

# WisDOT Freight Advisory Committee Meeting

## Tabletop Discussion Responses

April 29, 2025

### State Freight Plan Part 1: Background

**Question 1: Does the current structure still make sense? Are there new sections that need to be added?**

Table 1:

- What are the options with federal regs? There is room for change within the guidelines.
  - Maritime side was sufficient; good job capturing issues
    - Being able to have this for harbor assistance money for either keeping the funding or applying for new funding. Keeping an eye on harbor assistance and helping to keep the attention on it.
- Open the plan to apply for grants – the document is huge for grant writing
  - Help to connect the dots with all the industries and modes
  - WisDOT can help with identifying what information is easily accessible in the plan that is needed for grant writing – work with grant writers to tailor information relevant to grant writing. FAC attendees said they use the plan when applying for various grants (HAP, MARAD).
- Consider disaggregating the statistics when specific needs are identified. This will be beneficial for grant-writing.
- Open it to get the stats for justification and show to legislators; also to show the scope of the industry
- One thing of concern is log cars with rail, it sounds like they're aging out
  - Are there grants available for that?
  - Can the plan identify grants?
- Maybe there's a way to better frame the information/context
  - International, state contexts?
- Concern with rail safety – underlying concern with responsiveness of Class 1 railroads.
  - Regional rail has been a good partner on safety and operations
  - Need to improve Class 1 engagement on track use agreements
- RR – towns and counties have challenges with Class 1 railroads and communication
  - Desire for better Class 1-to-state efforts for communication and infrastructure improvements
    - Entice the Class 1s to work with the state
    - Small carriers work very well with the state
    - Regional railroads can be difficult to work with
    - Get a strategy for cooperation with Class 1 railroads with incentives
    - Example of how trains can run double stacked
      - Regional RRs are just passing through

- Can we make it work for them to be stopping in WI?
  - Need to work with local government to help keep the rails safer
- WisDOT has longstanding agreements, but there are conflicts emerging
- Need to involve Transportation Committee Chairs from the Senate and the Assembly and get grants and cooperation with Class 1 railroads
  - Seek opportunities for short lines to operate segments on Class 1 track
  - This could help save money for road maintenance
- Example of getting rail spur in Milton, great economic development
- Suggestion to highlight successes in the plan. Would like to point to these and say, “we achieved [this] here and can produce similar results with funding.”
  - Tell about the success after the investment.
  - Ports, airports, roads improvements and the ROI on these
  - Help to make the discussion more real
  - Regional planning
  - Will fit into the Freight policies and strategies area of the plan, economic context,
    - Case studies could be included
    - Standalone section?
      - Yes, that would be the most helpful
  - WSOR expanding in the NW part of the state? Working with economic development organizations
  - There is state money available that isn’t being spent
  - Work with other state’s FAC, good relationship with MN counterparts
    - Currently evaluating how to get double stacked cars in and out of the state
    - Bridges need to be built up
- Suggest more information about neighboring states

Table 2:

- Process still works – is solid. Focus on what is new
- Analyze change in administration policies - impacts

Table 3:

- The current plan makes sense since there are unique aspects to each mode (rail and truck).
- Looking at the results of the last plan, it looks like the current structure does still make sense.

Add: Economic Development

- Looking at the other state plans, the addition of an economic vitality section could be beneficial.
- Discuss price to ship products.
- Agreement, especially looking at how the economic landscape is, such as things closing. The economic vitality section could discuss how economic gaps could be filled.
- It could also cover how the state competes economically.

Table 4:

- General headings allow bringing in newer issues.
- Handicaps of current transportation system – fit under challenges or separate?
  - Bottlenecks or new topic that could be pulled out of a section
- Make sure freight providers and freight industry snapshot is outlined – assume under Context section
- Freight system needs under trends and challenges (switch with policies and strategies)

Table 5:

