



United States Department of Transportation (USDOT)-European Commission (EC) Urban Logistics Study Visit: September 26-29, 2016

Part of the USDOT-EC Urban Logistics Innovation Twinning Programme

This newsletter provides a brief overview of the USDOT-EC urban logistics innovation twinning programme. It describes a study visit held in September 2016 and key takeaways from the visit. Finally, it describes possible next steps to continue USDOT-EC cooperation to promote urban logistics information exchange and joint research and development (R&D) activities.

Twinning Programme Background

As part of the USDOT-EC urban logistics innovation twinning programme, the EC and USDOT are coordinating to exchange information on areas of urban freight research and innovation that are of mutual interest and benefit. The programme was initiated in 2015 and will continue for approximately three years.

Peer exchanges are a core activity of the programme. These exchanges include the study visit held in September 2016 and forthcoming events planned for 2017 and beyond. The exchanges seek to convene stakeholders involved in urban freight R&D activities in both Europe and the United States (U.S.).

The peer exchanges are specifically highlighting four EC projects called NOVELOG (New Cooperative Business Models and Guidance for Sustainable City Logistics), CITYLABS (City Logistics in Living Laboratories), SUCCESS (Sustainable Urban Consolidation CentrEs for conStruction), and U-TURN (New Models for Urban Food Transportation).

The Innovative Solutions for Improving Freight Movements in Urban Areas' projects include:

- **Urban Freight Operations, Logistics and Technology Primer:** Examine current conditions; provide noteworthy practices; and develop recommendations for strategies and technologies aimed to improve the safety and efficiency of urban freight movement and delivery
- **Urban Freight Communication & Coordination Primer:** Develop primer on communication and coordination among public agencies and private industry to support first- and last-mile connections in realizing efficiencies in the supply chain
- **Practitioner's Guide for Walkable Urban Thoroughfare Design:** Develop guidebook to communicate context sensitive solutions principles, techniques, and design for freight and land use planners and transportation engineers

The HORIZON 2020 research projects highlighted in the study:

- **NOVELOG:** Develop commercially viable business models for strategies to improve urban freight mobility for both public and private sectors
- **CITYLABS:** Use pilot testing in real-world urban environments to develop and evaluate logistics solutions (e.g., use of clean vehicles at distribution hubs)
- **SUCCESS:** Use data analysis and logistics optimization models to improve stakeholder coordination while mitigating negative externalities of urban freight transportation
- **U-TURN:** Explore new strategies for distributing food in urban environments, beginning with a pilot test in London, U.K.

These projects are part of the HORIZON 2020 research program, an EC-sponsored initiative that provides funding to support R&D efforts to spur European innovation and economic development. More than 40 European cities are directly involved in these projects.

The exchanges will also highlight research projects being undertaken by the USDOT's Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). These projects, known collectively as "Innovative Solutions for Improving Freight Movements in Urban Areas," seek to define major challenges

facing freight transport in U.S. cities and highlight innovative practices to address those challenges. The projects will inform freight planners, transportation engineers, and others about strategies and solutions to improve urban freight mobility.

Study Visit Purpose and Overview

During the study visit on September 26-29, 2016, a U.S. delegation met with representations of the EC and others in Brussels and London to discuss and exchange information on strategies to improve urban freight logistics and freight mobility in metropolitan areas. Participants included staff from the:

- USDOT, Federal Highway Administration
- Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC), Texas
- California DOT (Caltrans)
- EC Directorate General for Mobility and Transport (DG MOVE)
- Ecorys (consultant to DG MOVE)



The study visit enabled U.S. participants to observe urban freight research and EC demonstration projects, as well as meet key stakeholders representing the EC, various European organizations, and cities. The primary objectives of the study visit were to:

- **Exchange information and identify best practices, lessons learned, and success factors** to help State and local transportation agencies in the U.S. develop targeted strategies for freight planning and project development that benefit freight mobility in metropolitan areas.
- **Demonstrate examples of pilot tests or full-scale implementation of urban freight strategies** that are not currently widely used in the U.S. The intent was to increase participants' knowledge of innovative practices that advance urban freight transportation, as well as key implementation steps.
- **Develop a network to support continued exchange of research on urban freight issues**, leading to improved freight mobility and economic development in both Europe and the U.S.



