

# Lafayette MPO Freight Plan

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## Lafayette MPO Freight Plan

The facilitation of freight movement is one of the most important aspects of any transportation system. The movement of goods and services is not only the lifeblood of the American economy but also a sector into itself. Metropolitan Planning Organizations have been tasked with inventorying, analyzing, and assisting these vital passages.

### I. Current Status of Freight Operations in the Lafayette MPO

There are several ways to evaluate freight operations in a given geographic area. One of the means is by examining integration in the existing community. Unfortunately, the relationship with freight and the community in the Lafayette area is often a tumultuous one, illustrated primarily by the unrest in the area surrounding the Evangeline Thruway/U.S. 90 corridor. The neighborhood residents have been critical of the use of “jake braking” by the many trucks that utilize this important freight corridor. There is also the issue of air quality, as the area is very dense and primarily residential. In the rural sections of the MPO area, there have been several concerns raised about dump and earth moving trucks using roads that were built for farm access that now have significant residential populations. There are several borrow pits that are only accessible via these routes.

Another form is by looking at the structure of the area’s economy and freight’s part of the picture. An important point is that transportation-only activities do not make up an overly large portion of Lafayette’s economy, as evidenced by viewing Tables 1 and 2.

**Table 1: Percentage of Employment<sup>1</sup> calculated from Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages Data 2007<sup>2</sup>**

Industry	U.S. TOTAL	Lafayette Parish, LA	Louisiana -- Statewide
<b>Base Industry: Total, all industries</b>	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
<b>Natural Resources and Mining</b>	1.66%	13.76%	4.03%
<b>Construction</b>	6.29%	4.92%	8.76%
<b>Manufacturing</b>	11.82%	7.37%	9.90%
<b>Trade, Transportation, and Utilities</b>	23.05%	22.21%	24.72%
<b>Information</b>	2.64%	2.64%	1.85%
<b>Financial Activities</b>	7.04%	6.00%	5.87%
<b>Professional and Business Services</b>	15.64%	13.87%	13.25%
<b>Education and Health Services</b>	15.86%	14.95%	15.59%
<b>Leisure and Hospitality</b>	11.83%	11.49%	12.72%
<b>Other Services</b>	3.96%	2.68%	3.12%
<b>Unclassified</b>	0.19%	0.11%	0.21%
<b>NAICS 11 Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting</b>	1.03%	0.10%	0.65%

<sup>1</sup> Percentage of Employment: Ratio of industry employment to base-industry employment times 100.

<sup>2</sup> Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics

<b>NAICS 21 Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction</b>	0.63%	13.67%	3.38%
<b>NAICS 22 Utilities</b>	0.49%	0.18%	0.61%
<b>NAICS 23 Construction</b>	6.29%	4.92%	8.76%
<b>NAICS 31-33 Manufacturing</b>	11.82%	7.37%	9.90%
<b>NAICS 42 Wholesale trade</b>	5.26%	5.84%	4.91%
<b>NAICS 44-45 Retail trade</b>	13.52%	13.01%	14.63%
<b>NAICS 48-49 Transportation and warehousing</b>	3.77%	3.18%	4.57%
<b>NAICS 51 Information</b>	2.64%	2.64%	1.85%
<b>NAICS 61 Educational services</b>	2.09%	0.61%	1.34%
<b>NAICS 62 Health care and social assistance</b>	13.77%	14.34%	14.24%
<b>NAICS 71 Arts, entertainment, and recreation</b>	1.75%	1.48%	2.14%
<b>NAICS 52 Finance and insurance</b>	5.17%	2.61%	3.75%
<b>NAICS 53 Real estate and rental and leasing</b>	1.86%	3.38%	2.12%
<b>NAICS 54 Professional and technical services</b>	6.90%	6.31%	5.43%
<b>NAICS 55 Management of companies and enterprises</b>	1.67%	2.32%	1.52%
<b>NAICS 56 Administrative and waste services</b>	7.06%	5.24%	6.31%
<b>NAICS 72 Accommodation and food services</b>	10.09%	10.02%	10.57%
<b>NAICS 81 Other services, except public administration</b>	3.96%	2.68%	3.12%
<b>NAICS 99 Unclassified</b>	0.19%	0.11%	0.21%

