

Goods Movement Committee Assessment

Kansas City Regional Freight
Study

CONNECTED FREIGHT KC 2050

A Plan in Action



Prepared for:

Mid-America Regional Council

In coordination with

**Lawrence-Douglas County
Metropolitan Planning
Organization**

And

**Pioneer Trails Regional Planning
Commission**



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Acronyms and Abbreviations

CID	Community Improvement District
DOT	Department of Transportation
GMC	Goods Movement Committee
LDCMPO	Lawrence-Douglas County Metropolitan Planning Organization
MARC	Mid-America Regional Planning Council
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization
PTRPC	Pioneer Trails Regional Planning Commission
SPPC	Sustainable Places Policy Committee
TTPC	Total Transportation Planning Committee

1. Introduction

1.1. Overview

One objective of the Connected Freight KC 2050 Plan is to identify strategies that strengthen regional advocacy for freight by increasing and retaining membership in the Goods Movement Committee (GMC). The GMC acts as an advisory body to the Mid-America Regional Council's Total Transportation Planning Committee (TPPC) that involves addressing freight project priorities and policy considerations that affect the movement of freight within the metropolitan area.

1.2. Planning Considerations

Federal laws currently require metropolitan planning organizations (MPO) to develop transportation plans that enhance the safety and efficiency of freight by improving accessibility and mobility across the transportation system. The Connected Freight KC 2050 Plan will help to achieve that requirement by establishing a new vision, purpose, and goals for the GMC fulfilling the MARC's requirement to support public-private partnerships in the planning process. This includes strategies to integrate freight principles into the long-range planning process, project selection criteria, establishing representation on the MARC TPPC, and creating a forum to assist both urban and rural stakeholders in making sustainable and economically beneficial freight decisions that can quickly adapt to growing industries in the region. One of the main goals of the GMC will be to foster public-private partnerships by involving private businesses in freight planning to leverage resources, create innovative ideas, and promote economic development. Some of these strategies will also focus on identifying activities needed to maintain long-term interest in the committee.

1.3. Interagency Policy Assessment

To determine strategies for the GMC's growth in membership and the enhancement of freight planning within the region, an evaluation of policies from other committees was conducted to identify alignments and opportunities for coordination with the GMC's policies and focus areas. In reviewing policies and focus areas for MARC's committees, it was determined that several key focus areas of the Sustainable Places Policy Committee (SPPC) align closely with the objectives and activities of the GMC. These areas include promoting sustainable development, enhancing transportation efficiency, fostering economic growth, and ensuring environmental conservation. By analyzing the GMC's focus on freight movement with the SPPC's broader sustainable development goals, it laid bare the opportunity to create a more cohesive and comprehensive approach to regional planning.

This analysis identified a more straightforward approach to enable discussions on public-private partnerships, infrastructure advancements, regulatory adherence, and community effects,

which enhances the region's ability to respond to changing requirements and opportunities as follows:

- **Corridors:** The GMC can provide insights into vibrant corridor activities and evolving needs. Representatives from business organizations or Community Improvement Districts (CID) can contribute valuable perspectives on how to create and maintain dynamic and efficient corridors that support both freight movement and sustainable development. This will involve addressing issues related to infrastructure, transportation efficiency, and community impact, ensuring corridors remain vibrant and well-integrated into the regional development plans.
- **Department of Transportation:** The GMC can offer insights into regional and state priorities, alongside advisory roles for SPPC regulatory requirements. A representative from each state Department of Transportation (DOT) will serve on the committee, ensuring that transportation initiatives are aligned with sustainable practices and overarching regional goals. These representatives will bring expertise in transportation planning, regulatory compliance, and strategic development, fostering a collaborative approach to regional transportation challenges.
- **Economic Development:** The GMC can contribute valuable perspectives on the local market and its realities. Representatives from economic development agencies, local economic development departments, or local chambers of commerce can provide essential insights into how freight movement supports economic growth and development, and how sustainable practices can be integrated into these efforts. This collaboration will help identify opportunities for economic expansion, investment, and job creation, aligning freight movement with the broader economic objectives of the region.
- **Elected Officials:** The GMC can provide crucial insights into the political realities of the region. An elected official from each state will serve as co-chairs of the committee, ensuring that policy decisions reflect the needs and concerns of the community, and promoting collaboration between various levels of government. These officials will play a key role in bridging the gap between public policy and practical implementation, advocating for policies that support sustainable development and efficient freight movement.
- **Environment:** The GMC can address the natural environment, local conditions, and needs. Representatives from local sustainability staff, local conservation professionals, or other natural resource professionals can offer expertise on how to balance freight movement with environmental conservation, ensuring that projects are undertaken with consideration for their ecological impact. This type of collaboration is a major benefit of having these members working directly together. This will involve integrating environmental impact assessments, conservation strategies, and sustainable practices

into freight movement projects, promoting a harmonious relationship between development and nature.

- **Planning Professionals:** The GMC can offer insights into local planning and zoning. Representatives from local municipalities can provide detailed knowledge about planning regulations and zoning requirements, helping to ensure that freight projects are designed and executed in ways that support sustainable land use and community development. This collaboration will facilitate the alignment of freight movement with local planning objectives, ensuring projects adhere to zoning laws, land use policies, and community development goals.
- **Housing:** The GMC can provide valuable information regarding the local housing market for the freight workforce. By considering the impacts of commercial and industrial jobs on housing, representatives can help to develop strategies that support affordable housing and sustainable development. This will involve assessing the impact of freight corridors on residential areas, identifying opportunities for mixed-use development, and promoting housing policies that align with sustainable development principles.

2. Goods Movement Committee Recommendations

2.1. Sustainable Places Policy Committee Integration

To establish better coordination between freight project priorities and regional sustainable development strategies, it is recommended that the GMC integrate its work with the SPPC. This will align the GMC's efforts with SPPC's guiding principles, thereby enhancing the overall effectiveness of regional planning and development activities.

By integrating the GMC's efforts into the SPPC's work plan, MARC can foster public-private collaborations, enhance public outreach, and streamline the efforts of stakeholders involved in goods movement. This alignment will lead to more cohesive and comprehensive planning that supports transportation, balanced decision-making, environment, and conservation principles, benefiting the Kansas City region and its residents.

2.2. Membership Expansion

Based on the current planning considerations, the vision of the GMC will be to promote policies, actions, and programs that incorporate local, regional, statewide, and national freight planning processes into an overall regional freight planning framework.

Expanding the membership to include the Lawrence-Douglas County MPO (LDCMPO) and Pioneer Trails Regional Planning Commission (PTRPC) will significantly enhance the GMC's ability to meet agency requirements while broadening its strategic vision. The inclusion of these regional planning organizations will bring diverse expertise and localized insights to the table,

enriching the committee's understanding of transportation, land use, and increase opportunities for regional funding initiatives. It is also advisable that local chambers of commerce and economic development organizations be given a membership seat.

This collaboration fosters a more comprehensive approach to aligning freight movement with sustainable development objectives, ensuring that policies and initiatives address the unique needs and priorities of all communities within the region. By integrating these key stakeholders, the GMC can create more inclusive and forward-thinking strategies, ultimately strengthening the region's economic growth, environmental stewardship, and equitable development. The unified approach will ensure that freight movement is seamlessly integrated into the broader regional development strategy, promoting sustainable growth, economic vitality, and environmental stewardship.