

SPS-08: Freight and Goods Access and Mobility

State

1-15 points

Goal: Implement a transportation plan that meets freight access and mobility needs while also supporting triple bottom line sustainability principles.

Sustainability Linkage

Freight and goods movement planning benefits all of the triple bottom line principles by supporting economic prosperity through improved freight efficiency and reliability, reducing fuel consumption and related emissions, and reducing adverse impacts of freight on communities.



Background and Scoring Requirements

Background

This criterion is related to SPS-05: Access and Affordability. This criterion includes a focus on access for freight and goods, while SPS-05 includes a focus on access for people.

For the purposes of this criterion, the key terms are defined as follows:

- **“Engage”** means to successfully involve and interact with an institution or stakeholder.
- **“Institutional mechanisms”** refers to an agreed-upon, two-way communication process for sharing information and collecting feedback.
- **“Planning Process”** is a series of steps taken early in a project life cycle or decision-making process to define solutions for an issue or multiple issues (common examples include system-level plans and policies, long-range transportation plans, statewide plans, corridor plans, facility plans, area plans). A planning process typically contains the following steps: establish the plan purpose; develop goals, objectives, evaluation criteria, and performance measures and targets; analyze existing conditions; determine needs (based on scenarios or trends); develop and evaluate options; set priorities; develop a funding program; develop the plan; implement and monitor effectiveness of the plan.
- **“Regularly”** means early, often, and on an on-going basis throughout the planning process.
- **Freight stakeholders** include shippers, carriers, third party logistics providers, facility operators, governments, universities and communities near freight facilities.

Sustainable Freight System

A more sustainable freight system provides convenient access to goods and markets, allows for multiple freight modes, reduces congestion on roadways, and reduces freight inefficiencies and adverse impacts on communities (noise, emissions, vibrations, etc.).

Examples of goods movement issues that may be considered in a state transportation planning context are described below:

- **Economic sector analysis:** States may review different economic sectors important to the state and the transportation routes and modes critical for maximizing efficiencies or other state goals, and identify investment priorities based on those routes and modes. For example, examination of a specific agricultural

sector would review the access of farmers to food/product markets. If the current transportation system provides inferior access to markets from specific farming regions in the state, The State DOT could collect data and perform a planning-level accessibility analysis. The analysis would then help the State identify and program specific improvements to enhance access to these areas. This type of analysis could be done for any economic sector important to the state.

- **Freight Mobility Study:** A State may conduct a comprehensive, systems-level mobility study specifically addressing freight movement needs, issues, and potential solutions within a state or a region of the state (can be urban or rural). The State identifies key freight bottlenecks and examines quality of truck access to intermodal terminals, and uses data and tools to evaluate alternative solutions. The State engages freight and other stakeholders throughout the study.
- **Reliability Analysis:** A State may conduct an analysis that examines key routes to understand where there are issues with travel time reliability, and during what time periods (peak hour, mid-day, etc.) these issues occur. Solutions could then be focused on the most critical locations.

Mobility and Access

Mobility and access are both important for freight movement. Mobility relates to the ability and efficiency of moving goods from Point A to Point B. Access relates to the ability and ease of transferring goods (e.g. ability and ease of getting to a Port; ability and ease for producers to access transport opportunities for their goods).

Scoring Requirements

To achieve points, the agency must demonstrate that it has evaluated or improved freight mobility, reliability, and/or intermodal freight connections. Agencies can earn points according to the following; each of the scoring options is independent and can be achieved without prerequisites:

Requirement SPS-08.1

1-2 points. Develop Goals and Objectives

Scoring for this requirement is based on the following, cumulative requirements:

- **Requirement SPS-08.1a**

1 points. Consider Freight Access Goals

The agency includes in the LRTP or other appropriate plan (e.g. a freight rail plan) specific goals for maintaining and improving freight connectivity between modes and to freight generators for both inter- and intra-city freight, in ways that enhance sustainability (e.g., improve safety and fuel economy and/or reduce noise and emissions). Examples include systematic elimination of bottlenecks through infrastructure investments, using technology to ease port access, and anti-idling goals.

