

## Regional Motor Freight Transportation Plan

In today's global society, commercial transportation has become crucial to a region's business and industrial development potential. For many industries, economic competitiveness is defined by the ability of goods and services to be transported in a time-definite manner. And, while a well functioning commercial transport system is largely responsible for the modern quality of life attributes that consumers' value; for most consumers, commercial transport is an invisible process manifested only by big, intimidating trucks and loud, cumbersome trains that threaten their own timely commute. The Regional Motor Freight Transportation Plan was developed to address these key issues and to develop mitigation strategies that would incorporate freight transportation movement into our existing transportation system in such a way that will serve as an economic benefit to our region.

### Existing Condition

- 90 Percent freight movement in the Central Midlands region is by truck
- There are 308 miles of active railroad lines that are owned by Norfolk Southern and CSX
- The Central Midlands Region had 1,515 commercial crashes from 2004-2006, 15.8% of all crashes in the State
- Coal is the Top Commodity in our region
- Richland County constitutes 63% of the freight shipped, Lexington County 28%, Newberry 7% and Fairfield 2%
- At Grade Crossing by County: Richland - 293, Lexington - 205, Newberry - 132, & Fairfield - 74

## Recommendations & Strategies

### Recommendation: Create Design Standards for Freight Infrastructure

Officially recognized infrastructure and operational design guidelines that can be implemented by all jurisdictional bodies within the region are a fundamental element of effective metropolitan freight and goods movement planning. Truck traffic, particularly heavy-truck traffic, causes a disproportionate amount of roadway wear in comparison to passenger vehicle traffic. Central Midland's roadways should be designated on a network of freight transport corridors and should be designed to common physical standards that are more durable than conventional roadways.

### Recommendation: Establish Advisory Group to Retrieve Input on Freight issues

To facilitate greater participation in state and metropolitan transportation planning, federal legislation encourages states and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) to provide opportunities for various interested parties to provide input into the development of transportation plans and programs. Regarding freight, for example, SAFETEA-LU (Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users) stipulates that MPOs and states shall provide freight shippers and providers of freight transportation services with reasonable opportunities to comment on transportation plans and programs. The Central Midlands COG is positioned to begin to lead a group of representative from local stakeholders to retrieve input from the private sector and begin to include freight in the transportation planning process. This group can include but not be limited to:

- South Carolina Trucking Association;
- Economic Development Agencies (Fairfield, Newberry, Richland and Lexington);
- South Carolina Manufacturers Association; and
- Citizens throughout the region.