**Table 2: Location Quotients by NAICS Super Sector<sup>3</sup>**

<b>Industry</b>	<b>Lafayette Parish, Louisiana</b>	<b>Louisiana -- Statewide</b>
<b>Base Industry: Total, all industries</b>	1	1
<b>Natural Resources and Mining</b>	8.28	2.42
<b>Construction</b>	0.78	1.39
<b>Manufacturing</b>	0.62	0.84
<b>Trade, Transportation, and Utilities</b>	0.96	1.07
<b>Information</b>	1	0.7
<b>Financial Activities</b>	0.85	0.83

<sup>3</sup> Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics

<b>Professional and Business Services</b>	0.89	0.85
<b>Education and Health Services</b>	0.94	0.98
<b>Leisure and Hospitality</b>	0.97	1.07
<b>Other Services</b>	0.68	0.79
<b>Unclassified</b>	0.6	1.09

The above chart shows that the Transportation and Warehousing Sector makes up a smaller percentage of Lafayette’s employment than the nation as a whole and the state of Louisiana in particular. A shorthand way of describing it would be to the Location Quotient<sup>4</sup>. Lafayette’s Location Quotient for the Transportation and Warehouse Sector is 0.81 and Louisiana’s is 1.21.

**Table 3: Percentage of Employment: Transportation Sector<sup>5</sup>**

Industry	U.S. TOTAL	Lafayette Parish, Louisiana	Louisiana -- Statewide
<b>Base Industry: NAICS 48-49 Transportation and warehousing</b>	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
<b>NAICS 481 Air transportation</b>	11.42%	13.96%	4.47%
<b>NAICS 482 Rail transportation</b>	0.01%	NC	ND
<b>NAICS 483 Water transportation</b>	1.47%	2.26%	12.22%
<b>NAICS 484 Truck transportation</b>	33.53%	43.13%	26.85%
<b>NAICS 485 Transit and ground passenger transportation</b>	9.41%	6.24%	3.94%
<b>NAICS 486 Pipeline transportation</b>	0.94%	3.28%	3.49%
<b>NAICS 487 Scenic and sightseeing transportation</b>	0.66%	NC	0.47%
<b>NAICS 488 Support activities for transportation</b>	13.57%	16.97%	30.61%
<b>NAICS 491 Postal service</b>	0.10%	NC	ND
<b>NAICS 492 Couriers and messengers</b>	13.54%	9.06%	7.23%
<b>NAICS 493 Warehousing and storage</b>	15.35%	5.11%	10.61%

**Table 4: Location Quotients for the Transportation and Warehousing Sector**

Industry	Lafayette Parish, Louisiana	Louisiana -- Statewide
<b>Base Industry: NAICS 48-49 Transportation and warehousing</b>	1	1
<b>NAICS 481 Air transportation</b>	1.22	0.39

<sup>4</sup> Location Quotient: Ratio of analysis-industry employment in the analysis area to base-industry employment in the analysis area divided by the ratio of analysis-industry employment in the base area to base-industry employment in the base area.

<sup>5</sup> Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics

<b>NAICS 482 Rail transportation</b>	NC <sup>6</sup>	ND <sup>7</sup>
<b>NAICS 483 Water transportation</b>	1.54	8.33
<b>NAICS 484 Truck transportation</b>	1.29	0.8
<b>NAICS 485 Transit and ground passenger transportation</b>	0.66	0.42
<b>NAICS 486 Pipeline transportation</b>	3.49	3.71
<b>NAICS 487 Scenic and sightseeing transportation</b>	NC	0.7
<b>NAICS 488 Support activities for transportation</b>	1.25	2.26
<b>NAICS 491 Postal service</b>	NC	ND
<b>NAICS 492 Couriers and messengers</b>	0.67	0.53
<b>NAICS 493 Warehousing and storage</b>	0.33	0.69

In some subsectors of the transportation industry, Lafayette has more of its fair share of freight related activities. Air, water, truck, and support activities for transportation all have Location Quotients greater than one. Pipeline transportation in particular is shown to be a very important sector of our economy, as evidenced by the Location Quotient of 3.49. This is likely due to the preponderance of oil-field related activities in the Lafayette area, as shown in Table 1. The only Super Sector in the Lafayette area that has a Location Quotient greater than 1 is the Mining and Resources Super Sector, which makes it to be a likely extrapolation that most of the transportation activities are heavily involved in this field.

