

**MEETING MINUTES**  
**Gary-Chicago-Milwaukee (GCM) ITS Priority Corridor**  
**Executive Committee Meeting**  
**Thursday, July 14, 2005**

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The GCM (Gary-Chicago-Milwaukee) Executive Committee held a meeting on Thursday, July 14, 2005. The purpose of the meeting was to set policy direction for the GCM ITS Corridor.

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**1. Introductions**

Ruben Anthony, Jr., Deputy Secretary of WisDOT, led introductions of members of the Executive Committee, FHWA Officials, and the Coordination Work Group. The list of those in attendance is given at the end of these meeting minutes.

**2. 2004/2005 Activities and Accomplishments**

Jeff Benson of URS reviewed the accomplishments of the GCM Corridor in 2004:

- Each state completed planning studies for an interoperable **511 traveler information phone system**, which would allow travelers to hear traffic conditions in their own state and neighboring states.
- **The Gateway Traveler Information website** received five million hits per month. Upgrades such as historic travel times, wireless travel information pages, a construction information page, and quick text travel times allow travelers to better prepare for their trips or change their plans en route based on real-time information. Secretary Timothy Martin, IDOT, noted that his agency has used the Gateway to provide information to the trucking industry about cross-state detours for Kingery Expressway construction.
- The Awareness and Communications Work Group developed and distributed over 800 **promotional brochures** to stakeholders in the Corridor and attendees at regional and national conferences describing the accomplishments and goals of the Corridor.
- **The Corridor Action Team** has helped Illinois DOT, Indiana DOT, the Illinois Tollway, Chicago DOT, and the Chicago Skyway share and coordinate construction information to help travelers move more easily through interstate construction near the Illinois/Indiana border. It has developed and distributed construction information cards, coordinated traveler information between states, and developed guidelines for use of portable changeable message signs.
- The GCM Corridor continued **meeting annually with the I-95 Corridor Coalition** to discuss common issues and look for opportunities to collaborate. Areas for future collaboration include operations, security, and training.
- **A Performance Measures Subgroup** is looking at specific measures to determine where problems occur in the transportation system and ways to counter them. They came up with six potential performance measures and decided to focus on Travel Times and Air Quality.
- Each state completed an **ITS Architecture**, which provides the technical framework for technology and agencies to share data.

### 3. GCM Corridor Executive Director's State of the Corridor Report

Dan Shamo, GCM Executive Director, discussed the state of the GCM Corridor. Previously, the Executive Committee had directed the GCM Corridor Coalition should focus on regional or multi-state issues. A number of current trends emphasize the importance of this multi-state coordination:

- Traffic congestion is projected to increase in all three states,
- Changes in funding of ITS projects,
- ITS projects are not stand alone projects, but need to be incorporated into highway infrastructure during construction projects, and
- Transportation will play a major role in responding to any security related event.

Shamo would like to get direction from the Executive Committee on what is the likely future funding of the Corridor. He sees three options:

- 1) There is specific set-aside funding for the GCM Corridor in Reauthorization (though he did not think this was likely),
- 2) States set a specific amount or percentage of the state ITS funding they receive from Reauthorization to activities in the GCM Corridor, or
- 3) States declare that they will support projects in the Corridor on a project-by-project basis.

Shamo noted that under any of these scenarios, the Executive Committee would make the final decisions on projects and funding. He would like to have a teleconference with the Executive Committee members after the Surface Transportation Reauthorization Bill passes to discuss the type of commitment.

Secretary Martin asked what three projects the Corridor would work on if funding were available. Shamo responded that deploying 511 systems, fully interfacing state systems with the Gateway, and creating a Virtual Weigh Station (VWS) system to limit overweight loads that damage roads would be the highest priority. David Zavattono of IDOT noted that there has been some work done on these projects, but more could be accomplished if resources were available. Additional projects that would be high priority are coordinating transportation security measures between states and forming an Illinois/Wisconsin action team to coordinate construction for the upcoming I-94 construction effort.

Indiana DOT Commissioner Thomas Sharp said that instead of looking at programs, he would like to see five-year outputs and descriptions of how projects would benefit users.

Secretary Martin explained that Illinois DOT is looking at optimizing its systems, meaning that it is managed day-to-day to have the most beneficial impact for the public. Commissioner Sharp noted that Indiana is looking at identifying specific locations of recurrent problems areas and addressing those to decrease congestion.

Secretary Martin noted that traveler information allows truckers to identify bad routes before they leave the warehouse or while *en route*. Phil DeCabooter of Wisconsin DOT noted that Gateway is set up with a regional focus. Deputy Secretary Anthony agreed that the Corridor is

focusing on the right things now.

Shamo noted that the Corridor has started developing performance measures to better track how effective its activities are. The Performance Measures Subgroup is capitalizing on work done by others in the areas of Air Quality and Crash Propensity measures. These measures can be used to trigger countermeasures to address problems in the transportation system.

Zavattero stated that the Corridor wants to provide its customers with succinct, personalized, easy-to-use information. The primary customers of the GCM Corridor are travelers, both motorists and commercial vehicle carriers. Commissioner Sharp asked if the benefits of traveler information could be measured. He suggested focusing short-term efforts on the trucking industry because it is a more identifiable audience.

Shamo stated that he thought the strength of the GCM Corridor was the interstate coordination and communication it fosters, while its weakness is the limited resources.

#### **4. Plans for 2005/2006 Activities**

Shamo discussed planned activities for 2006.

