caltrans Districts

18 MPOs

+ 50,000 miles of California's  
highway and freeway lanes  
managed by Caltrans







## California Continued...

Large number of seaports and airports

3 land ports of entry with Mexico

California's long-term sustainable freight goals targets



## 2019 California Freight Mobility Plan

*Vision: California exemplifies the world's most innovative, economically-competitive multimodal freight network that is efficient, reliable, modern, integrated, resilient, safe, and sustainable, where social and environmental impacts are considered equally.*

## California Freight Advisory Committee

*The CFAC meets quarterly, or as needed, to participate in the development of the California Freight Mobility Plan (CFMP), to serve as a forum for the discussion of freight-related topics, to help coordinate regional freight priorities with other organizations, and to advise the State on freight-related priorities, issues, projects, and funding needs.*



# Freight Investments

## Seven Regions

Northern California

Bay Area

Central Coast

Central Valley

Central Sierra

Los Angeles/Inland Empire

San Diego/Border



# Ongoing and Future Opportunities

- Develop Executive Management information
- Regional Transportation Freight Advisory Committees
- Rural County Partners Engagement
- Research partnership opportunities
- Districts and Caltrans HQ involvement with RTP or localized Freight Planning efforts
- Peer technical expertise exchange
- Freight Education and Training needs
- Communication between Caltrans HQ, Districts, and our Partners
- Dissemination of freight information from other State agencies



A group of people in a meeting room, with a large 'THANK YOU' text overlay. The room is dimly lit with warm ambient lighting. People are seated around a table with nameplates and papers. Some are standing and talking. A whiteboard is visible on the left.

# THANK YOU

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