- May want to differentiate intra/inter/international corridors in some cases. Inter-state: weight limits for ag., licensing, seasonal movements with freeze/thaw road weight limits, etc. Interstate commerce presents unique issues. Might be useful to break those three items named apart.
- Weight distinctions exist within states and between states. Along Interstate Highways, HOS, truck stops, parking availability, weight limits, etc. vary - different routes have different needs depending on whether the route has more inter- or more intra-state travel.
- Question: was WisDOT struggling during the last plan to put different topics in sections according to the outline shown here?
  - Not significantly. For example, some are named intentionally to match federal requirements, e.g. the word ‘strategy’ in one of the sections.
- Doing the plan by mode would be too fragmented, so that doesn’t work [brainstorming out loud].
  - *General agreement at table on this comment.*
  - Of note, the freight policies *are* split by mode, which seems to make sense for what it is [paraphrasing].
- Technology: AI from how private sector *and* WisDOT are using it (internally and wherever else).
- NEW SECTIONS
  - Automation/artificial intelligence may be important to discuss now or in the future. Maybe some way of evolving the section names to include that.
  - Yes, much more significant this plan versus in the past due to tech advancements.
  - Electrification too. AI, etc.
- Perhaps the trends and challenges section should be expanded.
- Hard to structure these trends modally.

Table 6:

- I do think it makes sense for what was given then. Are there additional federal requirements? Where do the trade relationships fit in? It’s different than just saying it’s policy. Would like to be prepared to address tariff issues. What type of guidance from the USDOT office will there be before the next one? How do we address the external policies affecting freight? The plan should be proactive in identifying potential/likely impacts to the state.
- The freight plan can be more flexible for the current interconnected issues.
- Keep in mind the things can change and adapt accordingly
- Domestic trade, being imports and exports – movements and restrictions
- Finding what is impacting the industries

- Where are the bottlenecks from moving things domestically (identify the bottlenecks for the shippers)?
- What other discussions are coming from the plan?

Table 7/8:

- Is there a breakdown between domestic/international under Economic Context of Freight or Freight Trends?
- Breakdown of containers, freight bulk, super bulk, liquid cargo? Looking for percentages?
- Funding to non-highway projects – modal balance
- Lots of funding backlogs
- Number of trains on each corridor
- How do we connect modes? Present the system as an actual “transportation system.”
- Freight Railroad Infrastructure Improvement Program (FRIIP) – using a tranche of funding – existing state funding is inadequate
- Leverage federal funds with state money (economic development funding and transportation funding)
- Modal balance for funding – railroads are underfunded or get no funding

**Question 2: What critical facts need to be updated for the SFP?**

Table 1:

(No response)

Table 2:

- Global dynamics / inter-relations
  - Trade and logistics partnerships
- Impacts of real-time developments
  - Challenges and opportunities
  - Bi-lateral trade movement
  - Leveraging opportunities
- Opportunity with next Surface Transportation Bill
  - USDOT direction
  - Timing with new SFP deadlines
  - Anticipate requirements
- Agility – federal requirements and private sector
- Policies speak to goals and objectives – want to achieve in partnership with industry
  - Broad, flexible policies
  - Agile and adaptable
  - Focused goals → alignment

Table 3:

Tariffs

- A possible tariff section / discussion may be needed.
- The “T” word is what the industry hears a lot about lately, especially freight forwarders.

Reliability

- System Infrastructure Report

System Inventory

- Without being familiar with the current plan, a system inventory that discusses various modal and other elements, such as reliability and sustainability, would be good. This inventory could include the set of metrics/performance measures, such as the state performance report, to show how our infrastructure scores.

Funding

- A question was asked about the point at which the government steps in to address the current infrastructure issues, such as the development of an intermodal facilities. Essentially, at what stage do agencies kick in with their “checkbooks” to fund these projects. For example, when speaking with the City of Portage, they discussed the need for a study but there was the question on how the study will be funded.
- FHWA’s freight funding is unique, in that the freight programs have a more congressional touch. Other infrastructure funding programs through FHWA are prioritized by the state through state planning documents and transportation asset management plans. FRA has several programs that address rail and intermodal facilities.
- The question on how we will know what types of funding will be available and at what levels was raised

Demographics

- Demographic trends should be included. For example, which cities are growing versus shrinking. Some studies suggest that the population will be relatively the same over the next 30 years.
- Bringing back manufacturing may change that, with more people moving in than leaving.

Electrification

- It may be beneficial to note where electrification infrastructure is going, especially for fleet vehicles.

