

**SUMMARY OF GOODS MOVEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING OF OCTOBER 31, 2006
10:00 A.M.**

Present:

Dave Fechter, HNTB Corporation
Sarah Ward, MPO staff
Sharon Zhu, MPO staff
Jeff Stephens, HNTB Corporation
Rob Godine, WalMart
Ramon Solis, MPO staff
Mike Lester, Publix Supermarkets
Deputy Nick Lazarus, Pinellas County Sheriff's Office
Bonnie Martinez, Pinellas County Waste Management
Tom Washburn, Pinellas County Public Works
Mike Coleman, Great Bay Distributors

1. CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

Dave Fechter called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and had everyone introduce themselves

2. WHAT IS THE GMAC? – DISCUSSION ABOUT ITS ROLE

A. Identification of Freight Activity Centers

B. Identification of Local/Regional Freight Corridors

C. Identification of Freight Forwarders Who Use Assets

D. Environmental Justice Population Concerns

E. Economic Impact – Truck Route Restrictions

F. Identify Areas of Concern for Goods Movement

Mr. Fechter gave a brief background on his company, noting they are one of the consultants for the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and they have been authorized to perform a Goods Movement Study.

Ms. Ward indicated the MPO performed the first goods movement study in the mid 1980's. She noted that MPOs in urbanized areas with populations of 50,000 or more are required to complete a Long Range Transportation Plan, which includes goods movement. Pinellas County doesn't have a major port and doesn't use a lot of rail to move goods. They need to look at goods flow into Pinellas County and how to accommodate heavy truck travel within the County. A large part of this focus is to get input from the companies who depend on trucks for the movement of goods regarding operational issues, proposed truck routes, etc., and the perspective from the law enforcement agencies. There is a need to balance access by the trucks and the impacts to the neighborhoods and roads they create. The last comprehensive study was performed in 1994. Most of the truck traffic is on state roads, where there are no restrictions unless there is road construction.

Mr. Fechter noted the other agencies represented on the Committee that were not present; i.e., FDOT, Federal Express, Keenan Transport (large oil trucks), UPS (not confirmed), Terra Excavating, Joel Yacht Transport (transport yachts), and Exhibit Services (provide transportation for conventions).

Mr. Fechter noted that FDOT had performed a regional goods movement study. The draft of the study was completed in July 2005 with the assistance of URS consultants. HNTB has been working with the Pinellas County MPO on research for vehicle weight enforcement. Pinellas County Sheriff's Office was having enforcement issues using the Pinellas County's Code language regarding truck routes. Several recommendations from the State FDOT Freight Mobility Tampa

Bay Regional Goods Movement Study will be incorporated into the Pinellas County's plan, including the establishment of a Goods Movement Advisory Committee.

3. PINELLAS COUNTY MPO GOODS MOVEMENT STUDY OVERVIEW

A. Scope of Work

B. Schedule of Task Deliverables

C. FDOT Regional Goods Movement Study

Mr. Fechter stated that the Scope of Work includes 11 tasks, with 3 ½ tasks being completed. The Scope of Works also includes a schedule for the task deliverables. The State Regional Plan addressed freight activities and the economic component, translating the movements of goods into dollars. He reviewed several maps, one showing the location of the various truck routes and any associated restrictions; one indicating the freight activity centers; and regional freight corridors to get to the freight activity centers. There are six agreed upon regional freight activity centers in Pinellas County, and two potential additional regional freight activity centers.

4. PROGRESS UPDATE ON GOODS MOVEMENT STUDY

A. Traffic Classification Counts (Task 7)

B. Inventory of Existing Freight Assets (Task 4)

C. Documentation of Existing Policy Context (Task 1)

D. Data Collection and Mapping (Task 2)

Mr. Fechter noted they performed an inventory of freight assets (signage) on County (maintained and owned) truck routes. This also included some of the Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) equipment that was recently installed on one of the roadways. Part of the Committee's role would be to identify local freight activity centers, identify local corridors to move freight, and provide input regarding problem routes/sections, including areas susceptible to crashes.

The project began in April 2006, at which time, HNTB performed traffic counts on approximately 40 roads to determine truck volumes and the percentage that was related to heavy trucks. As part of the scope, HNTB staff looked at all the County roadways on the Truck Route Plan and performed an asset inventory (mostly signage). The unrestricted roads, except within the City of St. Petersburg, are mostly unsigned. The City of St. Petersburg signs the roads that are unrestricted with a black-and-white sign approaching a traffic signal indicating the road is a truck route. Signs are also posted indicating that no trucks are allowed or that it's a restricted truck route.

Another task the consultant performed was to document the statutes/rules that govern freight movement in Pinellas County, including local ordinances. They also looked at Comprehensive Plan transportation goals and objectives and had discussions with the St. Petersburg/Clearwater International Airport Planning Director and a CSX railroad official, and looked at developable land in the Gateway area.

