



# the facts: freight transportation



## WISDOT ENVISIONS ...

A freight transportation system that is responsive to global and regional economic needs.

## FREIGHT MODES

### Air

Seven Wisconsin cities have air cargo facilities. In 2007, these airports handled 116 million pounds of air cargo. By 2030, a 124 percent increase in cargo is expected, with airplanes continuing to carry high-value, high-tech goods.

### Rail

Wisconsin's freight rail network includes 3,500 miles of railroad operated by 12 rail operators, of which 477 miles are publicly owned. In 2004, 190 million tons of freight was transported via rail. By 2030, freight rail shipping is expected to grow 60 percent.

### Water

The state has six gateway ports: Milwaukee, Green Bay, Marinette, Duluth-Superior, La Crosse and Prairie du Chien. Great Lakes

barges or freighters will continue to carry bulk products, including wind turbine parts. Other cargo passing through Wisconsin's ports includes metallic ore such as taconite bound for the steel industry, coal for power plants, heavy machinery, salt and asphalt for roads, and concrete for the construction industry. Wisconsin's ports annually handle 40 million tons of cargo valued at about \$7 billion.

### Truck

In 2006, truck traffic accounted for 6.4 billion vehicle miles traveled in Wisconsin. By 2030, truck traffic is forecast to increase 64 percent, twice as fast as total highway traffic growth. In 2035, truck freight will account for 68 percent of all freight shipments measured by weight, and 76 percent of all freight shipments measured by value.

## Freight statistics

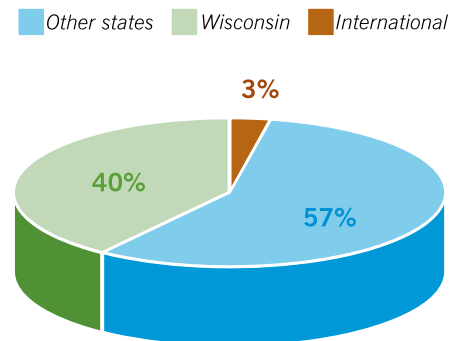
Wisconsin's businesses ship and receive goods both domestically and internationally via air, rail, truck and water. In 2002:

- » 528 million tons valued at more than \$433 billion moved within, through and to Wisconsin
- » 40 percent shipped entirely within Wisconsin's borders
- » 57 percent moved between Wisconsin and other U.S. states
- » 3 percent shipped internationally



More than \$433 billion worth of freight was shipped to and from Wisconsin in 2002.

## Destinations of freight shipments from Wisconsin businesses (2002)





Wisconsin's freight rail network includes 3,500 miles of railroad operated by 12 freight rail operators, of which approximately 470 miles are owned by WisDOT and privately maintained and operated.

## FREIGHT CHALLENGES

Rapidly changing international shipping patterns and rising fuel prices may affect Wisconsin freight transportation in the coming years.

### Air

- Limited air freight movement in Minnesota and congestion at Chicago's airports will impact Wisconsin's transportation system

### Rail

- Class I railroads may decide to reduce or cease service on low volume routes
- Some of Wisconsin's rail lines cannot accommodate the new industry standards for heavier freight cars
- Increased freight movement nationally and internationally will put greater pressure on Wisconsin's rail infrastructure

### Water

- An antiquated lock and dam system, lack of dredging, and low

water levels on the Great Lakes impacts freight movement by ship

- Regulatory environment is antiquated
- Border-crossings are inefficient
- Well-integrated water systems with road and rail systems are lacking

### Truck

- Truck traffic, sizes and weights are expected to grow significantly by 2030
- Roadways are not designed to handle the number and size of trucks using them, which may lead to accelerated infrastructure deterioration and expanded maintenance and preservation needs

## THE FUTURE OF FREIGHT

The state's freight shipments are expected to double by 2035. A large portion of this growth will originate overseas. By 2035, Wisconsin is expected to import and export 947 million tons of goods – valued at \$977 billion.

In 2035, trucking is expected to account for 68 percent of all freight shipments in Wisconsin. Business trends such as just-in-time delivery, e-commerce, the strategic siting of retail distribution centers and rising fuel costs, as well as the freight policy decisions of neighboring states will impact the level of freight moving through Wisconsin.

Truck and rail shipping is increasingly focused around major intermodal facilities in Chicago and the Twin Cities. This means locating an intermodal facility in Wisconsin is not economically sustainable at this time.

Overhead freight shipping – neither beginning or ending in Wisconsin – is expected to grow through 2030 and take up capacity on Wisconsin's transportation system.

As part of *Connections 2030*, freight transportation policies will be integrated into planning and investment decision-making processes.