Impacts on the environment

Discussion of the metrics – the process of “scoring”

Table 4:

- E-Commerce changes – shopping turning into freight trips which change with consumer preferences
- Improvements to the freight network since the last plan

- Data and inventory level information distilled down to the RPC level in order to put into plans more easily by sector
  - Multimodal freight tool mentioned to help
  - More interstate focus rather than intrastate
- AI applications in freight with planning and communications
  - Fit into freight trends and challenges – analyzing and time constraints and how to prioritize investments for implementation/changes
- What amount of traffic has switched from rail to trucks under freight trends and challenges
  - Connection to Mitchell International Airway taking trucks off the road (modal shift) – how does it change the flow of trucks
  - Cost consequence of modal change from rail to truck – Ex. Saw and paper mills closing
- Need accuracy in the forecasting – assume manufacturing state (mainly in MKE, lumber, iron ore, frac sands, grain transportation) but is this continuing? What will the future look like for these industries in the state and how will that impact the freight industry?
  - Under trends and challenges section

Table 5:

- Starting point: how'd we do it last time, and what should be different. Volumes and values, etc. Every year we procure what's the best available data (Transearch), but that's not to say for certain it's great. The Transearch data WisDOT will use will be current as of 2023.
  - 2023 data will not consider current economic environment; may need to mention in plan.
  - Uncertainty of data might throw a wrench in things, but maybe stating confidence level will help, AND saying 'if we [WisDOT] see a change in domestic manufacturing, this is how we think the corridors/trends might change (and noting federal/state implications). The SFP should also address the other option too; i.e., what does WisDOT expect if domestic manufacturing doesn't increase?
- Reliability of pre-2025 data vs. "real" volumes – current level (in 2025-26) should address the confidence level of the data used in the plan. Contrast the data we have vs. what we think is happening.
- Discuss Wisconsin businesses and their need for raw materials (critical minerals) in their supply chains. Opportunities for Canada, quartz, etc. Chip factories in AZ and OH, but there's lots of quartz available in NC. ID, WA, OR might have something too. High costs vs. national security.
  - We may reach out about that in a year or so for more details. Talk to your groups, WEDC, etc. and find out who in WI needs these rare materials and how bad are they struggling to procure them.
  - Also applies to military freight.
  - Applies to STRANET / Armor out of TX, etc. What are the conditions of the highway lines? Would there be a bridge not at capacity?
- Great Lakes for shipbuilding and navy ship repairs. More potential for that in Superior. That would affect the maritime section (Fraser). And Fincantieri on the opposite side of the state. Fraser and Fincantieri – What are their current supply chains? How would an increase in their manufacturing affect their supply chains?
  - There's a law saying naval warships can't be fixed in the Great Lakes currently. Pressure to change it. Also issue of capacity to get those out through St. Lawrence Seaway, potentially.

- Tourism AADT vs. freight AADT. Do we track tourists in WI to compare with freight (?).
  - We probably put in traffic counters, on 41 and 43 for example.
  - We consider on a one-off basis, like the draft. We said no oversize loads during that time.
  - Good to know the impact of tourism growth on freight movement.
  - Tourism to U.S. currently dropping.
- Status of reshoring

Table 6:

- Evaluate manufacturing processes.
  - What are the new targets?
  - Understanding supply chain structure between manufacturing are producing, shippers move things around. Where are the supply chains coming from?

Table 7/8:

- Truck parking availability
- Availability / coordination of EV charging
- Utilization and capacity on rail
- Bottlenecks on state-owned rail – five bridges in Janesville
  - State program to help bridge projects
- Connectivity / Access

**Question 3: What voices need to be included / involved?**

Table 1:

- Class 1 RR
- Legislators and Transportation Chairs
- Cooperation for Class 1 RR and local RR

Table 2:

(No response)

Table 3:

Railroads

- One of the things the FAC keeps discussing is rail and intermodal; however, those are the voices that they don't hear from a lot. It would be beneficial to understand their point of views, such as if the railroads won't do something or are limited in what they are able to do. Instead, we are spinning our wheels on what to do.
- There needs to be more private voices at the table, such as the railroads and terminal operators.
- Are short line railroads at the table?
- The railroads have participated in the FAC previously and the short line railroads have presented.

#### Distribution Centers/Retailers

- The increased reliance on distribution centers compared to brick-and-mortar stores was discussed, in light of changes in consumer shopping trends. In the future we are going to see more massive distribution centers in the middle of nowhere, instead of multiple stores in town, such as grocery stores. A better understanding of locations and trends for these operations will help, as well as sharing realistic expectations with these firms on what transportation services can be improved. One suggestion was to bring more distribution centers and retailers to the table, such as Amazon, Kwik Trip and other major online-based retailers.

Better explanation of the federal mandates – the 17 points / factors – and how those affect freight transportation

Freight funding

Where are the Congressional “touch” points?

How does the state decide to use it? How is that use prioritized and documented?

