

# 3 – Chapter 3: Public Involvement

A comprehensive public involvement process helps ensure that long-range plans and recommendations reflect interests, issues, and concerns from the state’s transportation system users. Early and continuous public engagement involves gathering input from a variety of stakeholders and the general public throughout the plan development process. Wisconsin is home to a variety of freight stakeholders including private industry, transportation users, and government interests at all levels – local, state and federal. (For more information see Chapter 2, *Transportation Stakeholders and Institutions*).

| Overview of Chapter 3   |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• This chapter summarizes stakeholder and public outreach efforts conducted in support of the Wisconsin State Freight Plan</li><li>• This chapter also describes several key inputs into the state’s decision-making process for making freight investments</li></ul> |

In addition to general public involvement, federal regulations require states to consult with key stakeholder interests early and often throughout the State Freight Plan’s (SFP’s) development effort.<sup>1</sup> The public participation process for the State Freight Plan and System-plan Environmental Evaluation (SEE) sought and considered input from groups included in these requirements, including but not limited to, Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), Regional Planning Commissions (RPCs), environmental resource agencies, statewide trade and economic development organizations, minority and low income populations (environmental justice groups), Indian Tribal governments, freight industry (including operators, shippers and carriers), and other interested parties. WisDOT also engaged the Freight Advisory Committee (FAC), which is comprised of stakeholders from public and private sectors, throughout the development of the SFP. The FAC provided guidance during the planning process, helped to identify potential issues to be considered in the plan, and promoted a shared vision for the state’s freight transportation network.

This chapter summarizes Wisconsin’s freight stakeholder engagement efforts, conducted in the development of the SFP, and describes how WisDOT has incorporated the input received.

## 3.1 WisDOT’s Public Involvement Process

The public involvement process for the plan focused on encouraging participation and soliciting feedback from all Wisconsin residents. The goals of the plan’s public involvement process are to:

- Ensure an open and inclusive process
- Educate the public about Wisconsin’s freight transportation system
- Provide opportunities for the public to participate in the planning process
- Facilitate dialogue between WisDOT, the general public, and stakeholders to identify the critical issues facing the state’s freight system and develop policies to address these issues
- Hold public involvement meetings at times and locations that are both convenient and accessible to all Wisconsin residents including ethnic minority and low-income populations and Tribal governments
- Utilize social media and Internet-based public involvement applications, including a web-based sign-up form, Facebook, and other social media outlets, as appropriate

---

<sup>1</sup> 49 USC 70202.

Development of the plan included a comprehensive three phase process to gather input early and continuously throughout the development of the plan:

- Phase 1: Pre Draft plan and SEE development and needs identification
- Phase 2: Draft plan and SEE review
- Phase 3: Final plan and SEE adoption

Early efforts prior to the initial development of the draft plan helped to inform and shape the plan, including:

- Governor’s Freight Industry Summits
- Connections 2030
- Truck Size and Weight Study

| <b>Federal Consultation</b>   |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 23 CFR 450 requires WisDOT to:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Establish early and continuous public involvement that provides timely information about transportation issues and the decision making process</li> <li>○ Include a wide range of people, including (but not limited to) individuals, public agencies, public ports, freight shippers, and providers of freight transportation services</li> <li>○ Demonstrate explicit consideration and response to public input during the development of the long-range statewide transportation plan<sup>2</sup></li> </ul> </li> </ul> |

### 3.2 Phase 1: Pre Draft Plan and SEE Development and Needs Identification

The State Freight Plan is Wisconsin’s first multimodal freight plan. Early plan development built on information received in prior efforts and described above, as well as feedback from multiple sources including stakeholder meetings, consultation with non-metropolitan groups, and environmental resource agencies.

In order to provide greater context to the freight planning process, this section describes both early discussions that started with the development of the department’s multimodal long-range plan

*Connections 2030*, the *Wisconsin Truck Size and Weight Study*, and Governor’s Freight Industry Summits, as well as additional stakeholder outreach used to help define the plan’s focus and content. Outreach through these forums and efforts helped connect WisDOT to the freight industry, and provided WisDOT with viewpoints on how enhancements to Wisconsin’s transportation system could improve the state’s business climate, create jobs, open new markets, and grow the state’s economic base.

WisDOT held many face-to-face meetings and teleconferences with stakeholders, including representatives from freight shipping companies, local governments, and engineering trade groups. Outreach and discussions are summarized later in the chapter.

| <b>Freight Plan Public Involvement Plan</b>  |
|--|
| <p>The Freight Plan Public Involvement Plan (PIP) describes the public involvement process for the Plan.</p> <p><b><a href="http://wisconsindot.gov/Documents/projects/sfp/pip.pdf">http://wisconsindot.gov/Documents/projects/sfp/pip.pdf</a></b></p> <p>The PIP describes public involvement strategy, including a consultation process with the public, stakeholders, environmental resource agencies, environmental justice communities, and Tribal governments about plan policies.</p> |

<sup>2</sup> 23 CFR 450.210.

