

PART III

Highway Freight Transportation Conditions and Performance



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Introduction

The Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21), enacted in 2012, included provisions to reduce traffic congestion and improve the efficiency of freight movement. MAP-21 called for freight-specific initiatives, including the development of a National Freight Strategic Plan, the designation of data-driven highway networks relevant to freight, and the establishment of a freight performance measure for the Interstate System. These initiatives subsequently formed the basis for freight provisions in the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act of 2015 (P.L. 114-94). The FAST Act directed FHWA to establish a National Highway Freight Program (NHFP) and a National Highway Freight Network (NHFN) under Title 23 to improve the efficient movement of freight. The law also created a multimodal freight program under Title 29 that requires the establishment of the National Multimodal Freight Network (NMFN). In addition, the FAST Act required the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Administrator to submit to Congress a report describing the conditions and performance of the NHFN.

As stated in the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act:

"...the goals for the National Highway Freight Program are established in Section 167 of title 23, subsection (b), and are as follows:

- To invest in infrastructure improvements and to implement operational improvements on the highways of the United States that –
 - Strengthen the contribution of the NHFN to the economic competitiveness of the United States;
 - Reduce congestion and bottlenecks on the NHFN;
 - Reduce the cost of freight transportation;
 - Improve the year-round reliability of freight transportation; and
 - Increase productivity, particularly for domestic industries and businesses that create high-value jobs;
- To improve the safety, security, efficiency, and resiliency of freight transportation in rural and urban areas;
- To improve the state of good repair of the NHFN;
- To use innovation and advanced technology to improve the safety, efficiency, and reliability of the NHFN;
- To improve the efficiency and productivity of the NHFN;
- To improve the flexibility of States to support multi-State corridor planning and the creation of multi-State organizations to increase the ability of States to address highway freight connectivity; and
- To reduce the environmental impacts of freight movement on the NHFN..."

Chapter 11 of this report addresses freight transportation on systems (including the National Network and National Highway System) covered in previous versions of the biennial *Status of the Nation's Highways, Bridges, and Transit: Conditions and Performance Report to Congress* (C&P Report).

Chapter 12 addresses the statutory requirement of a report on the conditions and performance of the NHFN. Based on the goals of the NHFP, Chapter 12 discusses metrics used to analyze the current conditions and performance of the NHFN and provides information on freight movement on this network.