FRA funds are available but not awarded – did they not have enough applicants?

What federal funds will be there in four to five years?

Will tariffs lead to sustained reshoring?

Electrification

Demographic trends

More employees working from home – changing conventional travel demand models

#### Table 4:

- Wisconsin region engagement, specifically Northwest
  - MPO, RPCs as connecting point – more ad hoc and WisDOT might have a wider reach with the FAC and updates
  - Regions could use list provided to the regions [ed. note: unclear] so they know who to talk to, deal with the disconnect between government
- Industry perspectives
- Operator of New Richmond intermodal yard, possible Portage yard explaining why they shutdown, challenges to get firsthand experience of these freight challenges
  - Impossible to do shipments out of facilities but no containers available
  - Provide information on container supply and demand discrepancies and cost impacts
- Interviews about other unsuccessful outcomes from freight investments in WI based on industry above (Ex. frac sands)
- Freight brokers since they are so well informed on multimodal perspectives, provide that broader viewpoint rather than one provided by a specific sector (trucking, rail, etc.)



Table 5:

- National Defense Industrial Base – New Wisconsin association, Wisconsin Defense Industry Council (WDIC)
  - Maybe a group at Oshkosh building military equipment
- Enbridge, gas/oil industry. If a large company (Kwik Trip) had significant impacts in WI, they might be worth talking to.
  - City of Superior, Enbridge and Cenova in Superior
  - FAC has a connection there. WMC.
- Where does OSOW fit in?
  - They're a FAC member. They represent SCRA. Not present at today's meeting. They've contributed in the past.
- Small parcel / air parcel / commerce will be more important this time due to Milwaukee airport.
- WI retail association, which works with PSC
- Great Lakes cruise ships – Milwaukee, Superior
- Which ag companies move product on Interstate Highways?

Table 6:

- FAC has representatives, FHWA organizations, any others?
- Economic Development (WEDA)
- Local / County Economic Development folks

Table 7/8:

- Users of 3 modes of transportation should continue to be included.
  - Logistics and supply chain providers
  - Manufacturers
  - Farmers
  - Producers (ethanol)
  - Owners of cargo
  - DNR for its environmental impact
  - Coordination of agencies and industry associations to reduce redundancy
  - Motor carriers
- Find a successful voice of someone who brought together multimodal freight

## State Freight Plan Part 2: Summary of Policies

### Question 1: Which policies stand out for you? Why?

Table 1:

- OSOW policy is good. OSOW stands out because paper industry uses those
  - Does this affect frozen roads, yes
  - Also, maple syrup
    - Could WisDOT upgrade the roads for those businesses rather than have OSOW permits? What if it's just a quarter mile of road?
    - Work with the town and the state
  - Wouldn't dairy farms be having the same problems?
- ARIP is mostly local roads and minor collectors
- Consider conducting a survey of business/industry impacted by Class B Frozen roads. Highlight opportunity to improve roadways that have the negative impact of reduced loads during spring thaw. Program could be similar to ARIP.
- How many businesses are affected by spring thaw time period?
- Large dairy operations have restrictions on how much manure they can spread, need to travel far and wide to be able to spread
- Maritime advocating for dredging is great, step that up and advocate for federal projects for docks
  - More focus on dock improvement needs.
  - Adding something to team with federal government to help make projects happen, stacking funding
- Will you address the changing role of technology in the movement of freight?
  - Truck platooning is in
  - Autonomous is in
  - It was unclear with FAC meetings of what the consensus from the state on how the technology would be implemented
    - More coordination with WAVE
    - Make sense to interconnect the FAC and WAVE
      - Sub policy?
        - Define what the state's role is in the implementation of technology
        - So that industry can be prepared for changes that would be coming
- Intermodal is weaved in and out of the plan
- Try to pull in FRA plan into the freight plan

Table 2:

- Policies by mode is a strength
  - Aligns with funding
  - Maybe have charts for:

- Links between modes
- Links to industry impacts
- Show interconnections of policies
- I like that it's multimodal.

Table 3:

General Discussion

- A lot of information was included in the presentation, and it is amazing to understand what WisDOT has been doing.
- Look to emphasize policies that are measurable, like truck parking.
- Has there been success in coordinating grant applications/programs with the policies that have been accomplished?
- Grant writing has been siloed off from freight planning section at WisDOT. There could be better coordination between the two sections to make sure that the correct policies are being addressed by syncing federal funding and the freight plan.

