

# 1 – Chapter 1: Introduction

Wisconsin has a robust multimodal transportation system that supports over five million people, 230,000 businesses, and nearly 109,000 shippers, all of whom rely on a safe and efficient transportation system daily. The state’s transportation system supports economic, recreational, and personal travel in its \$300 billion economy (2015).<sup>1,2</sup>

As a subset of the overall multimodal transportation system, Wisconsin’s multimodal freight transportation system underpins Wisconsin’s economy by providing efficient transportation of goods. Wisconsin’s multimodal freight transportation system includes roadways, railways, waterways, intermodal facilities (including truck-rail), airports, and pipelines.

Overview of Chapter 1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Describes the vision, goals, and strategies for the Wisconsin State Freight Plan</li><li>• Articulates links to the national freight strategic goals identified in federal legislation</li><li>• Provides an overview of the plan’s structure</li><li>• Outlines the development of the State Freight Plan</li></ul>

## 1.1 State Freight Plan Vision, Goals, and Strategies

To guide the development of the State Freight Plan (SFP), the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) developed a freight-specific vision and goals. The vision and goals are carried through each chapter and inform key decision points, and most importantly are underpinned by strategies used to identify policies and investments.

### ***Vision***

Wisconsin’s quality of life and economic growth depends on a safe, efficient, and coordinated multimodal freight transportation system that provides choices for the movement of goods to, from and within the state.

To help meet the state’s freight mobility demands, WisDOT has developed the SFP to define policy direction, inform future transportation investment, and provide an implementation plan to advance the safety and efficiency of freight movements in the state. As the state’s first long-range multimodal freight plan, the SFP links freight transportation needs to department policy, programming, and investment activities.

<b><i>Connections 2030 Vision for Multimodal Transportation</i></b>
<p>WisDOT envisions an integrated multimodal transportation system that maximizes the safe and efficient movement of people and products throughout the state, enhancing economic productivity and the quality of Wisconsin’s communities while minimizing impacts to the natural environment.</p> <p>-Connections 2030</p>

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, "Annual Estimates of the Resident Population: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2015."

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, "Wisconsin."

Adapted from WisDOT's long-range multimodal transportation plan *Connections 2030*, the vision for the SFP emphasizes those elements most important to goods movement in the state. The SFP vision is as follows:

*WisDOT envisions a multimodal freight transportation system that enhances the state's economic productivity, competitiveness, and quality of life through the movement of goods safely, reliably, and efficiently, while minimizing impacts to the natural environment.*

### **Key SFP Goals and Strategies**

The foundational goals developed to support WisDOT's vision for the multimodal freight transportation system have been adapted from *Connections 2030*. These goals form the basis for policy and other strategy recommendations contained in the SFP. SFP goals are as follows:

- Enhance Safety, Security, and Resiliency
- Ensure System Preservation and Enhancement
- Enhance System Mobility, Operations, Reliability, Efficiency, and Connectivity

In support of these goals, WisDOT developed the following strategic approaches to guide policy development:

- Position WisDOT to facilitate the safe and efficient movement of freight – provide convenient and accessible avenues to receive and address stakeholder concerns, challenges, and emerging trends to enable the safe and efficient movement of freight
- Integrate freight data and information into WisDOT investment decisions – integrate freight data and stakeholder input into WisDOT's planning, policies, programming, and operational decisions
- Promote statewide multimodal freight access and connection – promote adequate rural and urban access to regional and national markets and enable multimodal connections to freight facilities and services

## **1.2 FAST Act Compliance**

The Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act is a federal funding and authorization bill that governs federal spending on transportation. The bill was signed by President Obama on December 4, 2015, providing \$305 billion for federal fiscal years 2015 to 2020. The FAST Act requires state freight plans in order to be eligible for National Highway Freight Program funding. State freight plans have to be developed in compliance with the FAST Act and must be updated every five years.

As specified in the FAST Act, effective two years after the date of enactment of the FAST Act, a state may not use and allocate National Highway Freight Program funds for freight-related projects unless the state has developed a freight plan in accordance with the FAST Act (Table 1-1). Adoption of the Wisconsin SFP will take place in advance of the FAST Act requirement for states to adopt a state freight plan. Table 1-1 identifies the FAST Act State Freight Plan requirements and lists the chapters of the Wisconsin SFP that address these requirements.

