



# Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning

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## MEMORANDUM

**To:** CMAP Freight Committee

**From:** CMAP Staff

**Date:** ~~November~~ January 2015~~6~~

**Re:** Key outcomes of the regional freight plan

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GO TO 2040 establishes a strong foundation for the development of the regional freight plan. While no final decisions have yet been made, it is important to begin consideration of topics to be included in the regional freight plan. Doing so will allow CMAP to direct limited resources to the key topics. As with the larger comprehensive plan, criteria for deciding whether the freight plan will ultimately emphasize a specific topic include the following:

- Does CMAP or its partners have authority to implement recommendations?
- Does it meet objectives that have realistic chances for success?
- Is it considered important by multiple stakeholders?
- Is addressing it essential to the plan's and agency's credibility?
- Are the likely recommendations feasible to implement?

Given this framework, staff proposes that tThe regional freight plan ~~will~~ have ~~several~~ five key outcomes – updating GO TO 2040's general policy positions, identifying prioritized lists of capital projects, recommending truck operations improvements, highlighting locations for and parameters of future local planning, and identifying specific implementation actions. ~~The plan will also clarify CMAP's jurisdiction for freight planning and programming.~~

Other major metropolitan regions have relatively straightforward freight planning issues. For example, the signature issue in some regions is improving access to a major seaport or international border crossing, or perhaps securing access to freight rail right-of-way in order to support passenger service. In contrast, northeastern Illinois has a complex freight network, involving all modes of transportation (and major points of conflict between modes) and significant shares of internal, external, and through movements of freight. As a result, the regional freight plan must cover a variety of topics across a variety of modes.

## Review of GO TO 2040 Policies

Broadly speaking, GO TO 2040 supports policies that promote the region's economic prosperity and quality of life. Within this general framework, GO TO 2040 specifically calls on the region to create a more efficient freight network. To do so, the plan includes five specific recommendations: (1) establish a national vision and federal program for freight; (2) complete the CREATE program of rail improvements; (3) make regional truck improvements, including truckways, routing, delivery time management, and restrictions; (4) organization and public policy; and (5) integrate freight needs and financing into infrastructure prioritization.

CMAP and partners have made strides in several of these areas since the plan's adoption in 2010. For example, the recently-enacted Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act establishes two new funding programs dedicated to freight projects and directs states and MPOs to designate critical freight networks. Given the new federal policy context, the regional freight plan could comment on how best to prioritize new federal funds and designate new federal networks.

The next plan should review this progress and also note emerging policy issues that were not addressed in GO TO 2040. For example, innovative technologies have been developed in recent years and represent a potential area for new policy language in the next plan. The result here will be a revised policy framework, into which the capital projects, truck operations improvements, local planning, and implementation will fit.

## Capital Projects

One of the main deliverables for a regional freight plan will be prioritized lists of capital projects. This work is especially important for the region to successfully pursue competitive sources of funding (e.g., TIGER) or program potential new freight formula funds (e.g., as proposed in the DRIVE Act). As with the GO TO 2040 process, CMAP remains committed to transparent, performance-based evaluation and prioritization of capital projects.

It is important to articulate As a metropolitan planning organization, CMAP's jurisdiction is generally limited to very simply and clearly: CMAP has jurisdiction over the surface transportation system – for example in the formal listing of projects within the fiscal constraint of the long-range transportation plan – as well as the broad public benefits accruing from improvements to other modes. However, CMAP's data resources are limited; the best information is available for the highway system and, to a lesser extent, the transit system. Relatively little information is available on the freight rail system and even less is available to CMAP for air and water modes.