To some extent, Lafayette facilitates above average amount of air traffic when compared to the nation as a whole. This is primarily due to transport to oil extraction facilities in the Gulf of Mexico. There is also an above average amount of water traffic; however, there are no major river ports in Lafayette. As for truck freight, the primary routes are the I-10 and future I-49 corridors. Once the Evangeline Thruway/U.S. 90 corridor is fully converted to interstate standards, truck freight movement should be greatly improved and the current concerns in the residential portions of the corridor should be mitigated. There are limited rail facilities and traffic through the Lafayette area; these movements are primarily routed north to avoid a crossing through the Atchafalaya Basin. The federal survey shows that the amount of rail activity in the Lafayette area is negligible. There is one intermodal transportation center in Lafayette that serves the Amtrak service and the Lafayette transit system. It is located one city block away from the Greyhound station for Lafayette.

<sup>6</sup> (NC) Not Calculable, the data does not exist or it is zero

<sup>7</sup> (ND) Not Disclosable

**Table 5: Lafayette Parish Top 20 Employers by Number of Employees<sup>8</sup>**

#	Company	Industry	# Emp 2008
1	SCHOOL BOARD LAFAYETTE PARISH	Education	4250
2	LAFAYETTE CONSOLIDATED GOVERNMENT	Public Administration	2008
3	UNIV OF LA LAFAYETTE	Education	1900
4	LAFAYETTE GENERAL MEDICAL CTR	Healthcare	1757
5	WAL-MART STORES INC.	Retail Trade	1664
6	ISLAND OPERATING COMPANY	Oil and Gas	1500
7	STULLER INC.	Manufacturing	1471
8	HALLIBURTON ENERGY SVC	Oil and Gas	1371
9	OUR LADY OF LOURDES REG MED CT	Healthcare	1310
10	CINGULAR WIRELESS	Telecommunications	1150
11	UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CTR	Healthcare	1000
12	OMNI ENERGY SERVICES, CORP	Oil and Gas	950+
13	MAC-LAFF INC.	Service	950
14	MONCLA WELL SERVICE INC.	Oil and Gas	849
15	ACADIAN AMBULANCE & AIR MED SERVICES INC.	Healthcare/Transportation	835
16	ESS SUPPORT SERVICES WORLDWIDE	Retail Trade	831
17	THE ACE GROUP	Transportation	652
18	FRANK'S CASING CREW	Oil and Gas	625
19	WOMEN'S & CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL	Healthcare	610
20	LAFAYETTE PARISH GOVERNMENT (not a part of LCG)	Public Administration	597

Freight traffic in Lafayette is primarily destined for Lafayette or passing through. There are few operations with freight trip originations in Lafayette. Lafayette has minimal Manufacturing activity; its Location Quotient is only 0.47. Only two of the top 20 employers in Lafayette parish could be classified as requiring freight operations. Wal-Mart would be a freight recipient and Stuller would be freight exporter. However, neither of these two companies could be classified as major freight operations. Wal-Mart is a typical retail presence in almost every community in America and Stuller is a jewelry manufacturer, which requires unique shipping needs primarily through small air shipments.

## II. Overview of the Regional Freight System

There is one transportation related company in the top 20 employers: the headquarters for the Ace Group, which consists of Ace Transportation and Dynasty Transportation. Its closest local competitor is Acme Transportation. The three companies primarily service oil field operations in a trucking capacity.

The rail infrastructure is quite limited: there are only two lines in the parish, which intersect at one point. The northern section of the North-South rail line to Opelousas was

<sup>8</sup> Source: Lafayette Economic Development Authority

abandoned, as was a portion of the eastern section of the East-West line. The western section of the East-West line is jointly owned by BSNF and Union Pacific. The inactive eastern half of the East-West line is owned by Louisiana Delta. BSNF also owns the active southern portion of the North-South line.

There are also several companies that have track rights on the lines. Track rights are an arrangement where the company that owns the line retains all rights, but allows another company to operate over certain sections of its track. The agreement may specify whether the latter company can serve customers on the line. In some cases, the former company may opt to not run any trains over the line but still own it; this can also be done via a partial lease. The track rights for the southern portion of the North-South line are held by Amtrak and Louisiana Delta. Amtrak has track rights for the western portion of the East-West line, and Louisiana Delta has the only track rights for the inactive eastern section. Basically, the only active lines in the parish move through the western section of the East-West line and the southern portion of the North-South line.

The Lafayette Regional Airport offers extensive cargo and passenger service for an MPO of Lafayette's size. For passenger service, the airport offers daily nonstop flights to hubs in Atlanta via the Delta Connection; Dallas/Fort Worth via American Eagle; Houston via Continental Express; and Memphis via Northwest AirlinK. For cargo operations, both Federal Express and UPS offer Next-Day Air Gateway service. The airport is also developing a cargo ramp at the airport to better facilitate cargo operations.