Table 4:

- Do OSOW WI permits have to be paper and carried in the truck? MI and IA [allow] electronic – should make it electronic to make it easier for the truck drivers and agencies.
  - IL policy (Table 10.1) emerging technologies would be a way to address this.
  - Register route through multiple states nationally – clearing house of digital permits.
  - Reciprocity of permits not just OSOW policy correspondence.

Table 5:

- Policy 27 on highway – more truck parking. Obviously a good thing but we don't talk in it about providing security, and there's been a lot of truck incidents...what level of security should we provide. Maybe add that to the policy.
  - Heard about increase in freight theft, not sure if relevant in WI
  - Not so much in WI. More in parking than freight theft, just the safety/security of individuals. Surveillance cameras to review videos is helpful.
- Trends in OSOW/over-height permits, keeping that in mind and ensure trends are accounted for and any potential changes that might be required.
- OSOW general info – policy 3 and 17 talk about increase of # of OSOW permits – much of which is that we're so cheap in permits and we're getting super loads and continental loads are rerouting thru WI because it's cheaper to do the extra miles with the cheaper permits. Just a note, not sure if we need action on that, but more permits isn't always good. In these cases, our roads are suffering more for it. Also concerns about faulty permits or permits online that are acquired for the wrong commodity – poor compliance in WI and nationally on permits.
- Maritime Policy 5 – does not mention federal partners with 'customs.' If we want to create maritime container movement on the great lakes, we don't talk about customs, but you need that for bringing it in. Needs to mention federal, not just state/local.

- WisDOT currently has a good relationship with MARAD, we meet with them every few months as a catch-up. They're also on the FAC, but maybe not present today. We also sent people to Chicago recently for a grant writing seminar with MARAD.
- Part of the reason I mention the customs is that the community had to pay for the twin ports facilities, so that's maybe another source of state/regional funding.
- Who pays to station customs officials at a port?
- Did notice there's a resiliency policy from other states; not sure of history. To ensure resiliency of the grid and movement of product despite natural or man-made disaster (IDOT). Worth considering for WisDOT's plan.
- Local level resiliency – cyber security for traffic flow and patterns. And with electrification too.
- Policy #11 rail. Does truck platooning happen? (No)
  - Maybe we remove it then.
  - Maybe generalize the language more? Direct discussion towards CAV instead.

Table 6:

- Impacts to different modes *from* environment and the impacts of those modes *on* the environment (i.e., air quality)

Table 7/8:

- Liked OSOH [width and height clearance] corridor [preservation] – important to enhance rail corridors
- Double-stack [trains] need 22 ft [clearance] (amendment to policy)
- Improved access for Port of Milwaukee. Look for expansion?
- Put under Policy 17 -> Rail 10, remove unit train cap since we went from manual to automated (go from 1 to 3)

**Question 2: What policies did you not see there?**

Table 1:

- Develop a framework for leveraging state and federal funding sources to gain more funding for the state
- Additional information about the changing role of technology. Highlight the state's role (awareness, preparation).

Table 2:

- Lost opportunity to see connections. Switch to outcome-based structure. Then by the contribution from each mode.
- See policy by outcome, and a chart to show how the policies connect. Connection by outcome and mode.
- Could miss opportunity for where rail and road come together, for example.
- Between modes and goals, see where that is achieved. Have a visual display for a complex plan.

- There could be a timeframe for partners where they would be relied upon to take some form of action. Instead of just DOT doing this or that, the private sector, ag, etc. would be included in the framing.
- Roles: Who is responsible for each? Timeframes?
  - State, local, private, collaboration, etc.
  - Include in framing of policy
  - Where/ how do impacted stakeholders contribute?
- Should have opportunities for industry to take action. Define short-, medium-, long-term actions or if the time coincides with a certain bill. Prioritize actions.
- There are 28 types of OSOW permits. How is that decided? For example, new axle arrangements: what is the process for OSOW permits that make sense? Key considerations and decision points.
- Process just for the sake of process? Need a process for policy implementation, including key considerations and decision points.
- Local land use policies are very important – with finding an intermodal site it can be an issue. For example, a city's comprehensive plan. Also falls under last-mile issues.

Table 3:

Funding

- Sustainable practices and cost-effective[ness] are discussed in almost all of the plans. A policy might be included related to the use available funding versus borrowing funding (e.g., bonds), especially since borrowing can come with a much higher cost in the long term.
- The state currently uses transportation bonds for major road projects, such as the Blatnik Bridge. Wisconsin has generally been conservative in use of borrowing / bonding.

