

29<sup>th</sup> meeting of the  
**IOWA FREIGHT ADVISORY COUNCIL**

June 19, 2020  
 10:00 AM to 11:00 AM  
 Online - Microsoft Teams

**Members**

	Andy Cernin	x	Delia Moon-Meier
x	Tom Determann	x	James Niffenegger
x	Greg Dickinson	x	Kelli O'Brien
x	Don Egli		Joe Parsons
			Dan Sabin
	Calean Kokjohn	x	Mike Steenhoek
	Ron Lang	x	Reilly Vaughan
	Jody Sandy	x	Ron White
x	Don McDowell	x	Tim Woods

**Ex-Officio Members**

x	Todd Ashby	x	Mike Norris
	Mike Hadley	x	Paul Ovrom
x	Tim Marshall		Robert Palmer
x	Michael Kober	x	Joseph Rude
x	Sean Litteral	x	Andy Barnes for Col. Steven Sattinger
x	Scott Marler		Louis Vander Streek
	Shirley McGuire		Jennifer Wright

**Iowa DOT**

x	Stu Anderson	x	Justin Meade
	Phou Baccam	x	Phil Meraz
	Mikel Derby	x	Tammy Nicholson
x	Sam Hiscocks	x	Garrett Pedersen
x	Laura Hutzell		Charlie Purcell
x	Alex Jansen		Angel Robinson
x	Renee Jerman		John Selmer
x	David Lorenzen		Melissa Spiegel
x	Craig Markley	x	Jeff von Brown
			Andrea Henry
x	Amanda Martin		Susan Fenton

**Guests**

x	Milly Ortiz (Iowa DOT)	x	Andrea White (Iowa DOT)

### Meeting input objectives

1. Gather input, recommendations, and action items from members on improvements that can be made by Iowa DOT to better prepare for major supply chain disruptions.
2. Gather feedback from FAC members on how Iowa DOT should be identifying multimodal freight bottlenecks to be addressed in future projects.

**10:00 AM Welcome**

**Mike Steenhoek, Chair  
Soy Transportation  
Coalition**

#### **Comments from the Director**

Opening comments from Director Scott Marler on his vision for the DOT and the FAC.

**Scott Marler, Director  
Iowa DOT**

Chair Mike Steenhoek opened the meeting by thanking the group members for attending the first virtual meeting of the Freight Advisory Council and stressed the importance of continued engagement. Mr. Steenhoek then made announcements related to meeting logistics and completed roll call before introducing the first speaker.

Iowa DOT Director Scott Marler provided opening remarks to the group. Director Marler provided background information on his career, updates on the COVID-19 pandemic and DOT response, and his thoughts on past and future utilization of the Freight Advisory Council. A few of the highlights include:

- Iowa DOT has transitioned almost all the central complex staff to full-time teleworking while keeping a focus on “business as usual.”
- Director Marler commended everyone for their remarkable efforts to keep freight flowing.
- Iowa DOT is happy to have the opportunity to reengage the group and continue moving forward with our initiatives. The DOT sees the Freight Advisory Council as a crucial partner in our efforts to enhance the competitiveness of Iowa’s business and industry by continually focusing on a common goal of providing the most efficient freight transportation in the state.
- This group is an invaluable source of input, guidance, and advice on the state’s freight mobility planning, policies, programs, and investments that has already made significant impacts on the development of the current State Freight Plan and State Rail Plan by providing input on goals, critical trends and issues, multimodal freight bottleneck locations, identification of a state freight network, performance measures, and improvement strategies.
- Iowa DOT will continue to rely on this advisory body for quality input on all things freight and we will continue to evolve and adjust how the group interacts and operates in order to achieve the most beneficial outcomes for both Iowa DOT and the freight industry.

**10:15 AM COVID-19 Response and Impacts Discussion**

Overview of Iowa DOT’s response to the pandemic and ongoing initiatives.

