

**New Orleans Regional Planning Commission Freight Roundtable
October 22, 2014 - 8:30 to 10:00 a.m.
Regional Transportation Management Center
10 Veterans Blvd.
New Orleans, LA 70124**

Attendees

Karen Parsons, RPC
Walter Brooks, RPC
Courtney Young, RPC
Lynn Dupont, RPC
Clare Brown, RPC (Speaker)
Chris LaBorde, RPC
Jeff Roesel, RPC
Rebecca Otte, RPC
Scott Boyle, LaDOTD
Chris Morvant, LaDOTD
Ennis Johnson, LaDOTD
Dean Goodell, LaDOTD
Jim Murphy, MARAD
Cathy Nagin, New Orleans Cold Storage
Roy Quezaire, Port of South Louisiana
Joe Accardo, Jr., Ports Association of Louisiana
Pat Gallwey, Port of New Orleans
Jim Amdal, University of New Orleans Transportation Institute
Cheyenne Ellis, New Orleans Business Alliance
Mike Coatney, Acme Truck
Glen Guillot, Triple G Express/LMTA
Dave Lagasse, TCI
Jeanine Seube, Boasso America
Cathy Gautreaux, Louisiana Motor Transport Association
Kristi App, J.W. Allen/WTCTC
Michael Connelly, CSX Intermodal Transportation
French Thompson, BNSF
Bob Bach, New Orleans Gulf Coast Railway
Kevin Keller, HDR
Richard Metcalf, LA Mid-Continent Oil and Gas Association
John T. Hyatt, The Irwin Brown Co.
Rick Donnelly, Parsons-Brinkerhoff (Speaker)
Bruce Lambert, ITTS

Karen Parsons began the Freight Roundtable by welcoming everyone and brief introductions were made. The central theme for this meeting was trucking and specifically the addition of a truck modeling component in the Transportation Demand Model which the RPC uses to forecast vehicle movements.

Jeff Roesel, RPC Deputy Director gave brief introduction to his work to model the New Orleans regional transportation network, discussing the challenges and explaining RPC sought the addition of a truck model component to create a more refined picture of freight movements over the highway system. He stressed that all modeling results are imprecise but are an informed assessment based on the best sources available.

Rick Connelly, Senior Transport Modeler for Parsons Brinkerhoff Inc. was the featured speaker. His firm completed the truck model update for the RPC. He provided an overview of how freight modeling is quite different from passenger modeling and what the inputs are and what the outputs said. He explained that passenger modeling is predictable because person trips occur regularly and are linear in nature (basically home, work, lunch, work, errands and back home) whereas freight movements tend to change based on the financial networks, supply chain logistics and the physical network. They are influenced by numerous factors that often vary. Additionally, 50 to 75% of freight goes to a distribution center to be either consolidated or broken down before reaching consumers making predictions more complex. Mr. Connelly noted there are limitations in accounting for the variability of cost associated with inventory, warehousing and transport. Freight transport is dependent on shipment size, distance and services.

Passenger models are largely based on employment and census data. To build a regional freight model it takes a combination of more data sources. These include truck counts, the use of Freight Analysis Framework 3 data compiled by USDOT, census data, economic data, foreign trade statistics, commodity flow data, establishment and carrier surveys and location of intermodal terminals and large businesses. Model Outputs showed a tripling of exports over the next 40 years from the New Orleans region. There were numerous questions about charts covering growth and economic trends by sector.

After the presentation there was a question about the impact of fracking on exports and whether that was accounted for in the model. The answer was yes. Growth in chemical traffic was also of concern along the Mississippi River. RPC Executive Director Walter Brooks noted that the RPC is looking at a potential alternate highway route in this corridor. There was a comment about new crane equipment and how it would increase traffic.

Clare Brown, RPC Data Manager, gave a presentation on the 2012 commercial vehicle truck crashes drawn from data derived from police crash reports. She created maps geocoding the location and frequency of the incidents and numerous statistics. The number of fatal or severe injuries was very low compared to all crashes and Cathy Gautreaux noted insurance companies try to exclude coverage in Orleans and Jefferson due to overall high crash rates but this truck only information may have a positive influence.

Glen Guillot noted there is a large problem with I-10 and US90B congestion near the Port of New Orleans during a.m. and p.m. peak hour that reduces profitability for motor carriers and is having a severely damaging effect on trucking companies but also making the Port less competitive. Several ideas were suggested to alleviate congestion: open up a new truck route along Leak Avenue for east-west movements and extend gate hours at the Port of New Orleans. He said Long Beach now charges more during the day than at night to reduce peak hour congestion while extending gate hours. Pat Gallwey noted that the cost of labor is the determining factor rather than gate hours. Glen said his shippers often are willing to pay a higher price for timely pick up or delivery so this problem should be confronted. He stressed it is an urgent concern because it is undermining truck availability while a steady growth in cargo is forecast.

After a lively discussion the group was amenable to meeting once a quarter to address freight issues of concern. The next meeting will focus on congestion and Port hours of operation. The group wanted to hear from terminal operators at the next meeting.

Minutes by Karen Parsons and Courtney Young