



## Freight Advisory Committee

### NOTES

May 13, 2026, 9:30 AM

In-person: 1 Park Place, Colonie, NY 12205

[Virtual: contact Ethan Townsend for Zoom details](#)

### **Attendance:**

| <b>Name</b>        | <b>Title</b>                                   | <b>Representing</b>                            |
|--------------------|------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| Tom Phelan         | Senior Transportation Specialist               | BHX Engineering                                |
| Dave Sawicz        | Director of Transportation                     | Price Chopper/Market32                         |
| Doug Morris        | Director of State Affairs                      | Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association |
| Jacob Beeman       | Prog. Manger, Fleet and MHDV Electric Vehicles | National Grid                                  |
| Caitlyn O'Connell  | Legislative Operations Assistant               | Plummer, Wigger & Hohman                       |
| John Schneidawin   | Director of Strategic Initiatives              | Port of Albany                                 |
| John Scavo         | Director of Planning                           | Town of Clifton Park                           |
| Peter Comenzo      | Senior Planner                                 | Town of Rotterdam                              |
| Catherine Lawson   | Prog. Director, Masters of Regional Planning   | University at Albany                           |
| Ted Thompson       | Interested Citizen                             | Public                                         |
| Gautam Mani        | Senior Community Planner                       | FHWA                                           |
| Valerie Deane      | CHIPS, Rail & Bike/Ped Coord.                  | NYSDOT Region 1                                |
| William Fitzgerald | Transportation Analyst                         | NYSDOT Region 1                                |
| Jasleen Jaspal     | Planning & Economic Dev. Manager               | CDRPC                                          |
| Christie Shea      | Administrative Specialist                      | Capital Reg. Transp. Council                   |
| Martin Hull        | Director of Regional Planning                  | Capital Reg. Transp. Council                   |
| Adam McCarvill     | Transportation Planner                         | Capital Reg. Transp. Council                   |
| Ethan Townsend     | Transportation Planner                         | Capital Reg. Transp. Council                   |

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## AGENDA ITEMS

### 1. Welcome & Introductions

Meeting started at 9:30.

### 2. Feature Presentation: Union Pacific and Norfolk Southern Merger; Status and Implications – Tom Phelan, BHX Engineering

Tom Phelan gave a presentation of the proposed merger between Union Pacific and Norfolk Southern, two class one railroads in the Western US and Eastern US respectively. The merger would create what would be the first class one transcontinental railroad. The merger process began in 2025 but has hit regulatory hurdles causing delays. Union Pacific currently operates 32,200 miles of track and Norfolk Southern operates 19,400. This merger would have impacts across the rail and freight industry. Proposed benefits are decreased truck traffic, decreased emissions, and more reliability.

Opponents of the merger are concerned about decreased competitiveness, especially for the other class one railroads (i.e. BNSF, CSX). There are also concerns about the impact of shortline railroads, and smaller rail customers receiving less attention from the potentially merged companies.

The merger is currently pending a resubmitted application to the Surface Transportation Board, which is expected in the coming weeks. More information about the merger can be found at a variety of sources online, or if anyone has any questions, they can reach out to Ethan to be put in contact with Tom.

### 3. Discussion Items:

#### a. Superload Corridors Study Updates

Ethan provided an update on the Superload Corridors Study. Creighton Manning Engineering has been selected as the consultant team to conduct this study. The Data Collection Plan and Stakeholder & Public Outreach Plan are currently in development, after which Stakeholder Interviews will begin. The first Study Advisory Committee (SAC) meeting is expected to take place in late May or early June.

If interested, reach out to Ethan at: [etownsend@capitalmpo.org](mailto:etownsend@capitalmpo.org)

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b. Clean Cities & Communities Update

Adam McCarvill shared that Clean Cities & Communities funding returned in April. Efforts will soon begin to restart the program which has been on hold. Transportation Council attended an EV event at the Empire State Plaza on May 7.

If interested in participating in Capital District Clean Communities, please contact Adam at: [amccarvill@capitalmpo.org](mailto:amccarvill@capitalmpo.org)

c. Port of Albany-Rensselaer Maritime Summit

Ethan shared that the Port of Albany-Rensselaer Maritime Summit is scheduled for May 19<sup>th</sup>. The event will feature a variety of speakers and panels covering many aspect of the maritime freight industry. For more information about the event, including to RSVP, reach out to Penny Vavura at: [pvavura@portofalbany.us](mailto:pvavura@portofalbany.us)

d. Status of Regional Planning Initiatives

Ethan shared the current statuses of the Transportation Council's various planning initiatives.

#### **4. Participant Updates**

Jasleen Jaspal has joined CDRPC as the Planning and Economic Development manager and is looking forward to catching up on old projects and collaborate with others.

Jacob Beeman introduced himself as a representative of National Grid. He shared information about National Grids "Make Ready Incentives" available for medium and heavy-duty vehicle charging. If interested in electrification there are a variety of chargers and programs that can help you understand the costs of electrification. Reach out to Jacob for more information.

#### **5. Upcoming Meetings: August 12 & November 18**

**Meeting ended at 10:34 AM.**