

Twin Cities Area Transportation Study

Freight Planning

POSSIBLE NEXT STEPS:

- Form a subcommittee of TAC and Policy committee members
- Include other local agencies working with freight (i.e., chambers of commerce, economic development departments, Harbor Authority, St. Joseph Heritage Museum & Cultural Center)
- Build relationships with private sector (i.e., local manufacturers, distributors, three commercial shipping terminals on St. Joseph River)
 - Research contact information and build mailing list
 - Reach out to include in planning process through phone calls, meetings, and/or surveys
- Review studies, plans, and projects in TwinCATS area related to freight:
 - St. Joseph River Harbor Study (? Kim)
 - US-31 Corridor Plan
 - Reports produced by/for the Harbor Authority:
 - Dredged Material Management Plan
 - Proposed Barge Terminal
 - St. Joseph River Harbor Commodity Distribution Reports

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES RELATED TO FREIGHT IN TWINCATS 2035 LRP:

- Goal I: Support the Economic Vitality of Southwest Michigan
 - Improve competitiveness of the regional economy through efficient and improved multi-modal facilities, modes, and linkages.
 - Promote intergovernmental cooperation and the coordination of economic development with transportation planning and land use planning processes.
 - Ensure that the transportation system continues to effectively and safely serve the needs of commerce.
 - Maximize use of existing facilities and infrastructure by encouraging economic development on existing vacant or underutilized sites, especially in the urban core.
 - Promote coordination of construction activities and schedules among the various agencies within the MPO.
 - **Strategies:**
 - Advocate the completion of US 31 to the proposed connection point with I-94 BL on the eastside of Benton Harbor.
 - Provide letters of support for Transportation Economic Development Fund and other economic development grants.
- Goal II: Promote Safety Conscious Planning and System Security in Southwest Michigan
 - Promote safety-conscious design for all proposed projects.
 - Promote access management plans for major corridors within and leading into the urban area.
 - Work for continuous dialogue between local communities and railroads to improve rail/highway intersection safety.
 - Promote a coordinated interface between various modes of transportation.
 - **Strategy:** In cooperation with local units of government, county road commissions, and MDOT, study corridors of interest and identify solutions.

- Goal IV: Preserve the Regional Transportation System
 - Maintain existing road surfaces and their structural integrity.
 - Maintain and improve Lake Michigan and St. Joseph River Harbor navigation channels and related facilities for both commercial and recreational use.
 - **Strategies:**
 - Support resurface, rehabilitate, and reconstruct projects.
 - Collect and maintain a reliable database of system characteristics.
 - Assist local entities in developing and maintaining asset management plans.
 - Encourage the development of a five-year investment strategy from corridor studies.
 - Explore and evaluate new revenue sources.
 - Utilize the modeling process when appropriate in decision-making.
 - Draft corridor studies to insure corridors are examined from a system-wide viewpoint and examine alternative solutions to system deficiencies.

- Goal VI: Efficiently and Effectively Move People, Goods, and Services within Southwest Michigan
 - Improve competitiveness of regional economy through efficient and improved multi-modal facilities and modal linkages.
 - Consider the commercial/retail delivery needs within the urban area.
 - Improve the efficiency and use of truck and rail routes in and through the urban area.
 - Encourage the use of existing commercial sites in and around the urban core for efficiency in deliveries of goods.
 - Promote access management as a means of improving/enhancing deliveries and customer contacts.

- **Strategies:**
 - Co-sponsor a construction coordination summit with MDOT, the Berrien County Road Commission, local units of government, area emergency service providers, school personnel, and other agencies in the fourth quarter of the year to discuss planned construction activities and schedules.
 - Survey businesses to solicit their views of transportation inefficiencies (e.g. truck routes, parking facilities, access to business).
 - In cooperation with Berrien County and local units of government, explore locations and the feasibility of multi-modal facilities for harbor, air, rail, and roads.
 - Identify lack of connection between different modes.
 - Preserve active rail corridors and abandoned rail corridors for future transportation service needs.
 - Identify and collaborate with private freight partners.