

**Instructions for Small Group Discussion:
Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics Workforce
11:45 am – 1:15 pm**

- 11:45 Find a lunch and read through the discussion questions and mini case study
- 12:00 Start discussion
- 12:45 Start working on report back questions and final instant polling question for the larger group
- 1:15 Break and return to large group

Imagine if there was a coordinated regional workforce approach for transportation, distribution and logistics? What would it look like? What would have had to happen to make this a reality?

Discussion Questions

- What is already underway?
- What is working? And what can be expanded?
- What are the current dysfunctions/challenges to making progress?
- What are the biggest opportunities to leverage now, especially Recovery Act-related?
- How do the *GO TO 2040* goals factor in as it related to workforce development needs?
 1. Coordinated workforce, education, and economic development planning and information systems across the region;
 2. An integrated and adaptive career and education pathway system driven by skill needs of employers and accessible to all workers in the region.
- What would a coordinated regional approach look like? Do collaborative opportunities exist already?
- What would the recommended action steps look like?

Framework for reporting back to the larger group (7-8 min)

1. Why should we care – what is the urgency argument? If you were in an elevator with an influential official, what would you say?
2. What is in place now – list the assets – no more than 3 – that can be leveraged?
3. What needs to change? No more than 3 recommended action steps
4. If changes were made to create a regional TDL approach to the workforce, what are 3 potential outcomes?
5. Create an instant polling question for the larger group

Mini Case Study Outline: The Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics Workforce

In ninety minutes it would be impossible to discuss all of the possibilities to work on transportation and workforce issues. While accessibility to transportation is essential to the workforce, it will not be part of this discussion. For time reasons, this discussion will be limited to TDL and the workforce.

The Chicagoland region is one of the nation's freight hubs, with six Class I railroads converging to eighteen intermodal yards, two international airports and several interstate highways. The region's transportation network allows easy access to both coasts as well as the global supply chain. Employment in Transportation, Distribution and Logistics (TDL) has been growing in concentration (1.25), and is the fifth largest cluster in terms of overall employment (150,000) in the region. Average wages in the industry are above the U.S. average (\$55,800) (source: CMAP *Industry Cluster Snapshot*). The CMAP industry cluster analysis concluded that TDL is one of the top three industry clusters that lend itself to a regional focus.

Many organizations that care about regional economic prosperity have focused on improving the freight transportation network. Substantial additional capital investment in freight system infrastructure is expected to be included as part of the GO TO 2040 plan. The investments will take place in maritime, aviation, highway, and rail capital. These public investments are being met by private investments and industry growth, bringing rapid change to parts of the industry. This growth and change will, in turn, require additional investments in the region's workforce.

The region's workforce system developed responses to specific needs of the transportation industry. In 2004 a *Critical Skills Shortage Report for Transportation, Warehousing and Logistics* was released following a planning process. The report found that:

The transportation and logistics industry is facing serious problems in recruiting and retaining qualified workers. These shortages will become more serious in the future if Illinois does not increase the capacity and improve the alignment of secondary and postsecondary education programs at the state and regional levels including private sector training programs such as union apprenticeship and training programs. These shortages also will become more serious if we do not expand opportunities for more workers to pursue careers in this critical sector, including women and minorities.

The following initiatives were a result of the process and Report:

- 10 demonstration projects totaling \$1.3 million in direct funding and \$2.1 million in leveraged and redirected resources. These projects were designed to provide some short-term impact on the industry's skill shortages and long-term impact through replication and expansion throughout the Chicago Metro region.
- A region-wide event was held which focused on increasing community college and workforce development career counselors' awareness and understanding of the industry's career opportunities and working with TDL employers to address workforce needs.
- Incorporated the Transportation, Distribution and Logistics industry into a conference focused on "Retaining and Recruiting Mature Workers."

Since that time, the following workforce initiatives related to the transportation industry have occurred in the region:

- Chicago LEADS TDL sector work.

- Shared TDL curriculum developed and being used at Joliet Junior College, Moraine Valley Community College and Prairie State College.
- Logistics Council developed in Will County
- 21CC A Passion for Logistics – Global logistics education program developed for incumbent worker training
- TDL Forum in DuPage County

The 2040 Workforce recommendations sought to reach two goals by 2040, one of which is a coordinated workforce, education, and economic development planning and information systems across the region. One objective to reach that goal was to develop a mechanism for coordination of workforce, education and economic development systems where they intersect in order to facilitate workforce development services for the region's individuals and businesses. A set of activities were recommended to do that – including piloting a cross-system coordination initiative. The 2040 Workforce Development Advisors suggested that the transportation industry was a good candidate because it's regional; because there had been labor and skills shortages (prior to the recession); and because federal spending is likely to have an impact on the industry.

CMAA's recent industry cluster snapshot recommended the development of asset maps as a tool that can provide an inventory of firms connected to a particular cluster and identify its educational, research, and workforce requirements as well as possible infrastructure needs. It can also highlight networks and partnerships that foster and encourage cluster development in the region, helping to develop an economic development strategy.