**Scott Marler, Director  
& Chief Dave Lorenzen  
Iowa DOT**

Director Marler and Chief Dave Lorenzen provided an update on Iowa DOT’s response and ongoing efforts relating to the COVID-19 pandemic. On the freight side, DOT has focused on implementing the governor’s and

US DOT's regulatory relief to continue providing CDL's and streamlining the flow of essential products. Efforts are now focused on analyzing revenue impacts and working to minimize the negative impacts to state transportation funding. DOT has also been instrumental in setting up Test Iowa sites and transporting samples to the state hygienic lab each night.

The DOT has been explicit about being open for business. There haven't been any major issues or delays with construction projects, the Transportation Commission approved the next Five-Year Program, and alterations have been made to certain processes to minimize face-to-face contact. The DOT will continue to adapt as different federal and state proclamations expire or are extended over the next few months.

**10:30 AM Iowa DOT update**

An update on current activities and initiatives.

- 2020 Iowa Legislative session
- Federal transportation bills
- Other

**Stu Anderson  
& Susan Wallace  
Iowa DOT**

Stu Anderson provided an update on Iowa DOT activities and initiatives. Highlights included:

- COVID-19 has had significant impacts on transportation. This includes declines in rail carloads, passenger air enplanements, and vehicle traffic.
- COVID-19 will most likely have a significant impact on transportation funding. Figures were provided for the current status of the Aviation Improvement Program, Rebuild Iowa Infrastructure Fund (RIIF), and the Road Use Tax Fund. Iowa DOT will continue to track and work to minimize impacts.
- The Iowa Senate and House have passed a file relating to the State Variable Tax Rate which would shift the fuel tax incentive to E15 and greater blends.
- The Transportation Commission has approved the next Five-Year Program, which includes \$3.6 billion of state and federal funding to be invested on road and bridge projects.

Susan Wallace provided an update on federal legislative issues and activities. Highlights included:

- Current transportation topics in Congress include the transportation reauthorization, the response to COVID-19.
- The current surface transportation bill (FAST Act) expires September 30, 2020. There are currently two proposals to replace – ATIA from the Senate and INVEST from the House.
- INVEST includes an extension of the FAST Act through FY2021 and then a reauthorization for FY2022 to FY2025. There are also several proposals relating to highway, freight rail, commercial motor vehicles, multimodal, and discretionary programs.
- INVEST would require \$140 billion

**10:50 AM Freight Bottleneck Identification**

Overview of previous efforts by DOT/FAC and request for input on a current effort to identify freight-related bottlenecks.

**Sam Hiscocks  
Iowa DOT**

Sam Hiscocks provided a brief introduction to the DOT's effort to update the State Freight Plan. The DOT relied heavily on the Freight Advisory Council for developing the last State Freight Plan, and will do so again

for this update. The first major area of input being requested is relating to the identification of highway freight bottlenecks. Mr. Hiscocks gave an overview of the process utilized to identify these bottlenecks last time and requested any feedback on potential improvements that could be made.

The first step in the process was to utilize INRIX historical speed data to identify initial locations. Essentially, this involves tracking traffic speeds on roadways and flagging when speeds dip below certain thresholds for extended periods of time. Only locations that had such slowdowns in each quarter of that year were used to account for seasonal bottlenecks due to planting, harvest, construction, etc. Once these initial bottleneck locations were identified statewide, truck traffic thresholds (30% truck traffic or 5000 trucks per day) were used to separate the freight bottlenecks from bottlenecks impacting all traffic. Finally, this list was taken to the freight advisory council, metropolitan planning organizations and regional planning affiliations in Iowa, and the Iowa DOT district offices for input and additions.

Within the last few months, Iowa DOT has begun updating these lists by utilizing a similar process. The first step is currently being completed – using INRIX 2018 historical speed data to get an initial list of bottleneck locations in the state.

Due to time restraints, Freight Advisory Council members were then asked to provide any input on this approach to DOT staff following the meeting.

**11:00 AM Adjourn**

**2020 meetings:**

- Friday, March 27 (*cancelled*)
- Friday, June 19 (*virtual*)
- Friday, September 18
- Friday, December 18