They are in the process of producing maps in cooperation with the Pinellas County MPO staff. They are using data they have for future analysis to develop conclusions and recommendations.

Mr. Solis noted that in discussions with law enforcement agencies, they discovered there is a problem with enforcement because the definitions in the Pinellas County code are not clearly defined for enforcement purposes. The City of Clearwater developed the first truck route ordinance, with Pinellas County and several cities developing similar ordinances. There are several definitions with subtle differences signifying what is allowed. Cities have jurisdiction over County roads

within their boundaries; however, they do not have jurisdiction over State roads. Part of the problem occurs during construction where there might not be enough green time at a signal for trucks to safely execute turns. In addition, some intersections are not designed for truck traffic, which creates an unsafe situation. Another problem is the definition for a restricted vehicle. Currently, restricted vehicle is defined as a vehicle with single or multiple axels, weighing more than 35,000 pounds. Pinellas County eliminated the unrestricted portion of the ordinance because it didn't serve any purpose. One difference between Clearwater's ordinance and Pinellas County's ordinance is that Clearwater exempts any municipal or contracted trucks that maintain/pave roads; whereas, Pinellas County does not. The idea is to bring all parties together to update the Truck Route Ordinance in a more consistent/uniform manner.

5. STAKEHOLDER GROUP AND INTERVIEWS (TASK 3)

A. Survey

B. Individual Interviews

C. Stakeholder Concerns About Restricted Vehicles and Designated Truck Routing

Mr. Fechter developed a draft survey to gather information. Once the survey has been finalized, it will be emailed to everyone. In addition, he will conduct individual interviews.

6. UPCOMING TASKS AND MEETING DISCUSSION

A. Carrier Surveys/Field Observations (Task 2)

B. Designation Criteria/Community Values Survey Results (Task 5)

C. Identify Candidate Roadways for Restricted Vehicle Signage (Task 6)

D. Identify Roads Used for Hazardous Materials Transport

E. Update Existing Truck Route Plan – Identify Implementable Improvements, Operational Changes

F. Recommendations Input

G. Stakeholder Forum to Review Study Findings

Mr. Fechter indicated upcoming tasks include gathering field information, defining problems at various locations, designing of a community value survey (set of criteria to set the standards as a road for restricted truck use), finding which corridors are vital for truck movement for goods and services, seek GMAC member input, as well as the public input, identify candidate roadways for restricted/unrestricted truck movement, identify roads used to transport hazardous materials, look at implemental solutions and operational changes, develop a draft of recommendations for member review, and then finalization of the document.

7. OTHER BUSINESS

A. MPO Technical Coordinating Committee and Citizens Advisory Committee Roles

B. Schedule Next Meeting

Mr. Fechter noted that, prior to the final document being brought to the Metropolitan Planning Organization, it will be reviewed by the Technical Coordinating Committee and Citizens Advisory Committee for their recommendations/input.

The next meeting will be a review of the survey and receive member input.

It was suggested anyone who has a current operational issue, they bring it forward to the Committee for discussion.

Mr. Solis noted they receive truck crash information and place this information on a map.

Some discussion followed regarding the MPO's Long Range Transportation Plan. Mr. Lester indicated his delivery trucks cannot legally get to some of the Publix stores located off the truck route system. Ms. Ward responded language is included in the current ordinance that allows trucks to deviate from the truck route at the intersection closest to the designation to reach their intended facility. If a truck is stopped by a law enforcement representative, they would need to show their delivery slip as to why they deviated from the truck route. The goal is to have one map that would include the necessary data and, therefore, are attempting to reconcile the differences between the local ordinances. One area being reviewed is the need to extend the daylight hours for certain routes.

Mr. Fechter noted a vendor will be making a presentation to the Community Traffic Safety Team on Thursday, November 2, regarding a rear vision camera that could be installed in commercial vehicles to help reduce crashes involving commercial vehicles. If the presentation is felt to be informative and pertinent, he will bring the information to this Committee. University of South Florida, Center for Urban Transportation Research (CUTR) will be studying the use of the rear vision cameras as it pertains to the reduction of crashes.

Mr. Fechter indicated there would be four more meetings, in addition, to the final meeting in late spring, with the meetings being on a Tuesday at 10:00 a.m. in late November, January, February, and March. The next meeting would be Tuesday, November 28, at 10:00 a.m. at the same location.

He requested that the members review the draft survey and email him any comments on it so a final survey could be emailed to each member. In addition, he requested if a member had any suggestion for additional members or further items to discuss to let him know.

Mr. Solis noted this is a continuous process of education and cooperation.

8. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned.