

MAP-21 FACT SHEET

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SUBJECT: Freight Movement and Economic Vitality

PROBLEM STATEMENT:

In the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) reauthorization, Congress recognized the importance of a strong freight network to ensure competitiveness in the global economy. MAP-21 includes a variety of freight-related provisions, establishing a national freight policy, requiring identification of a Primary Freight Network, providing State incentives by increasing the federal share for freight movement projects, encouraging creation of state freight advisory committees, and outlining the contents for state freight plans. The question before Caltrans is how best to respond to these new, national freight policies and provisions.

RECOMMENDATION:

Caltrans should move ahead with ongoing and additional freight planning activities in a manner consistent with MAP-21 in order to enhance California's position to take advantage of available (first-come, first-served) incentives and potential future funding. Primary steps for accomplishment include the following.

- With Caltrans as lead, establish a California Freight Advisory Committee to advise the State on freight-related priorities, issues, projects, and funding needs.
- Continue to develop the California Freight Mobility Plan (CFMP), now ensuring that it is consistent with the minimum content requirements outlined in MAP-21. The CFMP will also incorporate input from the California State Rail Plan (CSR), Interregional Transportation Strategic Plan, Statewide Freight Model, Air Cargo Ground-side Needs Study, California Aviation System Plan, California Interregional Blueprint, Statewide Transit Strategic Plan, regional plans, and other sources.
- Identify candidate freight mobility projects for inclusion in the CFMP. Under MAP-21, projects must appear in the state freight plan in order to be eligible for federal funding.
- Coordinate with local and regional transportation agencies and the new Advisory Committee to identify regional networks, establish priorities, and leverage scarce resources (e.g., Public-Private Partnerships).
- Identify the state's freight network, including Critical Rural Freight Corridors to assist with the national Primary Freight Network designation. Under MAP-21, the U.S. Department of Transportation (U.S. DOT) has one year to designate the Primary Freight Network.
- Identify potential performance measures and establish processes to capture data for analysis.

BACKGROUND:

A large part of California's economy and millions of jobs depend on freight-related systems and industries; the competition for this economic sector occurs on national, international, and global scales. Recognizing these facts, the Business, Transportation and Housing Agency and the California Environmental Protection Agency in 2005 and 2007 issued the Goods Movement Action Plan; now, the successor plan, the CFMP, is currently in development. Caltrans is also in the process of identifying critical urban and rural freight corridors. Currently, however, there is no formal, statewide advisory body to guide California's freight policies and priorities.

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MAP-21 provides incentives for qualified freight projects by increasing the federal portion of project costs from the typical 80 percent to 90 to 95 percent, thus requiring only a 5 to 10 percent State/local match. Taking advantage of this opportunity can result in significant savings and benefits to California. By ensuring that the CFMP is consistent with the MAP-21 requirements and having our state freight network designated within the Primary Freight Network, California can maximize the prospects for capturing the higher federal share of funding.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Follow the "Recommendation" above, moving ahead multiple activities simultaneously, including the CFMP, the Advisory Committee, designation of the freight network, and other activities.
2. Establish the Advisory Committee, but wait for additional guidance regarding policy.
3. Wait to establish the Advisory Committee, but proceed with identifying California's freight network, including Critical Rural Freight Corridors, followed by a state freight plan.

Pros

- Identification of a freight network and prioritized projects would enhance the likelihood of obtaining federal funding incentives and improve mobility planning.
- An established advisory body focused on freight will provide a forum for addressing freight transportation issues and priorities, not only for Caltrans, but for all State agencies, officials, and stakeholders.
- A data-gathering and evaluation process will assist in measuring performance.
- The committee would provide long-term and continuing guidance and direction for various planning efforts, as well as build relationships and partnerships in support of future freight projects and programs.

Cons

- No additional resources are provided to establish and support the Advisory Committee; therefore, existing resources will need to be redirected from other activities.
- Parties not on the Advisory Committee may feel that their input is less valued.
- Establishing performance measures and processes prior to federal guidance (anticipated in 18 months) may require future adjustments.
- Because the U.S. DOT must designate the Primary Freight Network within one year, Caltrans would need to be ready within the coming months to identify and recommend California routes.

PROPOSED IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE:

- Coordinate with U.S. DOT regarding MAP-21 freight provisions, including the freight network and input for strategic plan guidance (ongoing)
- Establish a California Freight Advisory Committee (2nd Quarter FY 2012-13)
- Identify the state freight network (3rd Quarter FY 2012-13)
- Develop freight performance measures and internal Caltrans processes to collect and analyze data (4th Quarter FY 2012-13)
- Complete the California Freight Mobility Plan, including a statewide, multimodal, freight mobility project list (4th Quarter FY 2012-13)

Attachment:

MAP-21 Sections 1115-1118