**Governor’s Freight Industry Summits**

Between 2011 and 2016, Governor Scott Walker sponsored five annual freight industry summits, which gather public and private officials with a common interest in our economically-vital freight industry. The purpose of the Governor’s Freight Industry Summits is to:

- Understand issues of great importance to the industry
- Generate targeted feedback on industry needs
- Strengthen relationships with high-level industry leaders
- Develop a base for WisDOT actions and initiatives moving forward

WisDOT has held annual Governor’s Freight Industry Summits from 2011 through 2014 and in 2016. Table 3-1 summarizes the key topics discussed at each of the five Governor’s Freight Industry Summits.

**Table 3-1: Topics Discussed at the Governor’s Freight Industry Summits**

| Date              | Location      | Topics Discussed  |
|-------------------|---------------|---|
| November 9, 2011  | Appleton, WI  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multimodal Freight Network and Investment Priorities</li> <li>• Freight Policy and Regulations</li> <li>• Freight System Efficiency and Resiliency for Operators</li> <li>• Safety and Security of the Transportation System in Wisconsin</li> <li>• Streamlining Regulatory Processes and Bureaucracy</li> </ul>  |
| November 28, 2012 | Madison, WI   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intermodal Opportunities and Access to Asian Markets</li> <li>• Intermodal Challenges and Opportunities in Wisconsin</li> <li>• Ports Challenges and Opportunities in Wisconsin</li> <li>• Shortline Rail Challenges and Opportunities in Wisconsin</li> <li>• CNG Opportunities in Wisconsin for Trucking and Rail</li> <li>• Truck Weights Study and Legislative Initiatives in Minnesota</li> </ul> |
| November 5, 2013  | Milwaukee, WI | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manufacturing and Logistics Options in Wisconsin</li> <li>• Challenges and Opportunities of Wisconsin’s Motor Carriers</li> <li>• Successes, Opportunities and Challenges of Wisconsin’s Ports</li> <li>• Balancing of Container Opportunities and Challenges</li> <li>• Chippewa Falls Intermodal Facility Successes</li> </ul>   |
| August 14, 2014   | Appleton, WI  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transportation and Business Site Selection               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Factors that Influence Site Selection in Wisconsin</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Logistics and Supply Chains in Wisconsin               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Supply Chain Challenges in Wisconsin</li> <li>○ Wisconsin’s Proactive Partnerships with Industry</li> </ul> </li> </ul>    |
| October 13, 2016  | Wausau, WI    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Autonomous Vehicles and Advances in Multimodal Technologies</li> <li>• Wisconsin State Freight Plan Comments and Feedback</li> </ul>   |

On average, approximately 110 freight stakeholders participate in each Governor’s Freight Industry Summit. Over 260 individuals, representing 160 different organizations, have participated in at least one summit since 2011. Information and feedback received by industry attendees have been helpful to establishing policy directions and guiding new initiatives for freight in Wisconsin.

## **Connections 2030**

When WisDOT's multimodal long-range plan, *Connections 2030*, was released in 2009, no formal department-hosted forum existed to support the exchange of ideas and discussion of freight issues between the public and private sectors. In response, a policy was established to partner with stakeholders to ensure that freight movements are safe, reliable, and that they provide positive environmental and community impacts.

*Connections 2030* recommended that WisDOT should engage in freight advocacy by facilitating discussions that focus on efforts to address challenges and opportunities on a statewide and regional basis. Coordination between stakeholders and the department helps to facilitate prioritization of investments by targeting improvements to meet infrastructure needs, thereby supporting economic growth. As a result of *Connections 2030*, efforts focused on creating forums for the department to build and maintain relationships with the freight industry to better understand freight needs, markets, and issues.

## **Truck Size and Weight Study**

In 2005, Wisconsin Act 167 mandated the creation of a Joint Legislative Council study committee on Wisconsin highway weight limits.<sup>3</sup> The Joint Legislative Council study committee recommended WisDOT contract for a comprehensive *Truck Size and Weight Study*, which was completed in June 2009, focusing on economic benefits, infrastructure protection, and safety. The *Truck Size and Weight Study* recommended WisDOT establish a "Freight Reform Initiative."<sup>4</sup>

The Freight Reform Initiative was developed in part to align WisDOT actions and priorities with freight-related industry needs and Wisconsin's economy. Cooperation between the public and private sectors relative to freight decision-making was recognized as part of the Freight Reform Initiative. This recognition supported the notion that freight-related decisions are interconnected among freight modes and that the cooperation between the public and private sector leads to improved freight planning and mobility. In addition, compromises must be achieved between the public sector's goal to provide infrastructure to help reach the potential of the entire economy and the private sector's goal to use publicly-provided infrastructure to optimize time and cost functions for its own gain. As a result, the development of strategic partnerships between WisDOT and freight stakeholders became a component of the Freight Reform Initiative. The Freight Reform Initiative also recommended that WisDOT invite those in freight-related industries to participate in annual Governor's Freight Industry Summits, focus on "freight friendly" regulations and develop a multimodal freight network. Through these efforts, WisDOT was able to align actions to industry needs, respond to and create growth opportunities, forge partnerships with industry, and take proactive steps regarding regulations that impact businesses.

---

<sup>3</sup> Wisconsin State Legislature, 2005 Wisconsin Act 167.

<sup>4</sup> Wisconsin Department of Transportation, "Wisconsin Truck Size and Weight Study."

