

18th meeting of the
IOWA FREIGHT ADVISORY COUNCIL

June 2, 2017
 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM
 Courtyard Marriot
 2405 SE Creekview Dr, Ankeny, IA 50021

Members

	Col. Craig Baumgartner	x	Calean Kokjohn
	Joel Brinkmeyer		Ron Lang
x	Andy Cernin for Kevin Burke	x	Don McDowell
x	Tom Determann	x	Delia Moon-Meier
x	Greg Dickinson		Joe Parsons
	Randy Draper	x	Dan Sabin
x	Sarod Dhuru	x	Scott Stabbe
	Don Egli	x	Mike Steenhoek
	Kevin Ekstrand		Kris Vander Kamp
x	Bill Horan	x	Ron White
	Greg Jenkins	x	Tim Woods

Ex-Officio Members

x	Todd Ashby	x	Paul Ovrom
	Karen Bobo		Robert Palmer
x	Mike Hadley	x	Joseph Rude
x	Sean Litteral		Brett Tjebes
x	Shirley McGuire		Cecil Wright
x	Jarred Lassiter for Mike Norris	x	Jennifer Wright

Iowa DOT

x	Stu Anderson	x	Craig Markley
x	Phou Baccam		Scott Marler
	Kyle Barichello	x	Amanda Martin
	Mikel Derby	x	Diane McCauley
x	Tina Hargis	x	Phil Meraz
x	Sam Hiscocks		Phil Mescher
x	Brad Hofer		Tammy Nicholson
x	Laura Hutzell	x	Garrett Pedersen
x	Sandra Larson		Charlie Purcell
x	David Lorenzen	x	Danny Zeimen
x	Mark Lowe		

Guests

x	Andrew Collings (Des Moines Area MPO)		

10:00 AM Safety Briefing

Amanda Martin
Iowa DOT

Welcome and Introductions

Tom Determann, Chair

Council ice-breaker: *What critical or emerging issues are you experiencing in your industry? Is there anything we should consider for the next agenda or for the next meeting?*

- *Future meeting themes and/or topics*
- *Tour locations*

Amanda Martin opened the meeting with a safety briefing. Tom Determann, Chair of the FAC, then led introductions and ice-breaker topics discussed by the group. Each member was asked, “What critical or emerging issues are you experiencing in your industry? Is there anything we should consider for the next agenda or for the next meeting?”

- Emerging issues/future meeting topics:
 - Bill Horan promoted the use of roundabouts as a traffic control mechanism. Other members contributed by also supporting implementation and proposing ideas for future education for the public to learn how to properly navigate roundabouts. Other design issues were also discussed, including J-turns, diverging diamond interchanges, road diets, and elimination of one-way pairs.
 - Mike Steenhoek suggested a future discussion exploring the Iowa DOT process for disseminating all of the institutional knowledge that has been accumulated and providing it to the counties/locals who are in need of innovation. Steenhoek added that there is often a knowledge gap between State DOTs and local entities due to the large difference in available resources.
 - Mike Steenhoek also suggested a future discussion relating to public-private partnerships (P3s) and the accessing of private capital due to the direction of the new administration. Steenhoek proposed a refresher on how these types of partnerships are utilized and a discussion on where they work and where they don't, with an emphasis on the private sector perspective.
 - Bill Horan mentioned an issue experienced by rural areas relating to road closures during winter. Some Class B roads will be closed due to seasonal maintenance issues. This poses challenges to first responders. Horan offered that a solution may be a website showing all rural road closures in the state much like the Cars511 app for the primary highway system. National Highway System.
- Future tour location ideas:
 - Tom Determann offered to assist in setting up a tour of a river barge terminal on the Mississippi River.
 - Delia Moon-Meier offered to host a meeting and tour at the I-80 Truck Stop in Walcott.
 - David Lorenzen offered that a tour of the updated Traffic Management Center (TMC) may be beneficial.

10:20 AM Update from the Director

Mark Lowe
Iowa DOT

A general overview of the Department's future vision for freight in the state of Iowa.

Iowa DOT Director Mark Lowe began his update by expressing his appreciation to officially be appointed as Director and all those that reached out to him with congratulations. Items covered by Director Lowe included:

- The majority of Iowa DOT's legislative package was approved by the State Legislature.
- The Iowa DOT budget turned out well with stable amounts available for operations.
- The 5-year program will be finalized in two weeks. Fortunately, the I-74 bridge reconstruction in the Quad Cities is going to be cheaper than expected. This allows flexibility in spending those funds (up to \$40 million) elsewhere on the system, if necessary.
- The Motor Vehicle Division is currently reanalyzing Iowa's CDL services and locations with the goal of making the process of becoming a truck driver more efficient and less burdensome. This includes more education opportunities, 3rd party testing, and a potential interactive app that can help prospects prepare for tests.
- Iowa DOT's Traffic Management Center (TMC) continues to improve response times to incidents around the state. The TMC currently identifies incidents on the system before they are reported by the public over 50 percent of the time.

