



## TMACOG Freight Advisory Committee Agenda & Notes – November 2018

Wednesday, November 28, 2018, 11:30 a.m.

**Welcome and introductions** – Ray Huber, Committee Chair

**1. Working with the Railroads** – *Problems with railroad cooperation on highway, utility, or other projects, and possible solutions* – Roger Streiffert, TMACOG/All Attendees

The problem of not getting railroad cooperation for highway, utility or other projects, and ideas for addressing this issue was discussed. Below are some key points:

- Problem affects many jurisdictions, as well as ODOT, First Energy, and private sector companies.
- Affected projects include highway or utility projects intersecting railroads, the need to access railroad property, maintaining or improving sidings, and others.
- This problem has delayed and added cost to many projects in the region including large projects like the Anthony Wayne Trail bridge at City Park, Miami St bridge in East Toledo, McCord Rd underpass in Holland, and many more.
- The problem seems more common with the Class I railroads (NS/CSX/CN in this region) than with regional or short line railroads.
- The problems with CSX are more pronounced after the restructuring under Hunter Harrison.
- Those affected find it difficult to reach any local railroad personnel but instead must work through a network of representatives and find it difficult to get any commitment to correct a problem.
- Even when highway or utility work is scheduled well in advance, railroads often do not provide a flagger or otherwise fail to meet the agreement.
- State railroad representatives appear to have little influence on fixing issues at the local or at the statewide level.
- This issue is not just in northwest Ohio but is a statewide and nationwide problem.

After hearing from many attendees about the problems they've encountered, possible ways to address the issue were discussed and a plan will be followed:

- Staff will contact other entities in the region (e.g. – Ohio Turnpike, jurisdictions, private companies) to document problems encountered.
- Staff will contact other MPOs (MORPC, NOACA, OKI, SEMCOG) to find out how widespread this problem is in both Ohio and Michigan, and possibly include OARC (Ohio Association of Regional Councils) in finding a solution.
- TMACOG staff will document individual problems from various entities to have solid examples to back up claims.
- In the documentation we will try to include project delays or cost over-runs because of railroad delays.

- We will also list future projects that could be affected by railroad delays.
- When documentation is complete, staff will contact the ORDC (Matt Dietrich) to discuss the best way to address the issue in a non-confrontational manner.
- We will address this issue as a process and scheduling problem between the railroads and those needing to work with them; and we will try to work with the railroads to correct and improve the process.
- If needed, we could involve our legislators to stress the urgency of this problem or involve the media to bring this issue to the public's attention.
- ORDC Commissioner Tony Reams suggested this issue could also be a topic for discussion at the 2019 Ohio Conference on Freight.

Staff will keep the committee updated on further developments.

**2. TMACOG 2045 Plan 2020 Update – *Plan and schedule for committee input* – Roger Streiffert**

Staff gave a brief update on progress for TMACOG's long range transportation plan update – 2045 Plan 2020 Update. Plan Task Force meetings are being held monthly and Ray Huber, Freight Advisory Committee Chair, is a member of the Task Force committee. Public meetings will be held at the beginning of 2019 at various locations in the region to get public input on transportation issues that need to be addressed in the plan. Most will be held at public libraries, and a schedule of the meetings will be sent to committee members when it is established. Freight Advisory Committee input will begin in early 2019 with a review of the previous plan's projects and policies and will end mid-year with a list of updated and new projects and policies to be submitted to the Task Force. More updates to come as the process continues.

**3. Information from Regional Stakeholders – *Game plan for contacting businesses/facilities* – Roger Streiffert/All Attendees**

The committee did not have time to discuss this topic. The committee does plan to contact businesses to gather information from freight stakeholders regarding their needs for transportation and infrastructure improvements. This information will be important in identifying where improvements are needed and what issues affect our regional businesses and industry. This information can also be a source for projects to be included in the long-range transportation plan. A plan for visits will be put together in early 2019.

**4. Other Announcements or Discussion Topics – All Attendees**

The committee will continue to look at the Tracy Rd corridor in 2019 for what improvements can be made for efficient truck travel.



**Meeting Adjourned**

**Schedule of 2019 Freight Advisory Committee Meetings:**

(schedule may change as necessary)

Wednesday, January 23, 2019, 11:30 a.m.

Wednesday, March 27, 2019, 11:30 a.m.

Wednesday, May 22, 2019, 11:30 a.m.

Wednesday, July 24, 2019, 11:30 a.m.

Wednesday, September 25, 2019, 11:30 a.m.

Wednesday, December 4, 2019, 11:30 a.m. (Revised)