

Greater Charlotte Regional Freight Mobility Plan



Greater Charlotte Regional Freight Mobility Plan Advisory Committee Meeting 1 of 2

Tuesday, April 12, 2016

8:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

Harris Conference Center – Conference Room A & D

3216 CPCC Harris Campus Drive

Charlotte, NC 28208

MEETING NOTES

Attendees:

Patrick Anater, *CDM Smith*

Donald Arant, *NC Railroad*

Sam Ascunce, *CCOG*

Bill Bartosh, *Piedmont & Northern Railroad*

Jeff Boothby, *Woodsman Forestry*

Stephen Brusso, *Drake Enterprises*

Beverly Cheek, *Siemens Energy*

Shelia Cox, *Global Match*

Wallace Everett, *Bonded Logistics & CSCMP*

Greg Fennell, *NC State Ports Authority*

Mike Hamilton, *EPES Transport*

Jessica Hill, *CCOG*

Buddy Holson, *M & N Logistics & NC League of
Transportation & Logistics*

Jenny Humphreys, *CDM Smith*

Sean Kelley, *Bonded Logistics & CSCMP*

Kevin McDonough, *Lowe's*

Jim Prosser, *CCOG*

John Ustica, *Siemens Energy*

Daniel Zupko, *IFF CBA of Charlotte*

Discussion Question: What are your two biggest freight challenges today?

Responses:

Trucking:

- Charlotte does not have enough parking, rest facilities or fueling stations for trucks. Often drivers have to go to South Carolina for fueling and parking.
- There is a need to address regional congestion to move goods more efficiently.
- Delivery of containers is an issue because of regional bottlenecks.
- Rural highways are a necessity for smaller counties and some need improvements to handle the traffic of large trucks & trailers.

Rail:

- Piedmont Improvement Program is in middle of construction and trying to finish projects ahead of funding deadlines
- Rail use has increased in Charlotte and in turn generated truck bottlenecks into Charlotte.
- Not enough rail options to the Port of Wilmington
- Need to build up the railroads after being closed for 30 years

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- Need better coordination with trucking to better serve regional businesses.

Air Freight:

- CLT has focused on the passenger market and not freight. As a result, much of the region's air cargo moves through Atlanta
- There is a need for consistent air freight capacity

Ports:

- Cost of moving units to port (10 times as expensive as sister company in Germany for Siemens)
- Access to NC Ports is more difficult than Charleston, Norfolk or Savannah.
- Regain the market and shift the paradigm where there is a direct link between metro area and Port of Charleston

Freight System Infrastructure Constraints & Access:

- Infrastructure of moving large, heavy products is challenging and expensive- need to reduce costs of shipping in order to keep jobs/employees
- Rail and road do not effectively accommodate products
- Congestion planning for the area
- Connectivity of freight system infrastructure
- Not enough capacity to serve the marketplace here in Charlotte, which is a growing export market

Land use & Land Availability:

- Place to put everything (buildings, land, etc.)
- Need warehousing and other freight-oriented real estate around the region.

Workforce:

- Finding the talent to support the growth
- Production of talent - Supply chain management program at CCCC
- Hiring and replacing drivers that are retiring
- Workforce training for freight industry jobs remains a need to support growth in the region.

Policy & Regional Focus:

- Need a public transit system to get people off the roads and interstates to reduce congestion so that goods can move more freely.

Role of Advisory Committee and Freight Mobility Plan Implementation Question

Question: What's the leverage to implement the solutions and problems identified in the plan? How will these things get moved along?

Answer: Communicating the importance of linking the results of this plan with economic growth, including bringing in the economic development organizations to collaborate with the planning organizations. Secondly,

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by engaging the private sector. Third, by elevating this type of plan in the region to create a comprehensive set of policy recommendations that are central to the success of our region. This plan will guide the state plan, and once the state plan is finalized those projects will be available for funding.

Region's Freight Vision and Goals Discussion

- Opportunity to get publicity and coverage during National Transportation Week in June for a public awareness campaign on the role freight plays in our economy and everyday lives.
- Investigate an opportunity to add a public education/marketing campaign to help convey the message and will communicate to the general public the value of freight transportation during the planning process.

Regional Existing Conditions Discussion

Air cargo remains an issue. There needs to be more dedicated air cargo service and the warehouses and distribution centers to store and process imports and exports. For the regional, ATL remains the benchmark. Due to the time sensitive nature of air cargo, customs and cycle time off of plane into facility needs to be shortened. Land use conflicts and noise problems around the airport remains an issue and will likely compound as regional freight movements increase (most of these freighters operate at night).

Wilmington is currently competitive with Savannah, but Savannah is improving. The Port of Wilmington is near the completion of its turning basin deepening to allow for larger ships. It was stated that the Port of Wilmington is able to accommodate the same cargo as Savannah and able to accommodate larger ships by June.

What findings from the existing conditions analysis surprised you?

- Surprised by the size of the exports/imports distribution between North and South Carolina.

What seems to be the critical component of our regions freight system?

- Need to improve trucking infrastructure leads to a lot of opportunities for private investment and growth (i.e. truck stops)
- Need to focus on identifying and removing all the freight chokepoints, regardless of mode
- Anything to improve the flow of traffic and reduce downtime of truckers who have a limited number of driving hours

What spikes do you see that we need to address?

- Agriculture and forestry peaks are fall and dry months. Rural roads get hit hard especially during the worst weather.
- No matter the size of the roads, there will always be traffic. Need to encourage commuters to use alternative modes by increasing public transit options.
- Bypass areas to get trucks off the road that are also critical (loop systems to get trucks away from city).

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- Need to balance short term solutions that can be implemented immediately while long term solutions are in the works.

What can be done to enhance private sector participation in transportation planning?

- Maintaining a list of all the logistic companies that the MPOs and RPOs can use to reach out to the private sector.
- Get information from the drivers to implement continuous feedback loop to the planning organizations

Overall Plan Discussion Question

What does this plan need to include to make it beneficial to you and your organization?

- Address the long term vision and identify where the region going to go.
- Identify needed infrastructure for long term growth
- Reduce choke points and to work with CSX and NS to stay engaged on improving rail systems
- Develop company profiles on freight related industries and get their feedback
- Identify the right solution to minimize congestion and relieve some of the road and rail pressure
- Produce practical steps that can be implemented in the short term as well as the long term vision
- Engage and incorporate who would be involved (connections) in the implementation of recommendations
- Identify strategies to increase rail competition so that manufacturers can avoid monopolistic transportation and lower operating costs
- Recognize that rural highways are arteries for much of the region, particularly in the smaller counties and necessitate improvements
- Conduct a survey of drivers to get “boots on the ground” perspective and bringing that information to the top level
- Lay out a framework for vertical and horizontal communication so that everyone understands what the plan is and how we want to move forward as a region.
- Get information from key stakeholders about the market and trends
- How to increase the use of rail as well as ports for imports and exports