



Freight Megaregional Planning and Financial Policy (#CM2-48)

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MEGAREGIONAL FREIGHT FINANCIAL POLICY AND PLANNING

There are different transportation funding mechanisms available, such as freight corridor tolling, taxes on vehicle-miles travelled (VMT), and the motor fuel tax. The last of these is by far the most prevalent, but current research within CM² (Harrison & Loftus-Otway, not yet published) is establishing that fuel-tax revenue per freight VMT is declining. Part of this decline is linked to inflation, and part is linked to improvements in truck fuel economy, similar to the improvements in passenger fuel economy.

This research project examines the role of freight planning at the megaregion level. It builds on prior research within the UTC, which established how important megaregions are in inducing freight trips (Steiner, Yaro, & Zhang, not yet published). This project will look at how that influence can be leveraged to ensure state transportation financing remains stable, and the opportunities that exist in state and regional freight planning. By examining freight infrastructure funding from the megaregion perspective, this project will contribute to the body of knowledge necessary to protect, preserve, and expand freight infrastructure within megaregions.

This project will adapt existing travel demand models to provide insights into the revenue generated from various transportation funding mechanisms. Adapting existing models will make the procedure more practical, and create a methodology that can be applied to megaregions that this project does not initially consider. Having a model capable of addressing questions related to transportation financing issues at the megaregion scale will provide a valuable research tool for other projects. By using a megaregion perspective, this project will create a planning tool relevant for regional economic analysis.



Union Pacific Train Daily Volumes, 2003

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