



Regional Freight Leadership Task Force Scope

GO TO 2040 is the long-range comprehensive plan for the Chicago region that includes Cook, DuPage, Kane, Kendall, Lake, McHenry, and Will counties. The plan was approved by the CMAP Board in October 2010 after extensive public outreach and technical analysis. One of the plan's twelve chapters is devoted to creating a more efficient freight network, and includes a series of specific recommendations to increase freight efficiency and strengthen metropolitan Chicago's position as an international center of goods movement and intermodal logistics.

The plan states that metropolitan Chicago has not traditionally had a champion to look out for the public interest in freight. National discussions and decisions about the movement of goods tend to be dominated by port cities and states, despite the Chicago region's status as a national hub of truck and rail freight. The region's lack of a voice has consequences not only at the national level, but also locally. The region's hundreds of local governments make decisions that affect the freight system but often lack coordination, while private freight carriers often have a disincentive to collaborate within a competitive industry. Additionally, traditional revenue sources to support public investment in the transportation system have failed to keep pace with investment needs.

GO TO 2040 and the subsequent CMAP Freight Cluster "Drill Down" report call for a Regional Freight Authority to be explored to address institutional and funding barriers affecting the freight system in northeastern Illinois. To move this recommendation forward, GO TO 2040 calls for the region to convene freight stakeholders and transportation implementers to discuss potential institutional models for a Regional Freight Authority, including consideration of revenue sources and governance issues. CMAP is convening the Regional Freight Leadership Task Force to meet this call.

After reaffirming the importance of freight to metropolitan Chicago's economic future and identifying the region's freight challenges, the Task Force will consider how freight institutions have been developed in other regions, potential institutional models, the impact of operational and capital improvements, and revenue strategies to support freight investment. The Task Force will make a recommendation to the CMAP Board on an institutional setting to implement preferred strategies and provide a platform for ongoing leadership in freight.

CMAP believes that a comprehensive exploration of regional freight leadership requires a focus on the following questions:

1. Why is regional freight mobility important to northeastern Illinois?
2. How is regional freight policy treated in other regions?
3. How could a freight institution be designed?
4. How could a freight institution support capital and non-capital improvements?
5. How could a freight institution help pay for investments?
6. How could an institutional response improve the regional freight system?

CMAP intends to focus the Task Force's discussion on the highway and rail freight modes, which together account for the vast majority of goods movement in the region, and to limit the geographic scope of the Task Force to the seven-county CMAP region.

Note that specific capital improvements to improve regional freight mobility have been discussed in a number of other studies and programs. For example, the Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency Program (CREATE) consists of 71 strategic improvements to the rail system. GO TO 2040 also recommends a prioritized set of highway capacity additions and the implementation of congestion pricing to manage travel demand. It is not the purpose of the Regional Freight Leadership Task Force to identify specific capital improvements.

CMAP anticipates the first meeting to be held in October 2013 and expects the Task Force to complete its work in the late spring of 2014. The remainder of this document is organized around the eight meetings of the Task Force, presenting the goals of each meeting as well as the topics the Task Force will discuss.

Background: Why is regional freight mobility important to northeastern Illinois?

The goal of the meeting is to reaffirm the importance of freight to the economy of metropolitan Chicago and recognize the challenges facing the regional freight system.

In this first meeting, the Task Force will be introduced to the critical role of goods movement in the regional economy. This meeting will then take a broad look at the challenges facing the regional freight system, and how these factors are influenced by institutional arrangements.

Case Studies: How is regional freight policy treated in other regions?

The goal of the meeting is to analyze case studies from other regions and apply those experiences to the Chicago region.

Other regions face similar challenges to freight mobility and have developed a range of institutional responses. The second meeting will feature a panel of experts to discuss case studies illustrating best practices in freight leadership and governance from the United States. Staff will prepare background materials analyzing the case studies to identify lessons learned and potential evaluation criteria that the Task Force may use in considering institutional solutions to freight mobility problems in the metropolitan area. Such criteria may include transparency and accountability, how the hypothetical institution would fit into existing arrangements, public-private cooperation, and others.

Three potential case studies are the Freight Mobility Strategic Investment Board in Washington State, the Alameda Corridor in Los Angeles, and Kansas City's KC SmartPort.

Institutional Models: How could a freight institution be designed?

The goal of this meeting is to introduce and evaluate institutional models for freight governance and financing.

Staff will prepare background materials on institutional models for freight governance, including a policy analysis across multiple dimensions. The Task Force will deconstruct the case studies presented in the previous meeting and link them to the institutional models. The group will discuss the pros and cons of each model, as well as the relevance of these models to the Chicago region.

System Improvements: How could a freight institution support capital and non-capital improvements?

The goal of this meeting is discuss the capital improvements as well as non-capital policy tools to improve freight performance, and to link these strategies to institutional models.

A freight institution could support new capital investment to improve the freight system. Staff will present analysis of illustrative capital scenarios, estimating the costs and modeling the potential benefits from various levels of investment.

Non-capital policies such as coordinated truck routing, centralized permitting, and delivery management help to improve the performance of the freight system and avert unnecessary capital investment. Staff will prepare background materials on current operational deficiencies in the CMAP region. The Task Force will discuss the relevance of the various institutional models to addressing these operational deficiencies.

Funding: How could a freight institution help pay for investments?

The goal of this meeting is to analyze potential regional revenue sources to support freight investment and to link these sources to institutional models.

Staff will provide background materials identifying current issues in transportation funding, the substantial funding gap for freight investment in the region, and potential sources of new revenues to support freight investment. These background materials will differentiate project-specific revenue sources from broad-based revenue sources, and will provide a thorough policy analysis of each source. The Task Force will discuss the pros and cons of these revenue sources, and will also discuss the relevance of the various institutional models to the revenue sources.

Synthesis: How could an institutional response improve the regional freight system?

The goal of this meeting is to tie together the discussion of the three previous meetings to begin developing recommendations from the Task Force to the CMAP Board.

Staff will provide background materials summarizing the Task Force's deliberations in the previous three meetings. In this meeting, staff will facilitate a conversation to lead the Task Force to recommendations on preferred institutional models to support improvements to the regional freight system. This conversation will also include a discussion of how best to house a freight institution.

Draft Report

The goal of this meeting is to gather feedback from the Task Force on a draft report to the CMAP Board.

CMAP staff will prepare a draft report of the Task Force's deliberations and recommendations to the CMAP Board. This meeting will provide an opportunity for the Task Force to finalize its recommendations and provide editorial comments to staff.

Final Report

The goal of this meeting is to reach consensus on a final report.

The Task Force will vote on the final report to the CMAP Board, which will be delivered in late spring 2014.