

32nd meeting of the
IOWA FREIGHT ADVISORY COUNCIL

March 26, 2021
 10:00 AM to 11:00 AM
 Online - Microsoft Teams

Members

x	Tom Determann, Clinton Regional Development	x	Joe Parsons, Iowa Interstate Railroad
x	Greg Dickinson, Ten D/Merchants Distribution		Dan Sabin, Iowa Northern Railway
x	Don Egli, Iowa Motor Truck Association		Jody Sandy, Hy-Vee
x	Calean Kokjohn, Cryotech	x	Mike Steenhoek, Soy Transportation Coalition
	Ron Lang	x	Reilly Vaughan, Agribusiness Assoc. of Iowa
x	Don McDowell, Iowa Farm Bureau	x	Jillian Walsh, Traverro
	Delia Moon-Meier, Iowa 80 Group	x	Ron White, Artco Fleeting Service
	James Niffenegger, Landus Cooperative		Tim Woods, Woods Development
x	Kelli O'Brien, Union Pacific Railroad		

Ex-Officio Members

	Todd Ashby, Des Moines Area MPO	x	Mike Norris, Southeast Iowa RPC
	Mike Hadley, Keokuk County		Paul Ovrom, IDALS
	Michael Kober, Iowa Dept. of Public Safety	x	Joseph Rude, Iowa Economic Dev. Authority
x	Sean Litteral, FHWA Iowa Division		Col. Steven Sattinger, USACE Rock Island District
	Scott Marler, Iowa DOT		Louis Vander Streek, Iowa Utilities Board
x	Tim Marshall, FHWA Iowa Division	x	Jennifer Wright, Iowa DNR
x	Shirley McGuire, FMCSA		

Iowa DOT

x	Stu Anderson	x	David Miller
	Zac Bitting	x	Tammy Nicholson
	Mikel Derby		Garrett Pedersen
x	Brenda Freshour-Johnston	x	Charlie Purcell
x	Sam Hiscocks		Angel Robinson
x	Laura Hutzell		Melissa Spiegel
x	Troy Jerman		Jeff von Brown
x	David Lorenzen	x	Susan Wallace
x	Craig Markley	x	Andrea White
x	Amanda Martin		Lee Wilkinson
x	Justin Meade		

Guests

Meeting input objectives

1. Provide thoughts and recommendations on the freight networks in the state freight plan update.
2. Provide thoughts and questions relating to numerous projects and initiatives being led by the Iowa Interstate Railroad.

10:00 AM Welcome & Roll Call

**Mike Steenhoek, Chair
Soy Transportation
Coalition**

Chair Mike Steenhoek opened the meeting by thanking the group members for attending the 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 moving to the first presentation.

10:05 AM Soy Transportation Coalition Update

Update on a recently released report that highlights innovative approaches to repairing and replacing bridges.

**Mike Steenhoek, Chair
Soy Transportation
Coalition**

Chair Mike Steenhoek provided an overview of the recently released *Top 20 Innovations for Rural Bridge Replacement and Repair* study. This research looks to address deteriorating bridges and limited funding in rural areas. The goal of the study is to highlight a relatable number of innovative concepts that (1.) Will provide initial or lifecycle cost savings, (2.) Have been validated by a credible engineering entity or organization, and (3.) Are accessible in a large section of rural America.

A group of 13 bridge engineers and experts (county engineers, state DOTs, LTAP programs, universities, engineering firms) were assembled from the 13 states in the central U.S. The three engineers served as principal analysts for the project with the remaining ten engineers or experts serving as advisory committee members. These engineers and experts developed a list of the top 10 innovations for both bridge replacement and bridge repair. These include:

- Bridge replacement innovations – railroad flat car bridges, geosynthetic reinforced soil-integrated bridge system, vibratory H-piling drivers, buried soil structures, all steel piers, galvanized H-piling, press brake tub girders, galvanized steel beams, prestressed precast double tees, and precast inverted tee slab span bridges
- Bridge repair innovations – piling encasements, concrete pier piling repairs, driving piling through decks, epoxy deck injections, deck overlays with type O concrete and plasticizers, deck patching, thin polymer concrete overlays, penetrating concrete sealers, spot cleaning painting steel beams, and concrete overlay on adjacent box beams

10:10 AM Iowa DOT Update

A brief update of COVID-19 impacts, State legislative actions, and Federal funding, as well as other updates from the agency.

**Stu Anderson
Iowa DOT**

Stu Anderson provided an update from Iowa DOT including COVID-19 impacts to transportation and funding and the status of the five-year program. There are still lingering impacts on transportation due to COVID-19 including declines in rail carloads, passenger air enplanements, and vehicle traffic. Traffic has begun to increase again and are back to near pre-pandemic numbers in some areas. Although traffic levels and vehicle sales decreased, the overall COVID-19 impacts to funding have been significantly less than originally feared. COVID-19 relief allocation to highway, transit, aviation, and trails was also summarized.

Iowa DOT is currently developing the next five-year program with expected approval in June 2021. None of the projects programmed in FY2021 were delayed to later fiscal years or removed due to COVID-19 but there is only limited room to add large new projects. Overall, there is an optimistic outlook for future programs.

10:25 AM State Freight Plan: Freight Networks

Input on National and Iowa freight networks to be included in the updated document.

Sam Hiscocks
Iowa DOT

Sam Hiscocks gave an overview of the work Iowa DOT is doing to verify and update freight networks as part of the state freight plan (SFP) update. The presentation began with a general description of the purpose, objectives, and timeline for the SFP document update. The SFP is required by the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act and is intended to include the immediate and long-range freight planning activities and investments of the state. Input from the Freight Advisory Council will be a critical piece of the update process. The SFP is due in July 2022.

One item to be included is the designation of freight networks – the National Multimodal Freight Network and the Iowa Multimodal Freight Network. These networks are designated to (1.) Inform freight transportation planning, (2.) Recognize corridors to protect and enhance for improved freight movement, (3.) Develop department policies for these corridors related to design and use, and (4.) Assist with strategically directing resources and investments to improve performance. The methodology and proposed thresholds for being designated were covered for both networks. The networks should be finalized in the next few weeks. No concerns were shared by Freight Advisory Council members.

10:40 AM Update from Iowa Interstate Railroad

An overview of current projects and initiatives.

Joe Parsons
IAIS

Joe Parsons of Iowa Interstate Railroad presented on current projects and initiatives the company is involved with. Iowa Interstate is a railroad operating over 400 miles of track in Iowa and Illinois with access to multiple transload, barge, intermodal, grain, and ethanol facilities.

FRA reportable injuries are on a downward trend and the company continues to invest in safety initiatives like technology, positive train control, train operating monitoring enhancements, and other items that contribute to a strong safety culture. Overall traffic is trending upward with growth across different commodities such as ethanol, ag products, grain, intermodal, and aggregates. Iowa Interstate is also involved with a number of other recent and ongoing projects such as the new Booneville bridge, a continuous welded rail project, a new site in Iowa City, an empty container site in West Liberty, the Watco site in Council Bluffs, Elite Octane Ethanol in Atlantic, and Central Plains Cement in Altoona.

11:00 AM Adjourn

2021 meetings:

- Friday, March 26th (*virtual*)
- Friday, June 25th
- Friday, September 10th
- Friday, December 10th