## ***Efforts to Drive Content Development of the Plan***

During this pre-draft plan phase of development, public and stakeholder input was used to help drive content development of the plan and draft System-plan Environmental Evaluation (SEE). Early efforts to define the scope and focus of the plan and identify freight needs and issues included:

- Holding FAC and stakeholder meetings
- Consultation with Environmental Resource Agencies
- Outreach to low-income and minority groups
- Consultation with Tribal governments

### ***Wisconsin's Freight Advisory Committee***

At the direction of Governor Walker, WisDOT announced the establishment of a Freight Advisory Committee (FAC) at the 2014 Governor's Freight Industry Summit. Wisconsin's FAC was created as a forum for the exchange of ideas to help WisDOT better understand the complexities associated with freight movements in order to more effectively guide public investment to address freight transportation needs. The FAC assists WisDOT in addressing a wide array of freight movement issues and serves as a discussion and advisory forum for:

- Developing the SFP and other relevant state plans, as appropriate
- Providing feedback and advice to the Secretary's Office and WisDOT Freight Policy Administrators Group on freight transportation policies and processes, including but not specifically limited to:
  - Identifying obstacles, challenges, and opportunities in Wisconsin for more efficient freight movement in the state, national, and global economy
  - Seeking opportunities within the freight industry to improve freight movement to, from, through, and within Wisconsin
  - Identifying potential governmental initiatives that could enable Wisconsin firms to move goods more efficiently
  - Facilitating education among freight stakeholders and the state
  - Providing feedback and advice on governmental planning and project initiatives that impact Wisconsin's multimodal freight system

The FAC includes representatives from the rail, trucking, waterways, warehouse/distribution, energy, and agri-business industries, as well as supply chain and academic groups, MPOs, RPCs, and a variety of local, state, and federal agencies.

All of these individuals provide input on specific topics and/or issues addressed at each meeting. The FAC meets on a biannual basis to discuss topics to improve Wisconsin's freight transportation system. A summary of the topics discussed at each FAC meeting is included in Table 3-2. More information about the FAC, including detailed reports which capture their recommendations, can be found on WisDOT's website at:

<http://wisconsindot.gov/Pages/doing-bus/freight/fac.aspx>.

**Table 3-2: Topics Discussed at the 2015-2017 Wisconsin Freight Advisory Committee Meetings**

| Date               | Location    | Topics Discussed   |
|--------------------|-------------|--|
| April 23, 2015     | Madison, WI | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey Tool to Rank Priority Topics for Future Meeting</li> <li>• Intermodal Facilities in Wisconsin</li> </ul>   |
| September 16, 2015 | Madison, WI | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Federal and State Legislative/Budget Overview and Outlook</li> <li>• Wisconsin’s Connections to the World Economy               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Local Roads, First/Last Mile and Intermodal Connections</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Rail Access/Service and Competition/Options in Wisconsin</li> </ul> |
| April 14, 2016     | Madison, WI | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oversize-Overweight Vehicles and the Local Infrastructure Impacts</li> <li>• Supply Chain and Logistics in Wisconsin</li> </ul>   |
| October 12, 2016   | Wausau, WI  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wisconsin State Freight Plan Comments and Feedback</li> <li>• Ports/Harbors and Waterways in Wisconsin</li> </ul>   |
| May 16, 2017       | Madison, WI | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proposed Policies From State Freight Plan</li> <li>• Legal Weight Trucking in Wisconsin</li> </ul>  |

To assist in the development of meeting content for the inaugural FAC meeting on April 23, 2015, and subsequent meetings, FAC members completed an online survey designed to rank a series of freight-related transportation topics. The list of topics were generated as a result of the 2014 Governor’s Freight Industry Summit. The results of the online survey, which garnered a 100 percent response rate, were useful in understanding which topics were of most interest to the FAC as compared to the attendees of the Governor’s Freight Industry Summit. The feedback from the FAC on these various topics are included in Chapter 7, *Freight Transportation Trends, Issues, and Forecasts* and Chapter 8, *Freight Policies and Strategies*.

The FAC was also engaged to provide input on the development of the SFP. WisDOT provided updates at each FAC meeting regarding the development of the draft plan. Additional presentations were given to relevant associations and organizations representing FAC members. Examples of themes and input received by FAC members covered a variety of topics, including: vehicle weights and heights, alternative fuels, first/last mile connections, rail service and accessibility, agricultural equipment, transportation funding, performance measures, prioritization of funding, port access, and corridor preservation. The full list of topics and analysis of each topic is included in Chapter 7, *Freight Transportation Trends, Issues, and Forecasts*.

### ***Freight Stakeholder Meetings***

As part of the outreach effort, WisDOT presented to a number of freight stakeholders groups. Stakeholders include groups with an interest in freight generation, movement, and investments that could be impacted by the policies and recommendations in the SFP. Presentations were provided following requests from stakeholders to present information regarding the SFP at an upcoming meeting. These meetings were an opportunity to discuss the plan, identify an organization’s need and interests, and to focus discussions on stakeholder opportunities and concerns, as well as ask questions. A summary of presentations given to various freight stakeholder groups is provided in Table 3-3. The input received was invaluable in helping to clarify the draft plan’s vision and policies.