**Table 6: Cargo Enplanements in Pounds<sup>9</sup>**

2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	
169,636	155,465	187,452	1,175,000	1,067,906	1,134,125	<b>JANUARY</b>
193,640	174,623	189,254	1,262,110	1,094,838	1,029,750	<b>FEBURARY</b>
181,755	196,796	219,098	1,251,549	1,373,137	1,400,770	<b>MARCH</b>
172,462	188,557	213,884	1,220,784	1,197,947	1,026,795	<b>APRIL</b>
212,158	165,910	209,123	1,322,259	1,369,867	1,146,602	<b>MAY</b>
170,338	175,878	200,138	1,431,120	1,310,815		<b>JUNE</b>
183,852	161,140	178,692	1,215,548	1,306,215		<b>JULY</b>
178,145	175,173	217,358	1,467,819	1,422,672		<b>AUGUST</b>
175,998	184,313	1,030,463	1,432,963	1,305,761		<b>SEPTEMBER</b>
182,072	166,838	1,279,889	1,464,830	1,301,244		<b>OCTOBER</b>
165,249	192,100	1,262,229	1,220,103	1,143,699		<b>NOVEMBER</b>
201,943	234,899	1,003,718	1,094,776	1,073,422		<b>DECEMBER</b>
2,187,248	2,171,692	6,191,298	15,558,861	14,967,523	5,738,042	<b>YR. TOTAL</b>

<sup>9</sup> Source: Lafayette Regional Airport

**Table 7: Cargo Deplanements in Pounds<sup>10</sup>**

2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	
285,485	307,097	308,499	1,379,417	1,324,514	1,525,145	<b>JANUARY</b>
288,284	263,570	288,260	1,267,725	1,247,417	1,405,884	<b>FEBURARY</b>
428,483	309,780	351,090	1,263,213	1,451,113	1,388,874	<b>MARCH</b>
290,429	302,765	324,384	1,074,224	1,241,375	1,477,490	<b>APRIL</b>
292,434	293,462	336,601	1,199,815	1,470,050	1,387,248	<b>MAY</b>
266,275	286,140	366,447	1,259,524	1,417,513		<b>JUNE</b>
295,509	300,668	322,962	1,044,373	1,313,277		<b>JULY</b>
327,710	288,229	367,688	1,370,169	1,584,055		<b>AUGUST</b>
305,518	336,200	2,151,347	1,277,829	1,357,352		<b>SEPTEMBER</b>
314,210	325,310	1,620,471	1,174,901	1,553,606		<b>OCTOBER</b>
266,744	310,618	1,754,530	1,316,747	1,394,044		<b>NOVEMBER</b>
361,386	370,443	853,089	1,500,406	1,595,798		<b>DECEMBER</b>
3,722,467	3,694,282	9,045,368	15,128,343	16,950,114	7,184,641	<b>YR. TOTAL</b>

As the above chart shows, enplanements and deplanements have been increasing significantly over the past five years. From 2003 to 2007, cargo enplanements increased 584%. From 2003 to 2007, cargo deplanements have increased 355%.

The last major investment in intermodal infrastructure has been the Rose Parks Transportation Multimodal Center. It consists of a restored traditional train station with an added bus interchange facility. It was funded through an FTA grant and local matching funds. It has been a successful interface for the public to enjoy intermodal transportation.

Due to the citizen-oriented nature of the Lafayette MPO's committees, there are several individuals with diverse occupations that are available to be solicited for their educated opinions on the state of the freight infrastructure in Lafayette Parish. Among them are the head of the Lafayette airport and several individuals with experience in the freight trucking industry.

Unfortunately, the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development can only offer limited information and expertise. The last freight plan that the office of intermodal transportation commissioned was in 2003, and the state did not obtain any of the proprietary data from the consultant. As such, they can not provide any information on the freight industry in the Lafayette MPO area. This is in contrast to the Virginia Department of Transportation, which offered their MPOs an extremely comprehensive overview of the freight operations in their areas. The Lafayette district DOTD office has been more cooperative in working with the freight community through the planning process. A less than truckload shipping company, Saia Inc., asked and will pay for special freight accommodations for the ingress and egress to their facility as part of a widening project on U.S. 90. The Lafayette DOTD office also realigned an intersection in order to improve freight movement to an industrial park in Broussard.