OSOW

- A policy on OSOW and how WisDOT's policies and practices compare to or are consistent with other states.
- More discussion on the OSOW connections between states is needed, especially between Minnesota and Illinois.
- There are federal requirements for interstates to meet certain weight standards, but permitting can be a major issue, especially for transversing bridges and structures.
- What are the infrastructure implications?

Table 4:

- Not just road connections, also need rail connections at the harbors and ports such as Superior and Green Bay
  - Not excluded but make it clear that it is ALSO rail (Maritime 4)
- Request for printouts to have bigger text (all group)
- Air inclusion in multimodal policies
- Focus on short lines
- Make sure policies focus on what helps support shippers for more of the state to address issues
  - Might help on how to get rail lines and intermodal facilities to WI

Table 5:

- How well is road degradation from OSOW loads that cross through Wisconsin from out-of-state operators covered by our fees?
- Cybersecurity with regard to travel flows
- More in-depth discussion of military freight

Table 6:

- Challenges with non-attainment of air quality. Impact of freight on Air Quality. How to integrate environmental for the different linkages.
- Economic factors (supply chain, industry, competitiveness, etc.)

Table 7/8:

- Does state patrol ever make a pass through the truck rest areas? Impacts of adding more truck parking
- Expand carbon reduction funding to other modes, such as ferries and related port electrification projects.
- Local buy-in and feedback on intersections: j-turns vs overpass (on-ramps)

**Question 3: Does the current organization, by freight mode, still make sense?**

Table 1:

- Yes, it is easy to see the information and can look at the part that each industry would need
- The WI plan is actionable and that is good
- What is the role for pipeline in the plan? What is the purpose and role within the plan? Seems like there is no meaning since regulated at the national level.
  - It is required by the federal guidelines to include pipeline in the plan
  - How to coordinate with the utilities
  - Superior has the only refinery in WI and has pipelines, so what is in the plan is sufficient
- One of the hindrances in WI is the high electrical costs in the state, what can WI do to lower energy costs here?
  - Can that be added to the plan in the newest draft?
  - Add as context for business decisions in Wisconsin.

Table 2:

(No response)

Table 3:

- Potentially break out the policies by what has been accomplished versus still in progress makes sense. There are probably some low hanging fruit that is measurable.

- The current structure still makes sense.
- All the states have similar topics in just slightly different structures.
- A lot of sharing is happening between the states.

Table 4:

- Harder to discern what policies there are for different modes when it is not separated.
  - Matrix showing how policies cross over multiple modes – impacts of each policy to the different freight modes.
    - DOE, HHS grants have crossover into freight but it is not super visible.
    - Passenger rail improvements help increase freight capacity.

Table 5:

(No response)

Table 6:

- Integrate the information and show how they are intertwined, like how it is in reality.
  - Finding ways to show the connections across modes and systems. Reinforce the idea that shows the referencing how the entire plan has interconnections
  - Showing the "overlay" of key topics, then showing how they touch all the different areas (local road, maritime, airfreight, etc..)
  - Describing the interconnectivity of the policies, which ones overlap with each other
  - In the narrative, shows the "connecting tissue" of cross modal perspectives, issues, concerns, and topics.

Table 7/8:

(No response)

## State Freight Plan Update Part 3: Options for Improvement

### Question 1: What potential improvements stand out for you? Why?

Table 1:

- Like the ideas of more focus on risk and resiliency, video
- Climate / weather issues
  - Sometimes flooding is what causes the need for the dock improvements
- The videos are a good idea to show a quick story about the industry
- Anything you can do to keep it short and to the point and make the objectives clear and show what the timelines are to achieve the objectives
  - Make it clear that this is tied to investment decisions right away
- The current plan was greatly reduced from 300 to 70 something pages
- WisDOT has a portal page now, Google WisDOT plans, now the Connect 2050 plans are all in one place
- Looking at the quantities / graphs, where the projections for growth are, looking at the highway map
- Incorporating the income and employment numbers is good, being able to incorporate the new data
  - Helps with grant applications
  - Having the data in one spot is very helpful

Table 2:

- Potential to make information easier to digest. Improve user experience like the video clip idea.
- There could be a potential partnership opportunity between WisDOT and trade associations – to show how freight gets moved. Could make a video clip.