10:50 AM Iowa DOT Items

Overview and updates of current activities.

- Volkswagen Settlement
- Federal Aid Swap
- Iowa impact of Federal Infrastructure Package
- Report from April MAASTO Summit
- House File 218 – Longer Trucks

**Stu Anderson
Iowa DOT**

Stu Anderson and Craig Markley provided brief updates to the group on a number of Iowa DOT freight-related items.

- The Iowa Transportation Commission has a new Chair and Vice Chair, as well as two new commissioners.
- The Federal infrastructure package is still in development and is expected to incentivize private investment and emphasize streamlining regulatory processes. Attracting private investment may be difficult for rural states like Iowa. There are ongoing discussions related to loosening up tolling restrictions on the Interstate system and other potential opportunities such as public-private partnerships for the Lock and Dam system.
- The Volkswagen (VW) settlement is still progressing with State government agencies. A public comment period was held to gather input on how Iowa should utilize the roughly \$20 million from the settlement. The funds are intended to be used to help reduce emissions. Comments received included using the funding for public charging stations, propane school buses, renewable fuel state vehicles, and transit vehicle replacement.
- The Federal aid swap process the Iowa DOT has been working on was passed by the State Legislature and signed by the Governor. This allows the Transportation Commission to develop policy allowing local governments to swap Federal road and bridge funds with the Iowa DOT for State money. This process is more efficient for both parties.
- House File 218 was passed and extends the allowable length of single unit trucks in Iowa. This does not increase truck weights but it does provide more continuity with surrounding states.

- House File 463 includes language about increasing max vehicle weights for trucks fueled by natural gas.
- Craig Markley attended a MAASTO summit held in April with a focus on freight. The theme of the summit was eliminating borders and barriers and primary goals were to identify priority freight corridors, bottlenecks, and capital projects at a regional level. Other topics covered included automated vehicles, truck platooning, addressing congestion, improving intermodal facility access, driver shortages, harmonizing freight regulations, and regional freight flows.

11:10 AM State Freight Plan update

Overview of the changes and additions being made with the Iowa State Freight Plan to reach FAST Act compliancy, including:

- National freight goals
- National freight networks
- Critical urban and critical rural freight corridors
- Freight investment plan

Sam Hiscocks
Iowa DOT

Sam Hiscocks provided an update of the Iowa State Freight Plan. The original MAP-21-compliant plan was completed in the Fall of 2016. This document has recently been updated to FAST Act-compliance, pending FHWA review. Updates to the document and described in the presentation included:

- National freight goals: The national freight goals were expanded in the FAST Act to include ten National Highway Freight Program goals and ten National Multimodal Freight Network goals. These have been included in the Iowa State Freight Plan and compliance with the goals is shown throughout.
- National freight networks: The FAST Act created the National Highway Freight Network (NHFN) and National Multimodal Freight Network. Both are now included in the Iowa State Freight Plan.
- Critical urban and critical rural freight corridors: As part of the NHFN, Iowa DOT designated critical urban and critical rural freight corridors in the state with assistance from the nine metropolitan planning organizations in the state.
- Freight investment plan: The FAST Act allocates designated freight funding to each state through the National Highway Freight Program. In order for states to utilize these funds, they must be included in a freight investment plan (section of a state's freight plan) outlining where, when, and how they will be used. Iowa DOT developed a freight investment plan highlighting the three major highway projects that will utilize 90 percent of Iowa's allocated funds, as well as the multimodal freight project grant program that will utilize the other 10 percent.

11:30 AM Linking Iowa's Freight Transportation System (LIFTS)

Update on development of the LIFTS program that uses FAST Act freight funding allocated to the State.

