



# CONNECTING COOK COUNTY FREIGHT PLAN

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The Cook County Department of Transportation and Highways (DOTH) is in the final stages of producing the County's first-ever Freight Plan, which is a key recommendation of the County's Long Range Transportation Plan, *Connecting Cook County*. This newsletter highlights recent activities, analysis, and stakeholder input which has informed the Freight Plan and provides an overview of the draft recommendations. The County is excited to put the finishing touches on the Plan, which is expected to be released later this summer, and begin working with federal, state, regional, and local partners to implement recommendations.



## Technical Analysis Paves the Way

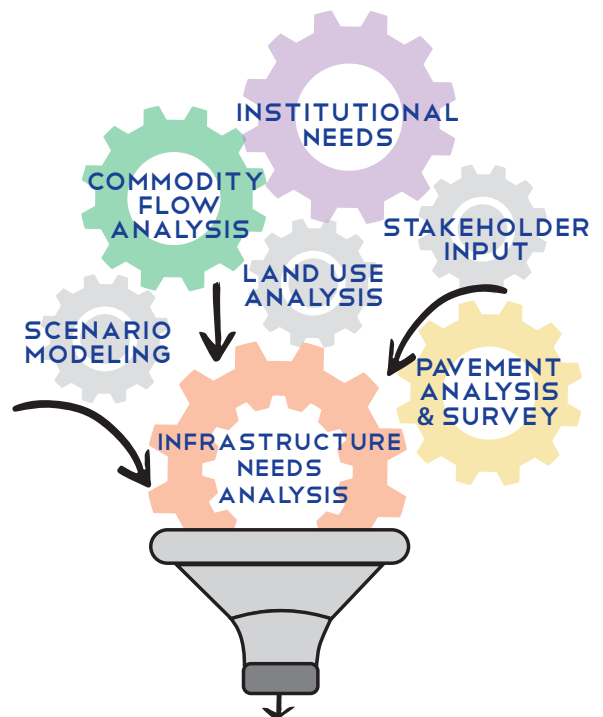
The project team has been researching, analyzing, and synthesizing data to understand freight system issues and needs in the County. These efforts, along with input from the Advisory Committee and other stakeholders, informed the needs and recommendations that will be included in the final Freight Plan. These studies included an analysis of what, where, and how goods are moving throughout the County as well as land use opportunities that would support freight movement. Further analysis documented regulatory and institutional barriers within the freight industry as well as funding and financing options for freight improvements. County staff also conducted a rigorous pavement analysis and field survey of key truck corridors to identify priority locations for improvements.



## Final Advisory Committee Meeting

DOTH hosted the third and final Advisory Committee meeting on May 22, 2018. The Advisory Committee received an overview of findings from technical studies, discussed the final Freight Plan elements, reviewed draft recommendations, and provided feedback. Members supported the County's freight planning efforts and pledged support for future partnerships to move projects forward.

DOTH would like to thank the Advisory Committee members for their participation. Their knowledge of freight issues and guidance throughout this process is important to the Plan and supports the County's role as a national freight leader.



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## Draft Recommendations

The Cook County Freight Plan will provide a deeper look into the freight system, while making the case for investment in infrastructure and development of freight-related policies that will ensure efficient and effective movement of freight within the County and ultimately support economic growth in the nation's busiest freight hub. The Freight Plan will also include policy, programming, and project recommendations. These draft recommendations generally fall into four main categories, summarized below, and align with Cook County's mission to support a strong and robust freight transportation network.



### Leadership

The County will take a leadership role in advocating for freight policy priorities by coordinating and leading freight issues that cross municipal borders. This is especially important for suburban municipalities, as much of the burden of the County's freight network is shouldered by local municipalities.



### Truck Routing, Infrastructure, and Permitting

The County will advance a connected truck route network, streamlined permitting for oversize/overweight trucks, and truck parking initiatives. Furthermore, the County will invest in roadway infrastructure to support efficient freight movement.



### Rail Improvements

The County will support freight rail improvements including completion of the CREATE Program, freight facility improvements, and grade separations.



### Coordinated Community and Economic Development

DOTH will actively coordinate with other County agencies to support economic development and workforce initiatives that support the freight cluster, and community development.



## Looking Ahead

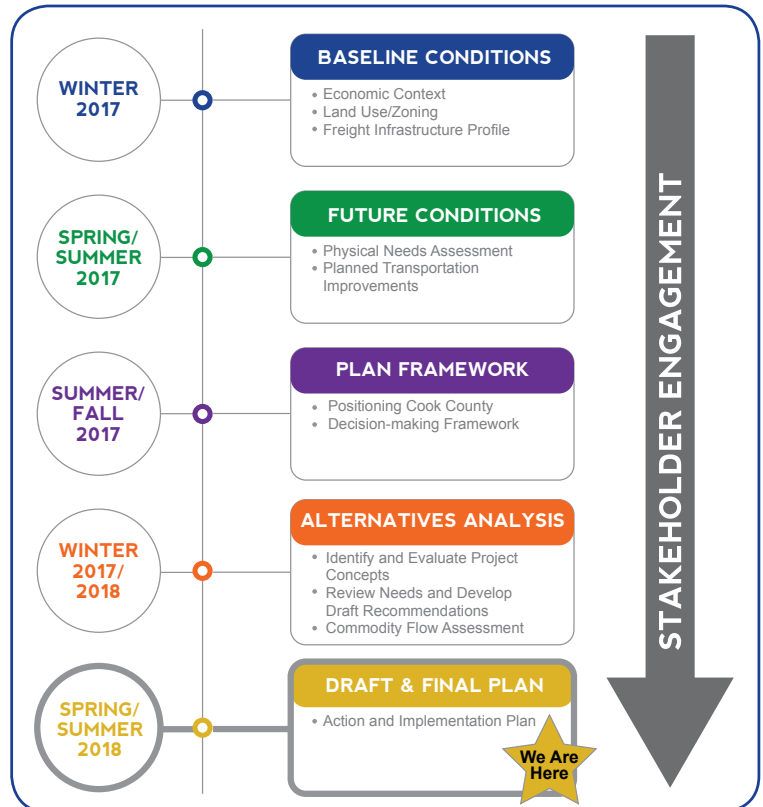
In the coming months, DOTH will refine the draft Plan, which is expected to be presented to the Cook County Board for consideration this fall. Stakeholders will be notified of the draft Plan. A copy of the final Freight Plan will be posted on [ConnectingCookCounty.org](http://ConnectingCookCounty.org).



## Freight Planning in Action

DOTH is taking an active role in advancing freight projects throughout the County. As part of the 2018 Invest in Cook grant program, the County is reviewing funding applications from municipalities and organizations, including a number of freight-related projects. The County expects to announce Invest in Cook awards this summer. Recently, DOTH submitted projects for freight funding through the Illinois Department of Transportation's new competitive freight grant program. The County is also excited to join local transportation leaders, planners, and professionals at the Transport Chicago conference on June 1, 2018, to provide an overview of the Freight Plan.

## PROJECT SCHEDULE



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For more information about the Freight Plan, visit [ConnectingCookCounty.org](http://ConnectingCookCounty.org)