

Minnesota Freight Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes  
June 22, 2012  
Ramada Plaza Minneapolis  
1330 Industrial Blvd. NE, Minneapolis, MN

Attendees

Gina Baas, Center for Transportation Studies; Fred Corrigan, ARM of Minnesota; Margaret Donahoe, MN Transportation Alliance; Steve Elmer, Metropolitan Council; Jerry Fruin, University of Minnesota; Bill Gardner, MnDOT; Bill Goins, FedEx Worldwide; Shawn Haag, Center for Transportation Studies; Ronald Have, Freightmasters, Inc.; Tim Henkel, MnDOT; Randy Hoyt, WisDOT/Lakeside Engineers; Louie Jambois, Saint Paul Port Authority; Frank Jaskulke, LifeScience Alley; Neil Jensen, City of Zumbrota; Dick Lambert, MnDOT; Andy Mielke, SRF Consulting Group, Inc.; Dave Montebellow, SFT Consulting Group, Inc.; Roger Nordtvedt, Land O Lakes, Inc.; Matt Pahs, MnDOT; Cathy Petersen, CJ Petersen & Associates, LLC; Philip Schaffner, MnDOT; Matt Shands, MnDOT; Chip Smith, Bay and Bay Transportaiton; Tim Sepncer, MnDOT; John Tompkins, MnDOT; Neal Young, MN DEED.

Summary of the 2012 Legislative Session update

Bill Gardner filled in for Scott Peterson, Director of Government Relations. Out of the last legislative session, there were 134 transportation bills in the House and 142 in Senate with a capital bonding bill and transportation bill in early May. The freight office at MnDOT was given \$2 million dollars for great crossing signal replacement, and \$1500 was given for gate arm and signal systems. The Port Development Assistance Program received a million dollars and the TED (Transportation Economic Development) program was given \$3 million dollars.

Policy changes: Digital forms of overweight permits in trucks are now allowed.

An annual permit is allowed with 145,000-155,000 pound trucks and trucker overweight permits can now be obtained from MnDOT.

Change to civil wait enforcement dealing with free ride for farmers carrying 10 percent be overweight was changed to 90 miles.

Legislature adopted a change to truck carrier insurance where a clause is prohibited and directed MnDOT and Department of Employment and Economic Department to do a self funded Freight Rail Economic Study (FRED).

Weight limits for local government vehicles now exempts certain vehicles that are engaged in snow and ice control, and train engineers may legally perform work on train tracks without a valid drivers license.

Summary of Matt Shands' comments

Shands gave an overview of the TED program. This year they reduced maximum reward from 10 million to 7 million, trying to leverage local funds to private funds to match state contribution to the TED program. Fourteen projects were selected and approved. The Eden Prairie interchange project was given the maximum award of 7 million, total costs were 31 million and the Milax County Highway 132 project requested \$10,000.

A project in Rochester on truck highway 14 and 40<sup>th</sup> access road is supporting a distribution center that will create 50 jobs within the next two years.

A Benton County project leveraged 2 million dollars in non-TED funding and two industrial parks near St. Cloud is going to be employing at least 1000 people. A Delano project, an industrial park access road, supports new industrial development. A freight rail investment bank, primarily local sector and for small projects having a loan max like the TED program, and a Freight Rail Assistance Program, which has bigger programs, are developing in Washington.

#### Summary of Neil Jensen's comments

Jensen described the problem in getting semi trucks to cross the intersection safely. He described the area with tractors driving next to the road, people crossing and drivers assuming the road is a freeway and driving 70-80mph. The project consists of turning the township road into a 10-ton highway, making access to the Hwy 60 interchange. Jensen said that more truck and vehicle traffic with the grant will open up the area and will turn the dangerous area into a county road for safe access onto Hwy 52.

#### Summary of Louis Jambois' comments

Mission and goals of St. Paul Authority: to create quality job opportunities, grow tax base and foster sustainable development.

Jambois described Phalen Corridor as a new two mile stretch roadway built in 1999 that cost one hundred million for the short stretch of road. Previously a junkyard and a contaminated site next to I-35E as the north gateway into St. Paul, Port Authority cleaned it up and planted projects within the area to make jobs and tax dollars. Another example is Beacon Bluff Business Center, 46 acres and a million and a half sq feet of empty office warehouse and manufacturing buildings. Post development of the project resulted in five businesses, 570 jobs and over 600,00 dollars in taxes. In Crosby Lake, 500 new jobs were created. In Energy Park 85 businesses and 5000 jobs were created with almost 7 million in taxes.

In the Empire Builder project, 13 business and 466 jobs were created with over 600 thousand dollars in property taxes. In business parks alone, 600 businesses and 17000 jobs were created. Development in business parks in the 15 years resulted in 9300 jobs, 14 million dollars in taxes and hundreds of millions in prior investments.

#### Summary of Frank Jaskulke's comments

With 35,000 direct jobs in the medical device side in Minnesota alone, and 150,000 supported, Life Sciences Alley is the second largest cluster of medical devices in the world. Per capita, their industry is four times as large than what is expected.

Many start-up companies are planted close to the CEOs' homes. Companies making location decisions should pick a highway location in a twenty-mile radius of big companies so that specialized talent will be found in close proximity to the company with good roads and affordable access to the company for the employees. Close proximity to the airport allows investors and physicians to fly in near company headquarters, providing good customer service for all involved.

### Summary of Philip Schaffner's comments

Goals of the Corridor Management Investment Strategy are to open up economic development and improve quality of life. Many stakeholders would say the real needs for programs making major improvements are in the range of \$3-5 million dollars.

The SIMS approach uses meetings and online forums to exchange information about the system and hear from partners about their needs and desires are on a local level, and to identify and move on opportunities in collaboration on low-cost strategies, maximizing the impact of the investments they're able to make.

He stressed the lower cost high benefit strategy to obtain more investments with low cost, like rumble strips, safety edges, etc. They are also looking for ways to improve mobility without major expansion and exploring the 2+1 continuous three-way roads used in Europe that alternate which direction has the two lane traffic, and has a dramatic reduce in fatalities because of this.

A competitive solicitation similar to program TED is being considered but with a broader range of impacts from these transportation improvements. They'll be developing criteria in the next year and will be addressing mostly trunk highway improvements and non-performance based needs.

SIMS will be launching the competitive solicitation in 2013.

A question and answer session followed the presentations.

### MnDOT Planning/Research Project Update summary by John Tompkins

Dave Christianson gave an update on the Southeastern Freight Study in Rochester and said they are heavily involved in the agricultural movements, fracsand and inter-mobile access for the southeast region of Minnesota. He mentioned the Rochester bypass study, which is the rail capacity study based on the Mayo's issues with the rail running closer to clinic.

Christianson talked about the feasibility of keeping the track where it is with the bypassing and reroute options. He highlighted the high speed rail finished alternative analysis of what the route will be for the rail from Chicago to the Twin Cities running and the preliminary engineering for the route from Minneapolis to Milwaukee.

The high-speed rail from Minneapolis to Duluth is two years out from being ready for investment.

Three rest areas along this corridor are using video technology to scan parking spaces to relay information via web or signs along the corridor to tell truck drivers how many spots are open in these three rest areas in the Truck Parking Availability study along the I-94 corridor.

A beginning statewide freight update is updating the 2005 Freight Plan with an emphasis on economic vitality along corridors. The project will be started in November or December, depending on funding.

Ron Have concluded the meeting at 11:45 a.m.