- Timeline
- Draft Application

Laura Hutzell &
Diane McCauley
Iowa DOT

Laura Hutzell and Diane McCauley presented on an Iowa DOT freight funding program currently under development. Iowa DOT has tried for a state-funded freight program for multiple years without success. A

pilot program was implemented last year when State Infrastructure Bank funds were repurposed for an application-based program that allowed freight stakeholders to apply for funding to be used for non-highway freight projects. This new program will utilize the 10 percent flexible funding allocated to Iowa through the National Highway Freight Program created by the FAST Act. The primary purpose of this new program is to provide funding for freight projects that aren't eligible for traditional highway and rail funding. Hutzell and McCauley covered the incorporation of FAC input, eligible applicants, project eligibility, project evaluation criteria, and the tentative timeline. Next steps include holding an informative webinar, releasing the NOFA, accepting pre-applications, final applications, and approving projects (expected to be Spring 2018). Iowa DOT will be asking FAC members to review and provide input on applications.

12:00 PM Lunch

12:30 PM Containerlocator.com

Overview and demo of containerlocator.com, a website developed by CyBiz Lab and the Des Moines Area MPO to help shippers locate intermodal containers in the state of Iowa.

Andrew Collings

Des Moines Area MPO

Todd Ashby and Andrew Collings from the Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) presented on a new tool the MPO has developed in partnership with the Iowa State University CyBiz lab. The idea for the <https://containerlocator.com/> tool was initiated by the Des Moines Area MPO Freight Roundtable group. The purpose was to address the issue of full intermodal containers being transported into Iowa and then leaving empty. The group wanted to try to take advantage of the opportunity presented by available empty shipping containers.

Collings provided an overview of the development process and gave a tour of the tool/website. Phase 1 included a feasibility study to explore data sources and what the effort would entail, revealing that a data mining company was needed to utilize incoming information that would be part of the tool. Phase 2 involved development of the website. Containerfinder.com uses the wordpress.org platform and updates itself daily. This website includes the following:

- A comprehensive list of Iowa cities to search for containers.
- The ability to search for containers by carrier name, carrier code, container type, and port of arrival.
- A map showing all certified scales in Iowa with addresses and phone numbers.

Next steps for the tool include gathering input from stakeholders on how to improve and holding discussions on user fees for the website. Eventually, it is expected that Des Moines Area MPO will reach out to others to potentially expand the tool to a regional or national level.

1:15 PM I-80 Planning and Environmental Linkage Study

Presentation of technical memos that were recently completed or are in the process of being completed:

- Viability of truck-only or restricted truck lanes
- Diversion strategy (evaluation of viability of alternate route improvements)

Brad Hofer &

Danny Zeimen

Iowa DOT

- Automated vehicles

Brad Hofer with Iowa DOT provided an update to the group on three technical memos the Office of Location and Environment has been working on as part of the I-80 and I-380 planning and environmental linkage (PEL) studies. PEL studies allow the Iowa DOT to answer a number of questions and address “big picture” items that are required in each NEPA document.

- Truck accommodation: This tech memo evaluates strategies for addressing trucks on I-80. Analysis and traffic projects were completed that predict growth in freight movement and truck traffic through 2040. These specific strategies for trucks were explored with the following conclusions:
 - Utilizing additional modes, such as putting trucks on trains, didn’t make sense in Iowa.
 - Implementing speed differentials for trucks doesn’t gain much in terms of operations. The state hasn’t reached the necessary levels of traffic yet.
 - Implementing truck restrictions, such as limiting lane usage, wouldn’t be necessary if I-80 was 6-lane. In addition, truck-only facilities are not feasible due to the price and time needed to construct.
- Diversion strategies: This tech memo analyzed the potential impacts on I-80 if other parallel routes were improved with the basic question being asked, “Are there improvements off of I-80 the Iowa DOT could make that would divert enough traffic to make improvements to I-80 unnecessary?” U.S. 30 and U.S. 34 were analyzed using five different scenarios including different versions of 6-laning, 4-laning, and/or not expanding the three routes. The final conclusion was that 6-laning I-80 is the best option to address the traffic levels as 4-laning U.S. 30 and/or U.S. 34 does not effectively improve the level of service on I-80.
- Automated vehicles and emerging technologies: This tech memo primarily focused on passenger vehicles and explored types of automated vehicles, projected adoption rates, reviewed necessary design elements, and completed traffic and safety analysis. Results of this study show that a 6-laned I-80 corridor with automated vehicle improvements provides a considerable decrease in crashes, crowding, and misery index.

Hofer then provided a brief description of the I-380 PEL study which has similar goals but less focus on freight as this is primarily a commuter corridor. The public meeting for the I-380 study is coming up and the tentative schedule is similar to that of the I-80 study.

2:00 PM Adjourn

Next meetings: September 8, 2017* and December 1, 2017

*The date of the September FAC meeting has been moved to the 8th in Des Moines, IA.