



Clean Freight Corridor Planning

Powering Freight with Alternative Fuels

ALTERNATIVE FUELS CORRIDOR

Key Takeaways:

- NYMTC's Clean Freight Corridors Planning Study will identify steps to develop clean fuel infrastructure along major corridors in the New York City metro area.
- The study will be informed by various stakeholders and planning agencies in the Northeast region. It will incorporate the latest data on clean freight technologies, trends, and goods movement.

For More Information:

Leslie Fordjour,
Project Manager,
Regional Planning,
NYMTC,
Leslie.Fordjour@dot.ny.gov

Gerry Bogacz,
Assistant Director,
Planning and Program
Management,
NYMTC,
Gerry.Bogacz@dot.ny.gov

The New York Metropolitan Transportation Council (NYMTC) has launched a study on clean freight corridor opportunities in the New York City planning region and nearby areas. This study will foster expansion of clean freight infrastructure to sync up with commodity flow patterns and new technologies, lower air pollutants emissions, and improve air quality and public health.

Background

NYMTC is the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for New York City, Long Island, and the lower Hudson Valley and includes a population of 12.4 million people. NYMTC has nine voting members and seven advisory members who address local transportation issues, develop regional plans, and decide on the use of federal transportation funds. NYMTC has embarked on a study to assess opportunities for clean freight corridors in its planning area and within the greater multi-state New York City metropolitan region in New York State, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Connecticut. This study, called the Clean Freight Corridors Planning Study, kicked off in June 2020 and will last 18 months. The study is a recommendation of the current NYMTC Regional Freight Plan (adopted in 2017) to advance more efficient goods movement and is being developed with the assistance of Cambridge Systematics and CALSTART.

Impetus for Clean Freight Corridor Work

New York City is the most densely populated city in the United States and thus has millions of people traveling to, from, within, and around the metropolitan area every day. New York is also home to major port, rail, air, and distribution centers for national and international freight shipments, meaning the vast majority of goods move by truck throughout the region. Additionally, the New York City metropolitan area is surrounded and intersected by numerous interstate highways with trucks carrying millions of tons of freight each year on routes such as I-80, I-78, I-95, I-87, I-280, I-278, I-495, and I-684.

This high level of freight activity has significantly contributed to air quality impacts regionally and in communities situated near these corridors. These communities are often lower-income households and communities of color. Recognizing the need to improve air quality along these corridors and especially in Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) designated nonattainment areas, NYMTC will use its Clean Freight Corridors Planning Study to enhance development of alternative fuel vehicle refueling infrastructure, particularly for medium- and heavy-duty trucks. The study will draw on the work and expertise of its member agencies and other regional and statewide agencies (i.e., New York City Department of Transportation (DOT), New York State DOT, and New York State Energy Research and Development Authority) to ensure it complements and reinforces those agencies' clean freight projects, such as alternative fuel vehicle incentive programs and corridor nominations.



NYMTC's efforts to designate clean freight corridors also complement those by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to designate alternative fuel corridors. Both NYMTC and FHWA aim to increase clean freight refueling infrastructure along roadways. In 2016, FHWA hosted a clean freight corridor workshop in Troy, NY and this event, along with NYMTC's partnership with the EPA's Northeast Diesel Collaborative, was a significant driver for developing the study.

Clean Freight Corridors Planning Study

NYMTC's Clean Freight Corridors Planning Study will include an inventory of existing alternative fuel infrastructure in the region, a fuel neutral review of current and emerging alternative fuel technologies, an identification of gaps between existing and future alternative fuel infrastructure capacities to fuel current and projected freight vehicles, an analysis of goods movement trends and forecasts, and the identification and definition of optimal corridors for recommended designations as clean freight corridors. This study will focus on interstate highways in the tri-state region because highways have the highest density of trucks.

The Clean Freight Corridors Planning Study is comprised of five tasks: 1) developing public information materials; 2) conducting an assessment of existing clean freight corridor infrastructure, gaps, and opportunities for FHWA alternative fuel corridor designation; 3) evaluating current and projected clean fuel technologies to fuel freight vehicles and mapping potential new clean freight corridors; 4) analyzing trends and forecasts such as commodity flow patterns, freight hubs, and economic opportunity areas; and 5) identifying an optimal mix of new clean freight corridors and hosting public workshops.



Figure 1. A map of the New York City metropolitan region's freight highways by annual tonnage, where "M" represents one million tons.

Coordination with regional stakeholders has added significant value to the study process. NYMTC has joined a memorandum of understanding with several MPOs and councils of government (COGs) in New York, Connecticut, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania to better coordinate planning activities. This coordinated effort is known as the Metropolitan Area Planning (MAP) Forum and has resulted in tighter regional planning and communication, resource and data sharing, and capacity building for clean freight programs. Additionally, the study is informed by a Steering Committee and a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). The Steering Committee is comprised of NYMTC members, while the TAC includes Clean Cities Coalitions from across the Northeast region; MAP Forum members; as well as representatives from MPOs, COGs, and other agencies from the involved states. The TAC provides expert knowledge on clean freight technology and goods movement. As part of the study, NYMTC has also been conducting one-on-one meetings with its members on relevant topics, such as gaps in clean freight infrastructure.

Intended Outcomes

The Clean Freight Corridors Planning Study will result in recommendations to designate specific roads as clean freight corridors based on the access and availability of clean fuel infrastructure for trucks. It will identify gaps in infrastructure and make recommendations to address them. It will also make recommendations to modify the demand side of freight deliveries to improve efficiency. The study is expected to be complete in late 2021 or early 2022.

Resources

- NYMTC's homepage provides information on its Clean Freight Corridors Planning Study and other related initiatives. Visit the website here: <https://www.nymtc.org/>.
- Access NYMTC's Regional Freight Plan 2018-2045 [here](#). This plan led to the Clean Freight Corridors Planning Study.