- **Requirement SPS-08.1b**

1 points. Consider Freight Mobility Goals

The agency considers multimodal freight mobility needs (aviation, marine, rail, interstate, pipeline, and intermodal) in the planning process. Freight mobility goals (such as freight reliability) and evaluation criteria are included in project prioritization and selection for the development of the STIP or Statewide Long Range Plan.

Requirement SPS-08.2

2-3 points. Engage Stakeholders

Scoring for this requirement is based on the following, cumulative requirements. The first requirement must be accomplished to earn the second.

- **Requirement SPS-08.2a**

2 points. Engage a Wide Variety of Stakeholders

The agency regularly engages a variety of freight stakeholders in creating plans and programs. This helps to ensure the transportation system supports freight movement and sustainable economic activity as appropriate. The State would develop a stakeholder involvement plan.

- **Requirement SPS-08.2b**

1 additional point. Utilize Institutional Mechanisms

The agency utilizes institutional mechanisms to facilitate the engagement. Examples of institutional mechanisms include freight representatives serving on a decision-making board or advisory committee. The decision-makers may use freight model data or use freight mobility or access as a criterion for solution prioritization in a planning process.

Requirement SPS-08.3

2 or 4 points. Develop Performance Measures and Monitor Progress

Scoring for this requirement is based on the following, cumulative requirements:

- **Requirement SPS-08.3a**

2 points. Include Freight Access Performance Measures

The agency includes and monitors sustainability-related freight access performance measures in planning documents (e.g. intermodal connections or linkages to freight generators).

- **Requirement SPS-08.3b**

2 points. Include Freight Mobility Performance Measures

The agency includes and monitors sustainability-related freight mobility performance measures (e.g. truck delay, travel time reliability, other national or state freight goals) in planning documents. Other examples of performance measures can be found in NCHRP [*Report 708: A Guidebook for Sustainability Performance Measurement for Transportation Agencies*](#)¹.

Requirement SPS-08.4

2-6 points. Demonstrate Sustainable Outcomes/Implementation

Scoring for this requirement is based on the following, cumulative requirements:

- **Requirement SPS-08.4a**

2 points. Freight Access - Provide for Planning, Evaluating, Maintaining, and Improving Intermodal Freight Connections and Linkages to Freight Generators

Intermodal freight connectors are the public roads leading to major intermodal terminals. Although they account for less than 1 percent of National Highway System mileage, they are key conduits for the timely and reliable delivery of goods. The agency provides for planning, evaluating, maintaining, and improving intermodal freight connectors and linkages to freight generators at all levels (interstate, state, and local). Measures and criteria to encourage coordination among the freight modes (e.g., rail, port, airport, and others) in ways that enhance sustainability are included.

- **Requirement SPS-08.4b**

2 points. Provide for Planning, Evaluating, Maintaining and Improving Freight Mobility

Freight mobility can be measured in a variety of ways, including reliability, travel time, through-put or volumes. The agency provides for planning, evaluating, maintaining and enhancing freight mobility utilizing appropriate quantitative measures and monitoring for freight modes.

- **Requirement SPS-08.4c**

2 points. Monitor Progress and Demonstrate Sustainable Outcomes

Monitor progress towards goals for at least one year after goal establishment using the performance measures established in SPR-08.3a and SPR-08.3b and show measurable advancement towards stated goals.

Resources

The following resources are referenced in this criterion and consolidated here:

1. NCHRP, *Report 708: A Guidebook for Sustainability Performance Measurement for Transportation Agencies* at http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/nchrp/nchrp_rpt_708.pdf

Scoring Sources

The program is considered to have met this criterion if the requirements above can be reasonably substantiated through the existence of one or more of the following documentation sources (or equal where not available):

1. A stakeholder involvement/public involvement plan or a similar description of the efforts used to engage the freight community in creating regional transportation plans and programs.
2. Documentation of freight mobility goals, objectives, and policies.
3. A freight section in plans (or a freight plan) that includes freight performance measures and implementation strategies/actions.
4. Plan and program recommendations that address sustainable freight and goods movement best practices.