## Freight focus

To improve WisDOT's understanding of freight movements and the challenges facing freight transportation in Wisconsin, the department will dedicate staff and resources to establish a freight focus.

By implementing an agency freight focus, WisDOT will support the state's competitive efforts within regional, national and global markets, and strategically place Wisconsin at a competitive advantage in applying for federal funding for freight-related projects that address congestion.

A freight focus will allow WisDOT to:

- > Analyze Wisconsin's freight markets and their role in the regional, national and international economy
- > Measure the economic impact of freight on the transportation network
- > Inform the public and decision-makers on freight issues
- > Assess the impact of federal and state policies on freight transportation

## CONNECTIONS 2030 ADDRESSES FREIGHT CHALLENGES

*Connections 2030* addresses freight-related challenges through planning, coordination and funding.

### Planning

- Conduct an all-mode freight study to evaluate the transportation system in Wisconsin as part of a national freight network

The study will:

- » Identify important state, national and international freight corridors in Wisconsin
- » Identify opportunities to improve intermodal shipping in the state
- » Seek innovative ways to maintain an all-mode freight network and improve efficiencies among modes to facilitate freight movement

- Continue collaborative regional freight research efforts with other Midwest states through various forums (for example, the Mississippi Valley Freight Coalition, National Center for Freight & Infrastructure Research & Education)

### Coordination

- Partner with stakeholders to ensure that freight movements are safe and reliable and have positive impacts on communities and the environment
- Continue to work closely with partner agencies, jurisdictions, states, stakeholders and others to provide seamless connections between transportation modes
- Facilitate and advocate for freight between public and private interest groups

### Funding

- Continue to administer grant and loan programs aimed at expanding transportation infrastructure for all modes
- Investigate new policies and financing strategies to help improve freight service
- Prioritize investments and target improvements to meet infrastructure needs while supporting economic growth



*WisDOT will focus its efforts on building and maintaining relationships with the freight industry to better understand needs, markets and issues.*



## MODE-SPECIFIC FREIGHT RECOMMENDATIONS

### Air

- Target federal and state funding to increase the competitiveness of Wisconsin airports
- Construct longer runways and install navigational systems to accommodate jets
- Update the *State Airport System Plan* to determine airport needs through 2030

### Rail

- Establish a department freight focus to:
  - » Facilitate relationships
  - » Address rail abandonments and strengthen rail markets
  - » Monitor market demands
  - » Develop outreach strategies
- Work with railroads to ensure that appropriate rail service is provided to shippers statewide
- Acquire rail lines into public ownership, when appropriate, to preserve essential railroad service
- Support increased investments in track and bridge upgrades to meet changing industry standards
- Work with stakeholders to study the economic impacts of a publicly owned rail system
- Continue to preserve abandoned rail

corridors for future transportation uses

- Support the creation of rail transit commissions to promote rail service preservation in northern Wisconsin

### Water

- Advocate for federal funding of navigation and environmental improvements for the Upper Mississippi River-Illinois River Waterway, and improvements to the Soo Lock system
- Continue to help communities and businesses make land- and water-side harbor improvements through the Harbor Assistance Program and the Transportation Economic Assistance program
- Encourage comprehensive harbor and waterfront land use planning
- Analyze waterborne freight, review and develop forecasts and identify opportunities to strengthen this mode as part of Wisconsin's transportation system
- Address roadway issues at ports

### Truck

- Work with stakeholders and local governments to evaluate the issues and proposed actions regarding the transport of oversize and overweight loads on Wisconsin's roads and highways



*WisDOT will analyze waterborne freight, review and develop forecasts and identify opportunities to strengthen this mode.*

- Partner with local governments to manage and invest in the local road and bridge network
- Work with local governments and stakeholders to address high-cost system needs
- Complete all enumerated Major Highway Development Program projects and approved corridors for study
- Implement the *Corridors 2030* system to maintain Wisconsin's high-quality network and connect major cities and economic centers
- Use technology and data to manage traffic flow, detect and respond to incidents, and improve the system's reliability

## ABOUT CONNECTIONS 2030

*Connections 2030* is Wisconsin's long-range statewide multimodal plan. It was developed to help the state maintain and enhance its transportation system to meet the needs of the 21st century and fulfill the state's transportation vision:

*An integrated multimodal transportation system that maximizes the safe and efficient movement of people and products throughout the state, enhancing economic productivity and the quality of Wisconsin's communities while minimizing impacts to the natural environment.*

For more information about *Connections 2030*, visit the plan Web site at [www.wiconnections2030.gov](http://www.wiconnections2030.gov).

