

TRB Urban Freight Transportation Committee
Brainstorming problems that most need solutions
Research that makes a difference

A. Outcome

Our intent today is to start a regular, annual conversation about urban freight research needs that leads to submissions to the National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP) or other solicitations that can result in useful research that directly benefits practitioners. Today's output will be the raw material with which we'll rough out the top 3 priorities by April and then in May select the one research topic to pursue in depth. Final submission will be in early September (at least for the NCHRP process). [Please see the *Annual Cycle for Research Problem Statements* document.]

Through dialogues over the last two years the Urban Freight Transportation Committee's members and friends have found ways to connect practitioners and researchers, for example, by:

- Calling out specific actions they can take to support each other's goals;
- Naming others whose involvement is critical to success; and
- Identifying key steps in promoting the adoption and active use of innovations.

Importantly, the action plan that emerged from the 2014 TRB session became the basis for several of us putting together a problem statement for the National Cooperative Highway Research Program's (NCHRP's) FY16 solicitation ("Getting Innovations in Metropolitan Freight Implemented").

B. Task

1. Listen to the presentations from the Volvo Foundation grant recipients with an ear to the questions you think need further research. Usually these are in terms of *what we don't yet know enough to create policies or plans*.
2. Note down on Post-its the questions whose answers could help practitioners.
3. Bring your Post-its to the breakout groups to brainstorm, cluster and summarize.
4. Report out to the whole group.

C. Roles

Everyone in the dialogue has an important role in ensuring that the conversation moves ahead and all ideas are well captured. This will help in documenting what happens today and using that as the basis for moving forward.

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Roles include

- a. *Presiding*: provide overall leadership ensuring successful completion of task;
- b. *Presenter*: summarize in a few minutes key findings to date;
- c. *Expert Advisor*: point out additional ideas, activities or resources to consider;
- d. *Facilitator*: help move the conversation along while maximizing participation;
- e. *Note_Taker*: record the main points made in the conversation for later use;
- f. *Reporter*: capture and report the themes and results of the subgroups; and
- g. *Participant*: share your ideas related to the framing questions.

D. Immediate Next Steps

By early February the Urban Freight Transportation Committee will prepare a summary of today's session and begin to:

- Outline the top 2- 3 problem statements;
- Research the most relevant prior work at high level;
- Determine if other committees have an complementary interest; and
- Identify the most interested state DOTs for each of the 2-3 problem statements