**Table 1-1: FAST Act State Freight Plan Requirements**

<b>FAST Act – State Freight Plan – Requirements</b>	<b>Wisconsin State Freight Plan Compliance</b>
Identification of freight system trends, needs, and issues with respect to the state	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 7, <i>Freight Transportation Trends, Issues, and Forecasts</i></li> </ul>
Description of the freight policies, strategies, and performance measures that will guide freight-related transportation investment decisions of the state	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 6, <i>Transportation System Condition and Performance</i></li> <li>• Chapter 8, <i>Freight Policies and Strategies</i></li> <li>• Chapter 9, <i>Investment and Implementation</i></li> </ul>
When applicable, a listing of – multimodal and critical rural and urban freight corridors designated within the state	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 9, <i>Investment and Implementation</i></li> </ul>
Description of how the plan will improve the ability of the state to meet national multimodal freight goals and national highway freight program goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 1, <i>Introduction</i></li> <li>• Chapter 6, <i>Transportation System Condition and Performance</i></li> <li>• Chapter 8, <i>Freight Policies and Strategies</i></li> <li>• Chapter 9, <i>Investment and Implementation</i></li> </ul>
Description of how innovative technologies and operational strategies, including freight intelligent transportation systems, that improve the safety and efficiency of freight movement, were considered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 5, <i>Wisconsin’s Transportation System Assets</i></li> <li>• Chapter 8, <i>Freight Policies and Strategies</i></li> <li>• Chapter 9, <i>Investment and Implementation</i></li> </ul>
In the case of roadways on which travel by heavy vehicles is projected to substantially deteriorate the condition of the roadways, a description of improvements that may be required to reduce or impede the deterioration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 6, <i>Transportation System Condition and Performance</i></li> <li>• Chapter 8, <i>Freight Policies and Strategies</i></li> <li>• Chapter 9, <i>Investment and Implementation</i></li> </ul>
Inventory of facilities with freight mobility issues, such as bottlenecks, within the state, and for those facilities that are state owned or operated, a description of the strategies the state is employing to address freight mobility issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 6, <i>Transportation System Condition and Performance</i></li> <li>• Chapter 9, <i>Investment and Implementation</i></li> </ul>
Consideration of any significant congestion or delay caused by freight movements and strategies to mitigate that congestion or delay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 6, <i>Transportation System Condition and Performance</i></li> <li>• Chapter 9, <i>Investment and Implementation</i></li> </ul>
Freight investment plan that includes a list of priority projects and describes how funds made available would be invested and matched	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 9, <i>Investment and Implementation</i></li> </ul>
Consultation with the state freight advisory committee, as applicable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 3, <i>Public Involvement</i></li> <li>• Chapter 8, <i>Freight Policies and Strategies</i></li> <li>• Chapter 9, <i>Investment and Implementation</i></li> </ul>

### 1.3 Wisconsin Freight Plan Link to National Freight Goals and Policy

In line with requirements of the FAST Act, the goals and strategies of the Wisconsin SFP reflect and incorporate the national multimodal freight policy goals and the national highway freight program goals established in the FAST Act. The following section outlines the goals of the national multimodal freight policy and the national highway freight program, as well as discusses how the Wisconsin SFP advances these goals.

#### **National Multimodal Freight Policy Goals**

- Identify infrastructure improvements, policies and operational innovations that:
  - Strengthen the contribution of the National Multimodal Freight Network to the economic competitiveness of the United States
  - Reduce congestion and eliminate bottlenecks on the National Multimodal Freight Network
  - Increase productivity, particularly for domestic industries and businesses that create high-value jobs

- Improve the safety, security, efficiency, and resiliency of multimodal freight transportation
- Achieve and maintain a state of good repair on the National Multimodal Freight Network
- Use innovation and advanced technology to improve the safety, efficiency, and reliability of the National Multimodal Freight Network
- Improve the economic efficiency and productivity of the National Multimodal Freight Network
- Improve the reliability of freight transportation
- Improve the short- and long-distance movement of goods that:
  - Travel across rural areas between population centers
  - Travel between rural areas and population centers
  - Travel from the nation's ports, airports and gateways to the National Multimodal Freight Network
- 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 multimodal freight connectivity
- Reduce adverse environmental impacts of freight movement on the National Multimodal Freight Network
- Pursue the goals in a manner that is not burdensome to state and local governments

The Wisconsin SFP is a multimodal document that identifies policies, strategies, and projects to improve the state's economic productivity, competitiveness, and quality of life through the movement of goods safely, reliably, and efficiently. These policies, strategies, and projects are developed by identifying the condition and performance, as well as the trends and issues facing Wisconsin's multimodal freight transportation system through data and stakeholder outreach. The multimodal and statewide focus of the Wisconsin SFP ensures that the analysis covers freight transportation in rural and urban contexts, short- and long-distance movements, and connections between modes.

Through this approach, the Wisconsin SFP will advance the economic competitiveness of the United States by addressing bottlenecks and improving safety, security, efficiency, and resiliency, while minimizing impacts to the natural environment. The Wisconsin SFP identifies the state's critical multimodal freight facilities, enabling freight coordination between states through Wisconsin's membership in multi-state organizations such as the Mid-America Freight Coalition.