### III. Initial Planning Actions

<sup>10</sup> Source: Lafayette Regional Airport

## A. Freight Needs and Deficiencies

There are some areas in the network where freight operations could be improved, but none would have as great an impact as the future I-49 Connector along the route of the current Evangeline Thruway/U.S. 90 corridor. Servicing all three forms of freight, it would be the superstar project that would have a significant enhancement of the Lafayette area’s freight operations.

The existing roadway that the Connector would replace is a north-south arterial, with sections passing through an older portion of Lafayette with a substantial residential population. Upgrading this section, the northern end, to freeway status would improve traffic flow by providing grade separated interchanges at several busy intersections. The southern section of the Connector also provides for railroad grade separations at several major cross streets, which should increase roadway safety as well and improving rail operations.

In terms of multimodal movement, the Connector is directly adjacent to the airport and the Rosa Parks Multimodal center, which services transit buses and the Amtrak station. Several community organizations, including the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce and the Lafayette Economic Development Authority, have lobbied the state and federal governments on behalf of the Connector. This project is objectively the greatest need for the freight operations in the Lafayette area.

The expansion of the southern portion of the Evangeline Thruway/U.S. 90 corridor to six lanes is a viable incremental project that will greatly enhance movement. Here are the results when comparing the built and not built scenarios for the year 2010.

**Table 8: Comparison of Vehicle Hours of delay (VHD), Average Daily Traffic (ADT), with U.S. 90 as a 6 lane vs. a 4 lane<sup>11</sup>**

	U.S. 90- 4 Lane	U.S. 90- 6 Lane	Hours Saved
VHD	8,078	5,016	3,062

  

			Difference in ADT
ADT	42,012	53,156	11,144

Note that the information provided is just on the improved portion of U.S. 90, not on the rest of the network. The results show that the delay hours are reduced by 3,062 hours, while the average daily traffic increases by 11,144. From the results we can say that we improved the freight movement along “The Energy Corridor of Louisiana”. The project is estimated to cost \$26,000,000.

## B. Integration of Freight into the 30 Year Plan

<sup>11</sup> Lafayette MPO Travel Demand Model

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One of the first actions in the development of the 30 Year Plan focuses on the regional goals and objectives. These provide the overall guidance and direction of the Long Range Plan. It is critical to address freight as part of this process. In addition to the regional description, it is critical that the users of the system be given an opportunity to identify the system's strengths and weaknesses. Based on these steps, staff can develop a summary that provides a snapshot of the regional freight system and its condition.

### **C. Community Participation**

The community can work with staff to identify a priority or critical freight network, including all components. The most reasonable project that fulfills this need is the future I-49 corridor. It has been identified as pivotal to Lafayette's future by several key organizations in the Lafayette area, most prominently by the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce. Having the business community united behind this project gives it the urgency that other projects lack.

In terms of general participation, the Lafayette MPO has solicited comments operations from the members of the freight community for inclusion in this plan on the current state of freight. Several key intersections were highlighted as being problematic for trucking operations. Most notably was the intersection of Pont de Mouton and I-49. The airport also wanted to include the fact that it is developing a cargo ramp to better facilitate cargo operations at the airport. These comments will be given great weight in future planning processes.

### **D. Areas with High Concentrations of Commercial Vehicle Crashes**

Commercial vehicle crashes are a major source of concern for the Lafayette transportation network. Not only do they have a serious impact on delay, due to the size of the vehicles a crash between a commercial vehicle and a standard vehicle can be devastating.

“According to a recent report from the NHTSA (National Highway Traffic Safety Administration), in 2007, large trucks were involved in 8 percent of all fatal crashes and 4 percent of crashes where there were injuries and property damage, but no fatalities. What this means is that while trucks are less likely than cars to be involved in crashes overall, they're more likely to be involved in fatal crashes. Specifically, trucks have a fatality rate of 2.5 (per million accidents) as opposed to 1.5 (per million accidents) for cars, according to statistics through the year 2004.”<sup>12</sup>

Data collected from the local police agencies was analyzed and mapped, highlighting commercial vehicle crashes from the years 2005 to 2007. As one can see from the commercial vehicle crash map in the appendix, these particular vehicle crashes are primarily located on arterial routes, especially the future I-49 Connector. If the I-49 Connector was upgraded to freeway service, then there would be significantly fewer accidents and an improved flow would result.

