

The Connector



April 2015

Message from WisDOT Secretary Mark Gottlieb

Governor Walker has made the safe, efficient movement of freight across Wisconsin a top priority. It's a recognition that a quality, inter-connected freight network is a vital part of the state's economic engine. Starting in 2011, the Governor sponsored an annual summit that gathered public and private freight industry stakeholders to identify concerns and solutions to freight-related challenges. At last year's summit, the Governor announced the creation of a Freight Advisory Committee (FAC) that will continue the substantial progress that's been made in developing a more freight-friendly Wisconsin. This edition of the WisDOT Connector will take a closer look at the role of the FAC in advising the department about current and emerging freight issues.

Creation and role of Wisconsin's new Freight Advisory Committee

Wisconsin's 36 member [Freight Advisory Committee](#) held its first meeting April 23, 2015, in Madison. Committee members represent freight and logistics organizations, municipal and economic development associations and key economic sectors such as agriculture, manufacturing, timber and paper industries, railroads and ports. Members are appointed by the WisDOT Secretary and serve two-year terms. The committee is expected to meet at least twice annually.



While advisory in nature, the FAC's official and important role is to:

- provide input and advice on priorities and policies that impact freight mobility
- advocate on the importance of a sound freight transportation system to Wisconsin's economy
- expand Wisconsin's role in national and world freight movements

Statewide Freight Plan

Over the next two years, a major role for the FAC is to provide guidance to the department in the development of the state's first-ever Statewide Freight Plan. The plan will take a comprehensive look at various long-term trends and concerns impacting Wisconsin's overall freight industry.

Along with serving as a blueprint to guide Wisconsin's multi-modal freight transportation future, completion of the Freight Plan will open potential opportunities to access additional federal resources to support freight infrastructure improvements. Initial plan drafting is already underway. Like other long-range modal plans WisDOT oversees, the process will involve public meetings and stakeholder outreach. Combined with input and guidance from the FAC, a finalized plan should be in place by the end of 2016.

Building upon the foundation...



The annual freight industry summits that began four years ago opened a valuable public/private dialogue and generated numerous accomplishments related to over-size, over-weight permits, State Patrol escorts, truck parking and harmonization of freight regulations across state boundaries. The newly-created FAC will build upon these accomplishments, identify emerging issues and suggest short and long-term solutions to keep freight moving and the economy humming.

A safe, reliable freight transportation network benefits all of Wisconsin by moving workers to jobs, raw materials to manufacturers and finished products to markets across the country and world. The ongoing work of the FAC will better position Wisconsin businesses, citizens and the state's overall economy to succeed in the international marketplace.

US 41 to become I-41

Further enhancing the transport of people and commerce in Wisconsin, Governor Walker recently announced final approval to convert US 41 from the Illinois/Wisconsin state line to Green Bay as I-41. Interstate designation holds many advantages including creation of a corridor identity that encourages economic growth. Of the 26 major distribution centers in Wisconsin, 73 percent are located within five miles of an Interstate. The Federal Highway Administration's approval of the I-41 designation represents the final step in a process that began nearly 10 years ago and involved federal, state and local government support. Installation of about 3,000 new signs along the 175-mile I-41 corridor in



Wisconsin will begin this summer and should be completed by November 2015.



The Wisconsin Department of Transportation's MAPSS Performance Improvement Program reviews performance measures for five key goal areas that guide us in achieving our mission - mobility, accountability, preservation, safety and service. To check out the latest online reports, simply click on the MAPSS logo.

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