The Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Council of Governments (CWCOG) is in the final stretch of updating our long-range transportation plan. This plan covers 5 counties in Southwest Washington (Cowlitz, Grays Harbor, Lewis, Pacific, Wahkiakum) and the City of Rainier, Oregon.

This transportation plan will be a guide for future transportation investments to help move our region forward. Stakeholder involvement has been a key part of the planning process including interviews last year with private/public freight stakeholders. To close the loop from these interviews we wanted to report back on interview highlights. The interviews asked about factors and challenges impacting business operations, as well as top freight priorities/needs.

**Factors/Challenges Impacting Business Operations & Top Freight Priorities/Needs**

Top factors and challenges impacting business operations.

- Cost of fuel
- Truck Insurance
- Employee Health Insurance
- Government Regulations
- Availability of Drivers and Parts
- Fleet Maintenance

The top priorities for improving freight mobility in the region in the next **five years**.

- Equipment Costs
- Other factors and challenges mentioned include congestion; rail capacity; truck restrictions (at ports); inadequately-sized roundabouts; materials cost inflation; longshore labor issues; not enough truck parking; and highway/road conditions.

The top priorities for improving freight mobility in the next **ten-plus years**.

- Infrastructure Maintenance and Expansion
- Improving Rail Movement
- Freight Connectivity Across State Lines
- Autonomous Trucks
- Controlling Emissions on a Realistic Timeline

Did we capture the top freight industry business operations factors/challenges, and freight priorities accurately? **Please respond to the survey (link below) to let us know.**

**Freight Strategies**

A final step in preparing the updated transportation plan is updating our long-range freight strategies based on previous outreach efforts (interviews and meetings). **We have developed a revised set of freight long-range strategies and need your help to make sure they are the right ones for our region.**

---

**We need your input to complete the Regional Transportation Plan!**

---

**Please use this link to complete a short survey.**

[https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CWCOGFreight](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CWCOGFreight)
**Washington State Freight Systems Plan**

As the year 2023 began the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) had a new statewide Freight System Plan. This new Freight System Plan includes “freight transportation trends, issues, and needs to inform freight policy and guide investment decisions.”

This statewide plan provides links to many supporting materials and tools. A couple of useful tools or information available in this plan are:

1. An interactive, online map illustrating supply chains in Washington State; and
2. A visualization dashboard where values, tonnage, commodity, and mode of freight flows can be viewed by county or region of Washington; and
3. A truck parking assessment was completed. This assessment compiled an inventory of truck parking supply. It also identified where the locations of undesignated truck parking are in the state.

For more information and to review the 2022 Freight System Plan, click or follow this link (https://wsdot.wa.gov/construction-planning/statewide-plans/freight-rail-plans/freight-system-plan).

**Title VI**

The CWCOG operates in accordance with all applicable federal and state laws, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, age or disability. Those persons with limited English Proficiency may request language assistance through oral, visual, and/or written translation at no cost to the individual. For assistance or questions regarding the CWCOG’s Title VI or Limited English Proficiency policies or to file a complaint, please contact the Agency’s Title VI Coordinator at (360) 577-3041.

---

**Next Edition**

The CWCOG is planning to publish the next edition of *Freight News & Notes* in Winter 2024. The Annual Port Successes article will be returning in the next edition so be on the lookout for it!

**Publications/Resources**

Check out the CWCOG website for the current 2045 Regional Transportation Plan, and other transportation-related plans.

Please refer people interested in receiving this newsletter, or other freight information, to www.cwcog.org/contact/ to request to be added to the CWCOG list.

---

**Freight Fact**

According to the US Bureau of Transportation Statistics, the total number of people nationally employed in truck transportation for each month June - December 2022 was at least 1.6 million. Going back to January 2005 (earliest month data was available), the second half of 2022 had the highest employment in trucking nationally.