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<sup>12</sup> [http://www.pttc.org/articles/commercial\\_trucks\\_010809.htm](http://www.pttc.org/articles/commercial_trucks_010809.htm)

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There has been less than five vehicle crashes involving trains from 2005 to 2007, so this is not considered to be a major safety issue.

### **E. Identification of Short-term Projects Using Maintenance Funds**

One of the most basic mechanisms for advancing pro-freight projects is to deal with quick-fix projects using available maintenance funds. Examples of quick-fix projects include traffic signal re-timings, turning radii improvements, and even pothole repairs.

If any projects are identified, MPO staff will work with the local public works department to solicit project support and funding. It is also important to identify proposed capital projects that could be modified to improve freight mobility. Once the projects have been developed, specific modifications could be developed. For example, new capacity added to an urban arterial could be reviewed to include geometric design considerations at key truck access points.

MPO staff will work with the MPO committees to incorporate freight improvement elements into the established project definitions. These freight considerations will take advantage of the traditional funding sources already in place for the overall project. The comments solicited during the citizen participation process will be utilized here.

### **F. Freight Outreach Program**

The Lafayette MPO Freight Outreach program will primarily consist of the creation of a Freight Advisory Committee culled from the current MPO committees, of which there are three: the Citizen Advisory Committee, the Transportation Technical Committee, and the Transportation Policy Committee.

The relevant data available for stakeholders to consider consists of traffic volumes, average speeds and travel times, and accidents. This information is also available through the regional freight profile. The stakeholders could develop a list of indicators or performance measures from these metrics. Staff should always ensure that the performance measures are related to key goals and objectives and the data are available. An ongoing activity for freight advisors and agency staff will possibly to review these measures. For any performance measures for which readily available measures do not exist, determine with freight stakeholders the potential for successfully collecting new data. Using the defined performance measures and available data, evaluate the freight transportation system.

## **IV. Continuing Planning Processes**

### **G. Ongoing Identification of Freight-specific Projects**

When new projects are developed and conceived, the possibility of freight facilitation should be considered. The MPO Committee members should ask the question among themselves about how this project will impact the freight community. The members that work with

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organizations that utilize freight have an extra responsibility to explore the way that the project influences their operations.

That is not to say that the MPO committees bear the brunt of the responsibility for incorporating freight into future projects. Staff should also use freight as a metric when evaluating projects into the network model. The current process for developing new projects primarily relies on general traffic in the model, but freight should have a voice in this process as well.

## **H. Highlight the Importance of Freight within a Corridor**

As the scope is being developed for a corridor study or plan, it is critical that freight be highlighted as one of the key factors in the creation and evaluation of alternatives. Freight is a way to find buy-in for a project in unexpected places. The freight community is often neglected during the notification process for corridor plans. There are potential improvements that the freight stakeholders would advocate for their development, and that should not be left off of the table.

To integrate freight considerations into a corridor study, it is necessary to have adequate data. Freight data should be collected to support operational analyses specific to the corridor's characteristics and study scope, such as truck counts. Based on an evaluation of operational conditions, specific improvement options should be developed that integrate with and promote overall corridor efficiency. Key access points and truck only lanes are a few options to consider.

The freight-specific alternatives and specific improvements should be part of the overall evaluation of alternatives. These should be circulated among the freight community and MPO committees as an important aspect of the planning process.

## **I. Integration of Freight into Project Evaluation Process**

The most fundamental approach available to incorporating freight projects is to build on or modify the process of selecting projects. The MPO staff should be mindful during these processes and evaluate the degree to which they already may incorporate freight considerations.

Based on the review of existing evaluation processes, MPO staff should identify specific data collections. For example, criteria that look at annual average daily traffic (AADT) could be expanded to include reference to annual average daily truck traffic (AADTT). The land use surrounding a project should be an important consideration, as retail and business heavy corridors are undoubtedly major freight centers.

Once the modifications have been developed, it is critical that the necessary data be collected to support the changes. In the example, if AADT is expanded to include AADTT, vehicle classifications will be required.

The recommended changes and new data requirements should be integrated into the MPO's procedures. This will likely require close coordination and cooperation with the staff

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responsible for overall project evaluation. Staff members should be included in all these steps to help build consensus early on in this activity.

#### IV. Conclusion

Freight is the spine of the American economic system. Its needs should be considered and promoted, just as much as the needs of the commuters in the Lafayette traffic model.

DRAFT