**Table 3-3: Wisconsin State Freight Plan Presentations Given to Freight Stakeholders**

| Date                 | Organization/Meeting   | Topics Discussed  |
|----------------------|--|---|
| January 21, 2016     | Wisconsin Manufacturers and Commerce                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vehicle heights and weights</li> <li>• Alternative fuels (CNG and LNG)</li> <li>• Role of future technology including autonomous vehicles</li> </ul>   |
| March 7, 2016        | Wisconsin Towns Association*   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transportation funding levels</li> <li>• Enforcement of Implements of Husbandry laws</li> </ul>  |
| March 10, 2016       | Transportation Development Association                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transportation funding levels</li> <li>• First/Last Mile connections</li> </ul>  |
| March 24, 2016       | Wisconsin Motor Carriers Association                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Freight performance measure development status</li> <li>• Intermodal facility needs</li> <li>• Transportation funding levels</li> </ul>  |
| March 29, 2016       | Wisconsin County Highway Association*                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transportation funding levels</li> <li>• First/Last Mile connections</li> </ul>  |
| April 4, 2016        | Wisconsin Transportation Builders Association                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Benefit of providing freight volumes/value by corridor</li> <li>• Consistency with other states' freight plans</li> </ul>  |
| April 12, 2016       | League of Wisconsin Municipalities*                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First/Last Mile connections</li> <li>• FAST Act funding</li> <li>• OSOW corridor preservation</li> <li>• Community and neighborhood impacts as a result of freight</li> <li>• Role of future technology including autonomous vehicles</li> </ul> |
| April 15, 2016       | Northeast Wisconsin Truck Expo   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transportation funding</li> </ul>  |
| May 2, 2016          | Wausau Chamber of Commerce   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First/Last Mile connections</li> <li>• Rail service and accessibility</li> <li>• Intermodal connections</li> </ul>   |
| May 3, 2016          | American Council of Engineering Companies of Wisconsin                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• OSOW corridor preservation</li> <li>• Prioritization of funding (projects outnumber funding)</li> </ul>  |
| June 1, 2016         | Metropolitan Interstate Commission – Harbor Technical Advisory Committee | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wisconsin's proximity to Chicago and the Twin Cities (impact of freight movements)</li> </ul>  |
| August 4, 2016       | Wisconsin Commercial Ports Association                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Port accessibility and corridor preservation</li> </ul>  |
| October 24- 25, 2016 | Mid-Continent Research Symposium   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Freight Factors</li> <li>• Bottleneck Analysis</li> <li>• Freight Policy</li> </ul>  |
| November 15, 2016    | WisDOT Annual Railroad Conference  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Class I Rail</li> <li>• Shortline Rail</li> </ul>  |
| November 16, 2016    | Milwaukee Region OSOW Working Group                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Freight Factor Scoring</li> <li>• Implementation</li> </ul>  |

\*Non-metropolitan groups representing local officials

## ***Stakeholder Consultation***

The Code of Federal Regulations (Section 450.210(c) of 23 CFR 450) defines consultation requirements with environmental resource agencies and Tribal governments when preparing long-range transportation plans.<sup>5</sup> WisDOT's consultation process is designed to inform environmental resource agencies and Tribal governments about plan policies and to get their feedback. The consultation process also includes a discussion of potential impacts resulting from plan recommendations along with identification of potential mitigation strategies. Specifically, consultation includes a comparison of the SFP with conservation plans or maps, and inventories of natural and historic resources, if available.<sup>6</sup> Federal legislation requires the discussion of possible mitigation activities in consultation with the agencies described in this chapter.

WisDOT held consultation meetings with environmental resource agencies, Tribal governments, MPOs and RPCs, and non-metropolitan planning areas. WisDOT also conducted outreach to minority and low-income groups. The following sections describe this outreach in greater detail.

### ***Environmental Resource Agencies***

WisDOT held two meetings with environmental resource agencies during the pre-draft plan development phase of the planning process, one in February 2016 and one in August 2016. WisDOT sought input from state and federal environmental resource agencies in February in preparation for the SEE as part of the State Freight Plan. Pursuant to Administrative Code Trans 400, the SEE qualitatively evaluates the potential environmental impacts resulting from the policies and actions defined within the Freight Plan. The goal of the consultation meetings was to gather input regarding the concerns, programs, and policies from various federal and state regulatory agencies. The input received helped inform the Environmental Justice Analysis (Chapter 10) and System-plan Environmental Evaluation (SEE) (Chapter 11) chapters of the plan. Those invited to participate are shown below; those with an asterisk participated in the meetings:

- Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration\*
- United States Environmental Protection Agency, Region 5\*
- FHWA Wisconsin Division\*
- Wisconsin State Historical Society\*
- Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources\*
- Office of the Commission of Railroads\*
- Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration\*
- Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection\*
- Wisconsin Department of Health Services, Bureau of Environmental and Occupational Health\*
- National Park Service\*
- Wisconsin Department of Military Affairs, Division of Hazard Mitigation and Emergency Management\*
- United States Army Corps of Engineers\*
- Public Service Commission
- United States Coast Guard

---

<sup>5</sup> 23 CFR 450.

<sup>6</sup> 23 CFR 450.214(i).