Table 3

- Loved the video idea.
- Are there any opportunities to use AI and analyze and summarize ideas from other state DOTs Freight Plans that could then be used in Wisconsin. For example, it could search all 50 states and find the elements that all use to determine best practices.
- Is there value in summarizing what other states are doing?
- This would be good, especially with the surrounding states, and determine how the states are similar or different.
- It would be good to understanding the differences and what is unique, what is good/bad.



Table 4:

- Story maps as an idea for improving the user experience – can interact with the map and is more of a living document and a story
  - Trying to work internally, believe this functionality is available with ArcGIS
  - Interaction with ArcGIS experience, ESRI data
  - Allows people to focus on what they want to see, ability to click on certain objects
  - Allows reports to have less information, can go to the story map to get details interested in
  - Freight overview, then topic-based information

Table 5:

- I like the video idea, but not sure if it's possible to incorporate into a document. Think about audience, etc. for main plan and maybe a dashboard version with quick videos incorporated.
- Will you turn the plan into a visual document?
  - No, federal requires a pdf.

Table 6:

- Security, ensuring security systems are in place to maintain the economy

Table 7/8:

- Good balance of charts, tables, graphics and text
- Could use more icons

## **Question 2: What ideas for improvements did you not see there?**

Table 1:

- Would like to see brief clear objectives with tactics to achieve and timelines
  - Side note: participant was surprised by the success stories that were shared, thought that the Freight Plan was an obligation and would like to see more in the document about how these policies are impactful
- Additional information about flow of goods (quantities)
- Additional information about growth projections
- Additional information about employment

Table 2:

- Partner with trade associations to inform / promote careers in freight. Video clips?
- Demonstrate outcomes. What have we done?
  - Things remaining to do
  - Connect and bring picture together
  - Be visual!
  - Vision = Connectivity

- Make the plan useful and demonstrate impacts
- Who / what...By when...Outcomes
- Make sure it does not just sit on a shelf
- Are there barriers to address?
  - To – From – Within Wisconsin?
  - By mode or location?
  - Commodity movement?
- Emphasize land use more
  - Policies and impacts
- Side comments:
  - That is not as much the intent of modal plans. Connect 2050 is more that of system as a whole. Individual plan then looks at what does that more specifically mean for freight, etc.
  - We have a Regional Plan 2050 and I'm realizing that the local governments won't even use it. Aspirational but gets job done.

Table 3:

Incentives

- Include incentives that could push businesses towards using facilities such as the Milwaukee Air Terminal and Port of Green Bay. Is there a way to make things more cost effective for businesses and encourage relocating to Wisconsin?

Communications

- Have more engagement with the freight community – opportunities to share knowledge outside of meetings.
- Creating a forum to share information/communication channel that connects the FAC outside of the meetings.
- Is there a way for FAC members to reach out to WisDOT or each other? How can members find out what is happening?
- An e-newsletter or other communication would be beneficial.
- More opportunities for idea sharing.

Table 4:

- Job for the next plan:
  - Distill data
  - Interpret data
  - Tell how it affects users
  - Outline options for addressing concerns
- Integration with Highway Safety Plan
- Add discussion of emerging technology

Table 5:

- Is there a way to develop a tool to get real-time freight data? A way to bring information down to a Wisconsin-specific level?
- Transearch data – problem is it's 2-3yrs out of date. Is it worth doing a University research project or see if we could develop near real time performance data? You can see intermodal drayage rates online daily, not sure if any of those are valuable, but prioritizing trying to get more up to date data might be important.
  - Data is obtainable quickly, but can you automate the scraping and analysis process? (AI, etc.). Potentially expensive.
  - Private sector doesn't want to share certain data, but they talk about other pieces of corridor.
  - Work with UW system to do research, identify sources, etc.?
  - MAFC has done a bit of that. 2019 - many pages of freight data sources. Not sure how current the info is now, but it was back then a good list of who has what type of available data (outside of proprietary private sector data that WisDOT wouldn't be able to use).
- Thrilled to hear resiliency/redundancy, making sure there's a policy/strategy to make the transportation system redundant for security issues, outages, OSOW needs alternate pathways. Working more the security plan around transportation.
  - Looking back at adaptability and creativity to get resources where they were needed during 2020-22. Assess the medium- and long-term impacts of Covid-19 and how WisDOT reacted at the time. Should any of the temporary policies be formally retained?
- How will you teach people to drive again? They don't care about anyone stopped (state patrol pulling over on the right, etc.). The biggest thing with COVID was speeding tickets over 100mph went way up.
  - Speeding is still way up from before pandemic. Unless it's a crash or swerving all over.
  - Can driver ed classes teach drivers how to act around trucking. Not sure who's setting the mandatory requirements.
  - You get an insurance reduction for 55+ defensive driver course. Maybe something of that format?
  - Used to do share the road presentation with locals around WI – semi driver would give presentation to students, then state patrol, then they'd go in parking lot with semi parked and cruiser parked in its blind spot. The kids would go in the driver's seat of each one to give them a visual. They don't do those presentations anymore for some reason.

