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The Institute for Trade and Transportation Studies provides research data and expert opinions to its members concerning the effects of commercial freight movements on domestic and international activities, with reference to infrastructure and transportation needs, and safety implications.

The ITTS member states include:

Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department

Florida Department of Transportation

Georgia Department of Transportation

Kentucky Transportation Cabinet

Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development

Mississippi Department of Transportation

Missouri Department of Transportation

Virginia Department of Transportation

West Virginia Department of Transportation

Executive Summary

The following report contains a template for a half day “Private Sector Freight Planning” session for the public sector.

In 2008, LADOTD organized a freight symposium in partnership with Louisiana Economic Development. The joint focus was to understand how transportation and economic development must operate together to promote Louisiana’s businesses. While not a part of a traditional freight advisory council, the blended content sought to outline basic freight transportation issues while also capturing how transportation contributes to the broader decisions facing private sector operations.

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FREIGHT ADVISORY COUNCILS: ONE POSSIBLE TEMPLATE

Introduction

The need to engage private sector businesses in examining regional freight needs, especially as their decisions influence cargo activity, remains of growing interest to State DOTs. Given the interest in Freight Advisory Councils, which were encouraged in the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (P.L. 112-141) (MAP-21) but mandated in the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST), there are many ways to engage the public/private sector in examining the importance of freight project delivery. *Bryson's 10 Step Strategic Planning Process* is a very informative way to formulate strategic planning.¹ The following presents one template.

In 2008, LADOTD organized a freight symposium in partnership with Louisiana Economic Development. The joint focus was to understand how transportation and economic development must operate together to promote Louisiana's businesses. While not a part of a traditional freight advisory council, the blended content sought to outline basic freight transportation issues while also capturing how transportation contributes to the broader decisions facing private sector operations.

LADOTD asked ITTS to assist in organizing the meeting. The meeting was structured with round tables with a facilitator and a recorder at each table. Each facilitator was given specific guidance on what to ask to engage the audience in the discussion. Every table had both a map of the state (where participants could highlight a need or a project) and an easel to capture key points. (Participants had pre-assigned seating to both ensure diversity while helping the sessions start on time.) A Summary Sheet for the reporters was used in helping to capture the discussion topics and for preparing the summary notes presented during lunch.

The following provides some information to help plan either a freight advisory council (FAC) meeting or some other meeting for a single day, with focus on collecting information that will be used to develop a list of strategic needs on a statewide (or regional) basis:

Some other freight resources on public sector partnering with the private sector are:

- *A Guidebook for Engaging the Private Sector in Freight Transportation Planning*
- *NCFRP 1 Public and Private Sector Interdependence in Freight Transportation Markets*
- *NCFRP 6 Impacts of Public Policy on the Freight Transportation System*

¹ John M. Strategic Planning for Public and Nonprofit Organizations: A Guide to Strengthening and Sustaining Organizational Achievement

Breakout Session

Breakout Session Structure

The facilitator will reiterate the purpose of the breakout session, the agenda and materials, and what should or should not be discussed. The facilitator will then introduce the recorder, stating the recorder's function is only to capture the salient points and to assist in preparing a summary of the session. The facilitator will reaffirm that all comments will remain confidential. Each table will be presented with a flip chart and an intermodal state map.

Facilitator's Duty During the Breakout Session

To ensure everyone has a chance to participate, the first task of the facilitator will be to provide for brief introductions and outline their experience in the state. Afterwards, the facilitator will begin focusing on the session topic.

- Keep the dialogue moving forward.
- Paraphrase (repeat back in your own words) to check for the sense of the discussion.
- Help people avoid repeating themselves by summarizing discussion and asking only for comments in areas that haven't been mentioned.
- Ask questions.
- Ask someone else to facilitate if you want to actively participate in the discussion.
- Make sure everyone has a chance to speak, but respect their rights as speakers.
- It's okay for momentary silence. This means they are thinking.
- Make sure people speak only on the matter at hand. If other issues come up, keep track of them on a "parallel agenda" and let people know that the group will return to this agenda before the end of the meeting.
- If you have a quick personal comment that will add to the discussion, please signal to the group that this comment comes from you personally and not as a facilitator.
- *At the end of each session, please thank the participants.*

Recorder's Duty During the Breakout Session

The recorder's duty is to capture the information from the session. You should provide your own laptop to capture any notes made during the presentation. The recorder may ask for clarification, but should otherwise not be involved in the dialog.

Facilitator's Duty After the Breakout Session

During the lunch break, each facilitator and recorder will meet in a separate area to develop a quick summary of the breakout sessions. Each facilitator will bring that report to the facilitator's meeting.

Freight Symposium Preliminary Agenda

8:00 am Registration and Continental Breakfast

8:30 am Welcome/Opening Charge—Governor, State DOT Director, etc.

9:00 am Growing Business in LA: What Do Shippers and Carriers Need?

(This speech was to introduce the topics that were discussed in the first breakout session. It should be 5-10 minutes.)

Breakout Session 1: Business Development Needs – Other than Transportation

10:00 am Break

10:15 am Developing A More Efficient and Reliable Strategic Freight Transportation System—Speaker

(This speech was to introduce the topics that were discussed in the second breakout session. It should be 5-10 minutes.)

Breakout Session 2: Transportation Needs

11:15 am Break

11:30 am Lunch

Recap Chief Facilitator

Next Steps—State DOT Director, etc.

1:00pm Adjourn

Breakout Session Topics

The objective of the breakout sessions is to identify and prioritize the major opportunities, challenges, constraints and actions needed to enhance economic development in the State of Louisiana, by providing a forum in which to identify, discuss and prioritize the perspectives of a diverse group of stakeholders with regard to enhancing Louisiana's freight transportation system.

Breakout Session Questions - These questions only serve as the basis for the brainstorming session. Please do not feel any obligation to limit your comments only to the areas listed below.

Session #1- Doing Business in LA: What Do Shippers and Carriers Need?

- What are the top 3-5 things that you consider to be the impediments to growth in the State?
- Prices (land, utilities, etc.)
- Soft Infrastructure (services, business support, international banking, etc.)
- Policies/Taxes/Laws (transparency, permitting, etc.)
- Market Conditions (access to markets, in-state demand for goods and services, comparison to other states/regions, etc.)
- Insurance/Regulatory actions (environmental or other regulations, flood insurance, liability insurance, compensation, etc.)
- Labor force (education, skill, training, etc.)
- Others?

Session #2 - Developing a More Efficient and Reliable Strategic Freight Transportation System

- What are the top 3-5 things that you consider to be the impediments to growth in the State?
- Prices (rates, costs, taxes, etc.)
- Infrastructure, Access to Terminals (landside access to ports, rail terminals, airports, etc.)
- Infrastructure, Quality of Assets (Roadway conditions, overpasses, congestion, safety, etc.)
- Policies/Taxes/Laws (transparency, permitting, etc.)
- Market Conditions (comparison to other states/regions, globalization, etc.)
- Insurance/Regulatory actions (permitting, operations, etc.)
- Labor force (education, skill, training, etc.)
- Others?

Summary Sheets for Each Table

#1 Proposed Idea:

- Strengths
- Weakness
- Opportunity
- Threat

What is needed to implement the idea?

- Political approvals or action required?
- Funding?
- Institutional Arrangements?
- Regulatory?
- Communication of benefits to all involved?

#2 Proposed Idea:

- Strengths
- Weakness
- Opportunity
- Threat

What is needed to implement the idea?

- Political approvals or action required?
- Funding?
- Institutional Arrangements?
- Regulatory?
- Communication of benefits to all involved?

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