The meeting discussions included a series of discussion topics ranging from wetland impacts to traffic congestion. Highlights and themes resulting from the discussions included:

- Secondary impacts resulting from the development of large distribution centers should be considered.
- Concerns of congestion relative to loading facilities for all modes (i.e. transload, intermodal, etc.).
- Idle reduction technologies and alternative fuels for trucks and trains are gaining popularity in Wisconsin; while similar technologies for boats and planes are still being explored.
- Multiple state and nationwide programs are in place regarding air quality, mitigation, and climate variability (i.e. CMAQ, SmartWay, and Green Tier).
- Emergency incident response is of concern for local first responders. Locals should be equipped with the resource and training to respond to an incident.
- Impacts to historic and cultural resources need to be factored into the process.
- Historic bridges need to be considered, especially when re-establishing rail lines.
- Wetlands are impacted by a variety of actions. The United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) has regulations in place.
- The Coast Guard is involved with the handling of ballast water.
- Disposal of dredge material from ports is a concern. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and USACE have regulations in place.
- Public health impacts and including measurement.
- Railroad crossings and related challenges to communities.

WisDOT used this input during the development of the draft plan's vision and policies and to evaluate the potential impacts considered in the SEE and environmental justice analysis. See Appendix 3-1, Public Hearings, for detailed information regarding the Environmental Resource Agency meetings. Comments received during the Draft Plan Public Comment period relating specifically to the SEE and environmental justice chapters were considered as well. Revisions were made to the Draft Plan where appropriate and included topics such as air quality, agriculture, prime farmland, and water resources.

#### ***Consultation with Metropolitan Planning Organizations and Regional Planning Commissions***

As required for all statewide long-range plans, WisDOT reviews regional transportation plans to ensure that local and state plan recommendations are aligned.<sup>7</sup> During development of the State Freight Plan, WisDOT staff met with the state's fourteen MPOs and eight RPCs (which represent non-metropolitan planning areas), to discuss their long-range transportation plan policies and recommendations, and how they could be incorporated into the State Freight Plan. They were an integral part of the discussions through quarterly meetings. A summary of the presentations given to MPOs and RPCs is found in Table 3-4.

---

<sup>7</sup> 23 CFR 450.208.

**Table 3-4: Wisconsin State Freight Plan Presentations Given to MPOs and RPCs**

| Date               | Organization/Meeting                                    | Topics Discussed  |
|--------------------|---|---|
| October 27, 2015   | Annual MPO/RPC Conference, Green Bay                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interest in regional, multi-state, and national components of freight movement</li> <li>• Freight’s impact on local roads and related funding</li> <li>• Need to show first/last mile connections</li> </ul> |
| April 24, 2016     | WisDOT MPO/RPC Directors Meeting, Madison               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Importance of rail connections</li> <li>• Opportunities for economic development due to freight improvements</li> <li>• Data needed to address performance measures</li> </ul>                               |
| July 27, 2016      | North Central Wisconsin RPC Meeting, Wausau             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rail needs for industries</li> <li>• Economic development opportunities in the region</li> </ul>   |
| August 25, 2016    | Annual MPO/RPC Conference, Appleton                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How the plan will discuss job opportunities related to freight</li> <li>• How environmental justice impacts will be measured</li> </ul>  |
| September 19, 2016 | Brown County RPC/Green Bay MPO Joint Meeting, Green Bay | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How WisDOT will designate Critical Urban and Rural Freight Corridors</li> <li>• Interest in specific project (Southern Bridge) being included in the plan to qualify for federal funding</li> </ul>          |
| October 24, 2016   | WisDOT MPO/RPC Directors Meeting, Madison               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of State Freight Plan</li> <li>• Discussed data and use of the freight bottleneck mapping in regional planning</li> </ul>   |

Feedback from these discussions included:

- Transload facilities are needed in the Green Bay area
- Funding is needed for first/last mile connections
- Interest in accessing funding through the FAST Act for key freight infrastructure
- Intermodal connections are important to economic development
- Data sharing will be important, particularly for tracking performance

The feedback received during this effort was integrated into the final draft plan.

***Consultation with Non-Metropolitan Groups***

In addition to the RPCs discussed above, WisDOT also consulted with three groups representing non-metropolitan local officials: the Wisconsin Towns Association, the Wisconsin County Highway Association, and the League of Wisconsin Municipalities. The input received from these groups was important for understanding freight issues in non-metropolitan areas. These are shown with an asterisk in Table 3-3.

***Outreach to Low-Income and Minority Groups***

WisDOT is committed to environmental justice throughout its planning and outreach activities. The specific environmental justice goals for the State Freight Plan outreach included:

- Identifying minority and/or low-income populations across the state
- Conducting environmental justice analyses to determine if any of the plan’s policies or actions result in significantly disproportionate impacts on environmental justice populations
- Conducting outreach to engage environmental justice populations in discussions regarding the SFP
- Building relationships with environmental justice populations

A summary of presentations and discussions with environmental justice communities and advocates are included in Table 3-5. These groups and individual were selected based on their proximity to major freight generators and facilities. In addition, they provided WisDOT with a perspective regarding how freight transportation impacts low-income and minority groups. The meetings were a mix of public meetings and standing meetings of organizations such as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in Beloit. The meetings typically included a presentation and open forum. The number of participants varied from 2 to approximately 50. Additional outreach is planned in other areas of the state for future phases of the process.

**Table 3-5: Wisconsin State Freight Plan Presentations Given to Low-Income and Minority Groups**

| Date              | Organization/Meeting  | Topics Discussed  |
|-------------------|---|---|
| December 5, 2015  | Southeastern Wisconsin RPC's Environmental Justice Task Force | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impacts from railroads traveling through neighborhoods</li> <li>• How the plan will increase job opportunities</li> </ul>  |
| March 30, 2016    | City of Milwaukee Commercial Corridor Manager                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic development for Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) on the North Side of Milwaukee and freight access</li> <li>• Century City BID and access from Capitol Drive from truck and rail</li> <li>• Rail spur access to Century City</li> <li>• How the Transportation Economic Assistance (TEA) program can help</li> </ul> |
| April 13, 2016    | Pastors United, Milwaukee                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How the plan will increase job opportunities</li> </ul>  |
| April 14, 2016    | Century City 1 Open House, Milwaukee                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How TEA can assist with freight access</li> </ul>  |
| April 18, 2016    | Harley Davidson Neighborhood of Neighborhoods, Milwaukee      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More connections to the port needed</li> <li>• Better freight connections off of Marquette Interchange and I-94 E/W</li> </ul>   |
| September 8, 2016 | NAACP, Beloit   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How maintenance and reconstruction impacts the church</li> <li>• I-39/90 truck freight</li> <li>• Opportunities to economic development for their community</li> </ul>   |
| October 17, 2016  | Hmong Wisconsin Chamber of Commerce, Milwaukee                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How freight is important to small businesses across the state</li> </ul>   |

Input from these meetings informed Chapter 10, *Environmental Justice*, including the analysis and consideration of mitigation in locations of future freight activities to ensure consistency with environmental justice principles.

**Consultation with Tribal Governments**

WisDOT is committed to government-to-government consultation with Wisconsin's eleven federally-recognized Tribes on actions that affect identified Tribal rights and issues. During the pre-draft phase of plan development, WisDOT presented information regarding the SFP at multiple Tribal meetings. Outreach efforts were focused on sharing information and obtaining feedback through consultation with Wisconsin's eleven federally-recognized Tribes and seven Tribal governments having a historic interest in Wisconsin. As part of these efforts, WisDOT sent a letter to the eleven federally-recognized Tribes and Tribes with a historic interest in Wisconsin that included information about the plan and an offer to meet individually. No requests for individual meetings were received.

Additionally, WisDOT developed freight movement maps for each federally-recognized Tribe in Wisconsin and distributed them at the May 12, 2016 Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council and reviewed them at the June 16, 2016 Inter-Tribal Task Force. The maps were informational and depicted freight movement by tonnage for highways and railroads. Table 3-6 includes the Tribal meetings where WisDOT presented information on the State Freight Plan and requested feedback.

**Table 3-6: Wisconsin State Freight Plan Presentations Given to Tribal Governments**

| Date               | Organization/Meeting                       | Topics Discussed   |
|--------------------|--|--|
| December 2, 2015   | Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How the plan could support Tribal businesses</li> </ul>         |
| May 12, 2016       | Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Movement of hazardous materials through Tribal lands</li> </ul> |
| June 16, 2016      | Inter-Tribal Task Force                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overview of State Freight Plan</li> </ul>                       |
| November 1-2, 2016 | Wisconsin Tribal Transportation Conference | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overview of State Freight Plan</li> </ul>                       |

The feedback received included how the plan will support Tribal businesses and the request for more information regarding the movement of hazardous materials through Tribal lands.

### 3.3 Phase 2: Draft Plan

Phase 2 (Draft Plan) began with the release of the draft version of the Wisconsin State Freight Plan for public comment on September 29, 2016. The public comment period concluded on November 14, 2016. During this time, WisDOT conducted public involvement meetings and meetings with minority, low-income, and senior citizen groups. WisDOT was also available to meet with various stakeholder groups, at their request, to discuss the draft plan. Throughout the public comment period, WisDOT accepted feedback on the draft plan via the Internet, e-mail, phone, United States mail and in-person at the meetings. The comments received during this time were compiled and analyzed to determine if and how the plan would be revised to reflect the public’s opinions. This input is critical for clarifying existing policies to better explain them to the public, and refining existing policies so that they better address the public’s needs.

## Release of the Draft Plan

WisDOT used a variety of methods to publicize the release of the draft plan, the times and locations of public involvement meetings, and methods available for obtaining information and providing feedback, including:

- Published legal notice in the Wisconsin State Journal
- Sent press releases to media outlets
- Posted information via the department's social media channels
- Posted plan documents and accompanying information on WisDOT's website
- Provided copies of the draft plan for review at WisDOT's central office, eight region offices, and Wisconsin document depository libraries in Madison<sup>8</sup>
- Delivered information on the draft freight plan in the lobby of the WisDOT Central Office

## Comment Period

The release of the draft SFP was accompanied by a 45-day public comment period and a series of public involvement meetings - one in each WisDOT region. Meetings with minority and low-income groups and with freight stakeholders were also held. At the end of the 45-day public comment period, WisDOT compiled the information received and developed changes to be incorporated in the final plan. These are summarized later in this chapter.