Table 6:

- Quality of data that is used (being **transparent** what the sources themselves can have) (Public Trust) – limitations of the data that is available

Table 7/8:

- Could use some more icons
- More infographics at the start of each chapter
- More agency communications to prevent redundancies
- How do we leverage WisDOT resources to interact with land site selection applications
- More communication between state agencies (DOT, DATCP, etc.) to prevent redundancy

- How do we help leverage WisDOT resources to land site selection opportunities and the jobs that are infrastructure-building?
- Have decision-makers (Joint Finance) at the table during these discussions for SFP development.

### **Question 3: What maps / graphics need to be updated?**

#### Table 1:

(No response)

#### Table 2:

- Maps with projects to address bottlenecks. Looking at maps to see how that's demonstrated for the whole state.
- Visioning is about connectivity.

#### Table 3:

- Adding a map of the updated warehousing data, including differentiating what kind of warehousing is it (e.g., cold-storage, dry, transload); include modes/types of transport that can access the warehouse (e.g., rail); etc.

#### Table 4:

- Make sure that all of the data is up to date if it has been released.
- Use data visualization tools.
- Check accessibility measures (i.e., for color blindness).
- Add interstate highways to rail maps – allows people to orient better.

#### Table 5:

(No response)

#### Table 6:

- Yes – need for input (public and private)
- Emphasis on private inputs
- Round table discussions with private sector
- Videos
- Showing an interactive map of how products can be made and end up at the one the shelves "Ketchup Bottle" "DeLong Distilled Grains" (Showing this narrative)
- Find a way that these graphics are able to quickly show the major themes (Kwik Trip)

Table 7/8:

- More infographics at the start of chapters

**Question 4: Is WisDOT going in the right direction in preparation for the SFP? Why or why not?**

Table 1:

- Yes, it is still useful
- Keep it short and to the point
- Graphs are good, but not too many

Table 2:

- How is the plan getting used? It should not just sit on a shelf. Take it to the next level - what can be done to make it more useful?
- The example of: Go back to these groups and see if they are adhering to land use, etc.
- Getting partners together, lots of jurisdictions
- Do we know if commodities are flowing well through the state? Is there harmony? Could show particular commodity flow going through the state, and are there barriers anywhere?
- Commodity flow data: Seems like there is inbound outbound & within but not as much data on what's going through the state.
- Discussions on ag commodity movement. For example, whether animal feed is produced in Wisconsin or another state. Or, if the inputs for animal feed come from the U.S. or another country.
- Agriculture is ok with wind and solar, but not on prime farmland.

Table 3:

- Yes
- A question was asked about the reasoning for changing the requirements for State Freight Plan from every five years to four years.
- Everything is moving so fast that there is probably a need to update more often.

Table 4:

- Addition of highway safety – including other safety plans is critical to all policies.
- Added information about emerging technologies
- Going in the right direction by involving constituents with FAC

Table 5:

(No response)

Table 6:

- Yes, make sure to check the boxes and continue the funding for federal programs
- Need more private sector included for one-on-one discussions or speak (round table discussion from the actual customers)

Table 7/8:

- Being the squeaky wheel to get more fed money
- More stakeholder engagement
- Add hyperlinks to funding opportunities and any other relevant resources (resource section)

**ADDITIONAL COMMENTS**

Table 1:

Future Meeting Topics

- Are there graphs of the federal grants that the state gets
  - What is applied for vs what is received
  - Are we missing out on some opportunities?
  - Information about the impact of freight funding (HAP, MARAD, others)
- There is an interactive map currently available that is by mode, local government (STIP is a work in progress, federal programs not quite completely listed)
  - Future meeting on this website
- Surface reauthorization that expires in 2026, can that be a future discussion?
  - Preparations for reauthorization
  - What are the impacts to the state?