- Coordinated **511 systems** deployment to provide the public with real-time traveler information,
- Completion of the **Corridor Program Plan** to outline future direction,
- Demonstration of the benefits of **VWS** in prolonging pavement life,
- Educate the public of **Move-It laws** to reduce secondary accidents,
- Share lessons learned with the **I-95 Corridor** to make operations more efficient,
- Complete **high-speed data links** across state lines to share information,
- Form another **Corridor Action Team** to address construction near the Illinois/Wisconsin border,
- Set baseline data for **Air Quality and Travel Time performance measures**,
- **Coordinate ITS Projects with activities of coalition partners** to leverage resources and communicate lessons learned,
- Partnering with Argonne National Laboratory to **use modeling tools to test security response plans**

Corey Carr of INDOT noted that agencies want to influence drivers' behavior to make travel safer and more efficient. He suggested travel time comparisons on Dynamic Message Signs (DMS) to get cars off congested roads, with messages being adjusted to affect behavior. Major ski resorts do this well. Mark Newland of INDOT noted that agencies need instrumentation on those alternate routes to get data to see what route is better.

Zavattero noted that the Gateway's historical travel time comparison feature allows users to compare real time travel times versus the average travel time for highway sections.

## **5. Corridor Program Plan**

Benson discussed previous Corridor Program Plans (CPP) and stated the new one is under development. The first CPP had over 100 projects, over 50 of which were deployed. The CPP developed under TEA-21 provided more of a regional focus and smaller number of projects. A new mission statement was developed for the new 2006 CPP:

The GCM Corridor will serve as a forum across the three GCM state boundaries to promote the active linking of transportation operations, the coordination of enhancements to transportation systems, investments by both public and private entities, an increase in the Corridor's attractiveness to travelers and businesses, and improvements in safety and security.

Stakeholder workshops were held in Gary, Chicago, Springfield, Milwaukee, and Madison to determine what the needs of the Corridor were and to suggest project ideas. Better traveler information and a greater emphasis on operations came up as priority needs. URS is currently documenting the needs and concerns and will start developing project ideas soon.

## **6. GCM Funding and Reauthorization**

Robert Tally, Jr. of FHWA gave a brief update on the different Reauthorization bills, which are in conference committee being reconciled. The current operating extension expires July 19. Both the House and the Senate versions continue ITS research at its current level of funding. There may not be an ITS deployment incentive included with the final Reauthorization bill. There is a Deployment program funding in the House version but not the Senate. There is a desire to mainstream ITS into the core FHWA programs. There may be movement to incorporate ITS more in the planning process.

Tally also relayed that Jeff Paniati of FHWA's ITS Joint Program Office said that FHWA appreciates the GCM Corridor's outreach to the Joint Program Office and supports GCM projects.

Secretary Martin distributed an ITS update for the state of Illinois to the other committee members. He also distributed a comparison document he used to determine staffing levels and justify not reducing staff further.

Commissioner Sharp noted that Newland has been charged with optimizing traffic flow so INDOT does not have to add or repave as many lanes. This activity will compete with construction projects for construction funding. If a technology project can increase traffic flow at a lower cost than construction, the technology project will be funded. Deputy Secretary Anthony noted that Wisconsin DOT does not have that kind of flexibility with how it spends capital improvement funding.

## **7. Executive Committee Chairperson and FHWA Representative Rotation**

Commissioner Sharp became the new Executive Committee chair and Norm Stoner, Division Administrator of the Illinois FHWA Office, became the new *ex officio* FHWA representative.

## 8. Next Executive Committee Meeting & Other Business

There is an Executive Committee teleconference tentatively scheduled for December to review and approve the CPP. The Coordination Work Group also suggested a teleconference 30-45 days after Reauthorization passes to discuss resource availability and direction for the Corridor.

Commissioner Sharp directed that the Corridor lay out a five-year plan focusing on one or two areas. The plan should show outputs and not just be a program to manage. ***URS will develop an outline of the CPP and send it to the Executive Committee for review and direction.*** He suggested the committee put money toward the program as it sees necessary, based on comparison with the costs and benefits of new construction.

Secretary Martin noted that he has asked staff at IDOT to host the Gateway website server at IDOT in Springfield. It is currently being housed at University of Illinois – Chicago. Zavatiero agreed with the move, noting that the website is no longer a research and development project and it should be housed in an operations environment. Commissioner Sharp and Deputy Secretary Anthony accepted this proposal. ***The Coordination Work Group will talk to Mark Kinkade of IDOT about this transfer.***

**GCM Executive Committee Meeting  
July 14, 2005  
Attendees**

<b><u>Name</u></b>	<b><u>Representing</u></b>	
Timothy Martin	Illinois DOT	Member
Thomas Sharp	Indiana DOT	Member
Ruben Anthony, Jr.	Wisconsin DOT	Representing Busalacchi
Robert Tally, Jr.	FHWA – Indiana	
Norm Stoner	FHWA - Illinois	
Dave Zavattero	IDOT	
Chuck Sikaras	IDOT	
Dick Smith	IDOT	
Randy Blankenhorn	IDOT	
Heather Tarczan	IDOT	
Scott Lee	IDOT	
Mark Newland	INDOT	
Corey Carr	INDOT	
Phil DeCabooter	WisDOT	
Gary Rylander	Edwards & Kelcey	
Jeff Benson	URS	
Dan Shamo	URS	
Tina Roelofs	URS	
Paul Lamb	URS	