## Public Involvement Meetings

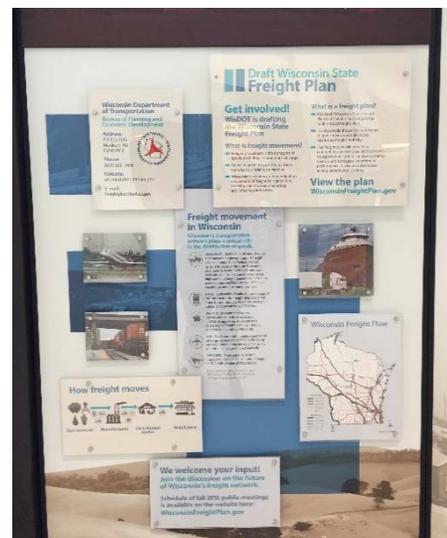
Conducted as open houses, the five public involvement meetings were scheduled on weeknights from 4:30 PM to 6:30 PM to allow attendees to review the materials, ask questions and provide comments at their own pace. Table 3-7 outlines the dates and locations of the public involvement meetings.



### Learning More About the Wisconsin State Freight Plan

WisDOT employed a variety of tools to share information about the draft State Freight Plan and provide opportunities for stakeholders and the public to 1) ask questions and 2) provide input on the draft plan and planning process:

- Freight Plan Website
- Display Boards
- Social Media: Twitter and Facebook
- Press releases
- Presentations
- Public involvement meetings
- Focused outreach meetings
- Public Hearings



<sup>8</sup> Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, Wisconsin Document Depository Program.

**Table 3-7: Public Involvement Meetings Held for the Draft State Freight Plan**

| City       | Location   | Date             |
|------------|--|------------------|
| Eau Claire | Eau Claire City Hall, 203 S. Farwell Street          | October 5, 2016  |
| Appleton   | Appleton Public Library, 225 N. Oneida Street        | October 6, 2016  |
| Wausau     | Longfellow Administration Center, 415 Seymour Street | October 11, 2016 |
| Middleton  | Kromrey Middle School, 7009 Donna Drive              | October 18, 2016 |
| West Allis | Tommy G. Thompson Youth Center, 640 S. 84th Street   | October 20, 2016 |

### **Social Media Outreach**

WisDOT employed social media - Twitter and Facebook, specifically - to generate interest in the draft SFP, as well as to provide information about the release of the draft plan for public comment and the times and locations of public involvement meetings.

### **Data Compilation and Analysis**

During the public comment period for the draft plan, WisDOT collected over 280 comments from interested individuals and groups. Over 150 comments were submitted by stakeholders during the FAC meeting and Governor’s Freight Industry Summit held in October 2016. WisDOT also received more than 130 comments via email and from attendees of the public involvement meetings. In compiling comments, individual ideas or suggestions within a single communication were separated and sorted by theme to aid analysis. These themes, as well as specific ideas or suggestions, were reviewed by WisDOT, with recommended changes to policy and actions provided in the final draft plan. All comments were compiled and analyzed to develop a complete picture of stakeholder interests and concerns. Comments promoting significant additions, deletions, or revisions were reviewed and carefully considered. The following provides a compilation of themes from SFP comments.



#### **Modal Issues**

- Ports need to be recognized as a critical asset and need a multimodal freight network to function.
- The state needs to take a more active role working with the rail providers, notably the Class I rail providers, to improve freight rail service.
- WisDOT needs to determine its role in establishing intermodal facilities in the state.
- Commenters suggested that there is a lack of harmony between states on oversize/overweight permitting.
- Commenters proposed configurations for changing truck size and weight for legal and oversize loads.

#### **Freight Projects**

- Comments were received regarding the priority project list in the State Freight Plan. Commenters asked if there would be an opportunity to add local street and highway projects to the priority project list in the State Freight Plan.
- Including local streets in the priority project list would recognize the importance of first mile/last mile connections.

#### **Safety**

- Concerns of movement of crude oil and hazardous materials by all modes of transportation.

## ***Draft Plan Changes***

Based on the analysis of comments received during the draft plan stage, WisDOT developed several changes to the draft plan to address key issues identified. Comments received ranged from general comments to policy recommendations. The general comments identified potential changes to the State Freight Plan. These changes include enhancements, clarifications, providing more detail, correcting possible inaccuracies, and documenting follow up and additional implementation strategies. The comments that identified policy recommendations were considered for the plan. The review of these comments identified several topics that the State Freight Plan should address. These topics include:

- Improve the Multimodal Freight Network
- Development of Intermodal Facilities
- Improve Freight Rail Service
- Safe Movement of Hazardous Materials
- Commitment to First Mile/Last Mile Freight Connectors

### ***Proposed New Policies Resulting From Comments Received***

The following proposed policies were developed in response to the comments received and have been incorporated into the freight plan chapters where appropriate:

1. WisDOT will continue to coordinate with state, regional, and international partners, as well as explore the development of a maritime strategy for Wisconsin, to support maritime transportation as part of a safe, efficient, and seamless freight transportation system.
2. WisDOT will work with stakeholders to facilitate a discussion to develop an intermodal strategy for Wisconsin.
3. WisDOT will review the department's project development process and design standards to incorporate the needs of freight system users.
4. WisDOT will provide information to communicate and educate industry and the general public on pertinent freight topics and issues.
5. WisDOT will leverage the data, tools, and methods developed through the freight plan to inform project prioritization and investment decisions, as well as provide them for DOT partners.
6. WisDOT will continue to work with other states to identify harmonization opportunities.
7. WisDOT will investigate ways to simplify, streamline, and provide more permitting options.
8. WisDOT will continue its efforts to promote safe rail crossings throughout the state.
9. WisDOT will monitor national best practices and other initiatives related to reducing freight's impact on the environment.