As a result, staff expects the regional freight plan will to list capital projects for the highway system and, to the extent it interacts with mass transit or intercity passenger service, the rail system. Thus, while considerations regarding air, water, pipeline, or any other modal systems might be broadly discussed at the policy level, capital projects in the regional freight plan

should focus on the adequate provision of highway connections to and transit interactions with these other modes. Specific examples of the types of capital projects

~~Given CMAP's jurisdiction, the regional freight plan should~~ could identify ~~capital priorities in the following areas include the following:~~

- Truck bottlenecks (National Highway System only)
- Truck safety hotspots
- Highway-rail grade crossing conflicts (compare to CREATE program)
- Passenger-freight rail conflicts (compare to CREATE program)
- Adequate access to and connectivity of the NHS (potentially including analysis of intermodal drayage)

The above list could be expanded to other types of projects if new data sources become available. Note that data availability may vary across the above areas; ~~Given the current varying data availability,~~ it is likely that some of the above types of improvements will be analyzed and recommended at a far greater level of detail than other s improvements. For example, CMAP will likely be able to analyze trucking bottlenecks and grade crossing conflicts at a greater level of detail than passenger rail-freight rail conflicts. Similarly, the analysis of adequate access to and connectivity of the NHS will likely be a more general discussion, comparing known locations of freight transportation deficiencies to implementers' recent or proposed transportation improvements.

~~Where possible, t~~ This analysis will utilize CMAP's performance-based programming process to assess proposed projects. ~~For example, proposed projects in proximity to truck bottlenecks may be evaluated for their effectiveness on similar measures to those used in CMAP's performance-based programming processes.~~ Where data allows, approaches to this assessment will be explored in tandem with the regionally-significant project evaluation process. In addition, this project may also ~~is likely to~~ recommend freight-specific points or metrics for use in the evaluation of regionally significant projects in the larger regional transportation plan.

### **Local Regulations for Truck Operations**

GO TO 2040 recognizes that trucks face numerous operational restrictions implemented by local governments, including routing restrictions, permitting requirements, parking restrictions, and time of day delivery restrictions. In addition, the state also regulates routing and permitting for state highways. These regulations are often inconsistent across boundaries, potentially inhibiting the safe and efficient movement of trucks.

Much research is already underway at CMAP on these topics. The regional freight plan can draw on this work to (1) identify key areas of inconsistent truck routing for future study, (2) outline best practices and policies for local routing and restriction decisions, and (3) recommend best practices for truck permitting processes. Additionally, other work is underway in the region to better understand off-hours delivery (e.g., UIC UTC) and truck parking (e.g., Illinois

Tollway) and could potentially yield recommendations to build upon the existing policy language for those two topics in GO TO 2040.

## Local Planning

Many critical freight issues are realized at a local level – first and last mile issues, inadequate geometrics for trucks, land use conflicts – and may not be consistently distributed across the region. Drawing in large part on the findings from the “Capital Projects” and “Local Regulations for Truck Operations” sections, overlaid with data on land use and development, the regional freight plan should identify subareas for future study and will also specify the types of issues to be studied. The plan could also point to general policies and best practices, such as strategies to preserve industrial corridors, ~~strategies to~~ mitigate land-use conflicts, ~~or~~ model ordinances, for municipalities and others to plan for their freight-related land uses.

CMAP staff suspects that many freight issues will be concentrated in a handful of subregions within northeastern Illinois. Overlaying the locations of inconsistent truck routing, significant clusters of manufacturing and industrial land uses, multimodal freight facilities, and the NHS should help the plan identify locations for future study. The plan should also identify the topics to be studied in these locations (e.g., coordinated truck routing, adequate connections between industrial and freight facilities and the NHS), drawing on the review of GO TO 2040’s freight policy positions.

## Implementation Prospects

The regional freight plan should identify relevant revenue sources that could be applied to implement capital projects (e.g., STP, CMAQ, etc.), appropriate implementers to deliver these projects (e.g., IDOT, CDOT, Metra, etc.), and appropriate implementers to conduct supportive plans and studies (e.g., CMAP’s LTA program). The result may be structured similar to the Implementation Action Area tables in GO TO 2040.