The study visit was timed to provide information to U.S. participants that will help inform USDOT's guidance to States on (and States' responses to) new USDOT requirements on freight planning and project implementation.

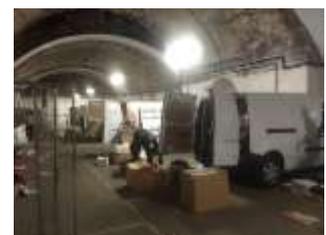
The most recent U.S. surface transportation authorization law, called the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act, or *FAST Act*, requires each State to develop a State freight plan. These plans must comprehensively address the State's freight planning activities and federal freight funding investments. By December 2017, States must submit a freight plan to USDOT that meets all of the *FAST Act's* requirements; otherwise, they will be unable to obligate National Highway Freight Program funds (representing about \$6.3 billion U.S. dollars). Fewer than half of States currently have a freight plan and many existing plans may need to be updated to meet all of the *FAST Act's* requirements.



Study Visit Agenda Highlights

Highlights of the study visit included:

- 17 presentations and site visits to see examples of EC urban logistics projects being implemented;
- Policy discussion with EC policy officers; and
- Networking opportunities with 24 representatives from European cities and European logistics networks and federations.



Study Visit Key Takeaways

The study visit provided valuable forums to share innovative practices and learn about demonstration projects to better manage urban freight mobility. Key takeaways included:

- **Identified frameworks to support U.S. freight planning.** The London Barking Riverside Freight Project is designed to address poor traffic flow, heavy congestion, and restricted freight movement in an urban area. An area-wide freight plan is required as part of this project. The area-wide freight plan has the potential to benefit major U.S. urban areas by providing local government agencies with a model framework to proactively plan for and accommodate freight movement during and after project construction.
- **Contribution of new ideas to support USDOT initiatives and joint agency activities.**
 - The EC shared strategies to reduce emissions. Transportation accounts for almost a quarter of Europe's greenhouse emissions and is the main cause of air pollution in cities. The information has the potential to contribute new ideas to the Partnership for Sustainable Communities, an interagency initiative with USDOT, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.
 - A high concentration of bicycle commuters and delivery services in Central London necessitates innovative solutions to address freight/bike interactions and improve safety. These innovations may help inform FHWA's bike and pedestrian safety and safety performance management projects.
- **Increased understanding of implementation practices that are applicable in U.S. contexts.** For example, study visit participants had the opportunity to learn about the FRevue (Freight Electric Vehicles in Urban Europe) project, which focuses on last-mile delivery, as well as CITYLAB, which promotes a "living laboratory" approach to address city logistics. These and other projects provided valuable information about key implementation steps, lessons learned, and success factors that can be shared with U.S. freight stakeholders.

The study tour identified the following key topics for further EC-USDOT analysis and coordination:

- **Best practices in urban freight planning**, specifically on developing and managing consolidation centres, access zones, and loading bays;
- **Electrification of freight distribution ("cleaner last mile")**, including implications of electrification on vehicles (larger size, greater range, recharging capacity) and freight planning/operations policies and practices (e.g., parking or loading zones);
- **Challenges for urban freight in megaregions**, including how to address megaregion governance and congestion challenges;
- **Data collection and use** to support improved freight mobility, including digitalisation of information.
- **Possible topics for further analysis and discussion** included:
 - Corridor approach to planning for freight mobility
 - Port connections
 - Truck weight/standards
 - Innovative approaches to financing freight projects

Study Visit Feedback (from U.S delegation)

"The EU site visit was an excellent opportunity to share innovative solutions for urban freight challenges. The Federal, State, and local U.S. delegation gained knowledge that can be used to help enhance the implementation of urban freight mobility solutions within the U.S. I look forward to sharing the lessons learned with other U.S. freight stakeholders."

– *Tamiko Burnell, Transportation Specialist, FHWA, Office of Freight Management and Operations*