## **3.4 Phase 3: Final Plan**

### ***Release of the Final Draft Plan***

During Phase 3, the final phase of plan development, WisDOT released the final draft of the State Freight Plan and SEE for a 45-day comment period, issued legal notices, conducted three public hearings, compiled all oral and written testimony on the final draft plan, and made final revisions to the plan.

WisDOT issued press releases and information via social media channels to publicize the release of the final draft plan, public review period, and public hearings, as well as published the final draft plan and related plan materials on the State Freight Plan website.

**Comment Period**

A legal notice for the release of the final draft plan and SEE and accompanying 45-day public review period was published in the Wisconsin State Journal on December 9, 2016. A legal notice for the three public hearings on the final draft plan and SEE was published in the Wisconsin State Journal on November 28, 2016, fifteen days prior to the first hearing, in accordance with Trans 400 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code. The legal notice included the dates, locations, time, and format of the public hearings.

The public hearings were held in De Pere on December 13, in West Allis on December 14, and in Madison on December 15. Each hearing employed a hybrid format, including 1) an open house area where people could talk to WisDOT staff and view the final draft plan and plan-related information at their leisure, 2) a presentation on the final draft plan, and 3) a formal public hearing that offered the opportunity for attendees to provide oral testimony in an open setting.

**Table 3-8: Public Hearings Conducted for the Final Draft State Freight Plan**

| City       | Location  | Date              |
|------------|---|-------------------|
| De Pere    | Brown County Library-Kress Family Branch, 333 N. Broadway | December 13, 2016 |
| West Allis | Tommy G. Thompson Youth Center, 640 S. 84th Street        | December 14, 2016 |
| Madison    | WisDOT SW Region office, 2101 Wright Street               | December 15, 2016 |



The open house portion of each public hearing began at 4:30 pm. Information about the final draft plan was presented to attendees at approximately 5:45 pm, followed by commencement of the formal hearing at 6:00 pm. The public hearings ended at 7:30 pm. Details on the location of each hearing were available on WisDOT’s State Freight Plan website: [www.wisconsinfreightplan.gov](http://www.wisconsinfreightplan.gov).

Attendees had the opportunity to provide oral testimony in a private setting during the entire length of each public hearing. Testimony in the form of written comments was also accepted during the hearings and through the end of the public review period on January 23, 2017. Materials presented at the public hearings, as well as sign-in sheets and transcripts are provided in Appendix 3-1, Public Hearings.

## ***Data Compilation and Analysis***

In total, WisDOT received 20 comments during the second review period, bringing the total number of comments received during the two comment periods to over 300. A total of eight people attended the public hearings. The comments received during the public comment period requested additional detail be added about the waterway system, expressed support for specific projects, suggested changes to online motor carrier permitting, recommended stylistic changes to the plan, and expressed agreement with specific policies in the freight plan. The following list includes a summary of comments:

- The importance of the Southern Bridge and Arterial Streets Corridor to economic growth. Brown County Executive Streckenbach requested that the Southern Bridge be included in the State Freight Plan's list of priority projects.
- Lake Carriers' Association expressed interest in the development of a strategy specific to Wisconsin's maritime transportation sector to build upon the Regional Maritime Strategy released by the Conference of Great Lakes Governors and Premiers in June 2016.<sup>9</sup> In addition, they provided text edits to the document.
- The need for new rail corridors in Wisconsin.
- The need to upgrade the four-lane section of I-41 between Green Bay and the Fox Cities to a six-lane facility.
- Comments regarding the online motor carrier office services.

## ***Final Draft Plan Changes***

WisDOT has reviewed the comments and made the suggested edits to the plan on the waterway system and implemented stylistic recommendations, as appropriate. No new edits to the freight plan were made as a result of comments related to project inclusion, freight corridor designations or the motor carrier online services.

Regarding the designation of Critical Urban Freight Corridors (CUFCs) and Critical Rural Freight Corridors (CRFCs), Chapter 9 discusses that after the State Freight Plan has been published, WisDOT will consult with stakeholders, including MPOs, RPCs, and freight industry representatives, prior to making final a determination on the designation of CUFCs and CRFCs in Wisconsin.

---

<sup>9</sup> Conference of Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Governors and Premiers, "Strategy for the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Maritime Transportation System." (June 15, 2016).

## Chapter 3, Appendix 3-1 – Public Hearings

1. Wisconsin State Freight Plan Public Hearing Overview
2. Completed Sign-In Sheets
3. Public Hearing Handout
4. Public Hearing Open House Boards
5. Public Hearing Presentation
6. De Pere Public Meeting Transcript
7. West Allis Public Meeting Transcript
8. Madison Public Meeting Transcript