### ***National Highway Freight Program Goals***

- Invest in infrastructure improvements and implement operational improvements on the highways of the United States that:
  - Strengthen the contribution of the National Highway Freight Network to the economic competitiveness of the United States
  - Reduce congestion and bottlenecks on the National Highway Freight Network
  - Reduce the cost of freight transportation
  - Improve the year-round reliability of freight transportation
  - Increase productivity, particularly for domestic industries and businesses that create high-value jobs
- Improve the safety, security, efficiency, and resiliency of freight transportation in rural and urban areas;
- Improve the state of good repair of the National Highway Freight Network
- Use innovation and advanced technology to improve the safety, efficiency, and reliability of the National Highway Freight Network
- Improve the efficiency and productivity of the National Highway Freight Network
- 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
- Reduce the environmental impacts of freight movement on the National Highway Freight Network

Similar to the national multimodal freight policy goals, the national highway freight program goals are advanced in the Wisconsin SFP through the plan's approach and recommendations. The Wisconsin SFP identifies policies, strategies, and projects that advance WisDOT's vision of a multimodal freight transportation system that enhances the state's economic productivity, competitiveness, and quality of life through the movement of goods safely, reliably, and efficiently, while minimizing impacts to the natural environment. By advancing Wisconsin's vision for freight in the state, the Wisconsin SFP will advance the economic competitiveness of the United States through the reduction of congestion and cost, and increase the reliability, safety, security, resiliency, and overall competitiveness of domestic industries. The Wisconsin SFP identifies the state's critical highway facilities, enabling freight coordination between states through Wisconsin's membership in multi-state organizations such as the Mid-America Freight Coalition.

## 1.4 Wisconsin SFP Chapter Structure

### **Part One – Chapters 1-4: Plan Overview and Context**

- **Chapter 1** – Introduces the Wisconsin State Freight Plan
- **Chapter 2** – Provides an overview of freight-related roles and responsibilities for WisDOT and its partners
- **Chapter 3** – Reviews public involvement activities that helped shape the plan
- **Chapter 4** – Provides an overview of the economic importance of freight transportation in Wisconsin

### **Part Two – Chapters 5-7: System Inventory and Needs**

- **Chapter 5** – Provides an inventory and assessment of the condition of state transportation assets that support freight movement
- **Chapter 6** – Reviews operational, safety and security elements associated with freight transportation
- **Chapter 7** – Describes some of the key trends and issues facing the state's transportation system

### **Part Three – Chapters 8-9: Freight Plan Implementation**

- **Chapter 8** – Describes WisDOT's implementation strategy focusing on freight-related policy elements and provides a basic overview of the state's transportation funding structure
- **Chapter 9** – Provides an implementation plan, strategies, and freight-related performance measures

### **Part Four – Chapters 10-11: Estimated Impact of Freight on Communities and Environment**

- **Chapters 10 & 11** – Documents the system-plan environmental evaluation and the environmental justice analysis of the potential impacts of the plan on the state's natural, cultural, minority, low income, senior, young, and zero-vehicle populations.

## 1.5 State Freight Plan Development Process

The SFP was developed by incorporating several factors, including legislation and national/regional emphasis, in accordance with the state's trends, challenges, opportunities, and with a special focus on public involvement.

### ***Legislation and National/Regional Emphasis***

The SFP was developed in accordance with FAST Act freight planning requirements. The SFP identifies the strategies and performance measures that will guide freight-related transportation investment decisions in Wisconsin. As required, the SFP includes a freight investment plan that outlines a list of priority projects and describes how dedicated freight funds are invested and matched.

### ***Focus on Transportation Investments and Economic Development***

The SFP meets the challenge of defining freight-specific policies that address system demands and reflect industry needs within the context of a fiscally-constrained environment.

### ***Needs, Trends, Challenges and Opportunities***

The SFP identifies the needs of the Wisconsin economy, current and emerging freight trends, challenges Wisconsin's transportation is facing or will face in the future, and opportunities for increasing efficiency going forward. WisDOT developed the SFP policies to address these trends and challenges.

### ***Public Involvement***

Public involvement activities that shaped the SFP included public outreach efforts that helped guide the development of the plan. Based on federal guidance regarding environmental justice considerations, a special focus was placed on soliciting stakeholder input and assessing the impact on environmental justice populations. Additional outreach activities during the draft plan public review effort helped to refine the SFP's policies.

### ***Providing an Implementation and Performance Monitoring Strategy***

To meet future freight mobility demands, the SFP provides a systematic way to measure system performance via the implementation of policies and the identification of prioritized networks for highways and the state-supported rail system.