



# Long Innovative Corridors Spanning Multiple States

*ITS America AV Freight Working Group*  
Panel Brief

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**November  
2024**

## ITS America AV Freight Panel Brief

### Long Innovative Corridors Spanning Multiple States

On August 5th, 2024, ITS America's AV Freight Working Group held a panel discussion centered around the creation of multi-state intelligent corridors supporting vehicle-to-everything communication and their impact on freight movement. The panelists emphasized the importance of addressing connectivity gaps in major corridors and deploying a variety of technologies to enhance corridor efficiency. There was also a significant focus on optimizing freight movements through real-time traffic operations information, highlighting the integral role of innovative corridors in the future of transportation. The panel included both state and federal perspectives, fostering a conversation enriched by diverse experiences. The discussion was moderated by Zeke Reyna, the Emerging Technology Team Lead at the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) and co-chair of ITS America's AV Freight Working Group.

#### Panelists:

- **Elise Feldpausch** is the ***Statewide Connected & Automated Vehicle Technical Specialist*** at the **Michigan Department of Transportation**. Michigan DOT is responsible for planning, designing, and operating streets, highways, bridges, transit systems, airports, railroads, and ports in the State of Michigan.
- **Jeff Purdy** is the ***Freight Programs Team Leader*** for the **Office of Freight Management and Operations** at the **Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)**. FHWA supports State and local governments in the design, construction, and maintenance of the nation's highway system. FHWA is responsible for ensuring that America's roads and highways continue to be among the safest and most technologically sound in the world.

Elise discussed the development of intelligent corridors, the role of Michigan, and the importance of technology and collaboration in realizing these initiatives.

- **Intelligent Corridors:** Elise emphasized the importance of creating long, intelligent, connected corridors that enable vehicles to communicate with each other and the infrastructure. She highlighted the need for connectivity and the deployment of various technologies to ensure a continuous experience for drivers.
- **Michigan's Role:** She discussed Michigan's unique position in the conversation around intelligent corridors due to its geographical features and international borders. In Michigan I-94 is the state trunkline highway, meaning it consist of all the state highways in Michigan, including those designated as interstate, United States numbered, or state trunkline highways. It enters the state south of New Buffalo and extends all the way through the state exiting at the Blue Water Bridge at the Canada-United States border. Elise expressed a desire for Michigan to be more involved in coalition discussions for intelligent corridors, particularly advocating for an I-94 intelligent corridor in Michigan.

- **Technology Deployment:** Elise discussed the need for creative thinking to address technology deployment gaps and the importance of interoperable devices. She stressed that the focus should be on the driver's experience, ensuring that the technology deployed meets the needs of the driver while ensuring safety, advancing technology, and fulfilling interoperability goals.
- **Collaboration and Vision:** She called for a unified vision and commitment at the state level to move forward with the development of these corridors. Elise highlighted the necessity of collaboration across state boundaries and within the state to prioritize these initiatives.

Elise's contributions to the discussion underscored the significant role of intelligent, connected corridors in the future of transportation. By advocating for robust connectivity and the deployment of versatile technologies, she highlighted the need to bridge existing gaps and enhance the driver's experience. Her emphasis on Michigan's strategic position and the importance of state-level collaboration and creative solutions to technology deployment gaps reflects a forward-thinking approach. These points collectively illustrate the transformative potential of innovative corridors in optimizing autonomous vehicle (AV) freight movement, ensuring seamless communication between vehicles, and fostering a more efficient and effective transportation system.

Jeff Purdy emphasized the integration of technology to optimize freight movements and the necessity for interoperability among various technological systems to ensure seamless data exchange.

- **Technology and Interoperability:** Jeff emphasized the importance of technology in optimizing freight movements and the need for interoperability among different technologies to ensure seamless data sharing across platforms.
- **Information Sharing:** He highlighted the significance of real-time traffic operations information, disruptions to travel, and the need for accurate information on bridge clearances and load postings to aid in the routing of trucks.
- **Freight Movement Optimization:** Jeff discussed optimizing freight movements by planning trips to avoid rush hour traffic and considering the entire supply chain, including intermodal transfers, to ensure efficient freight delivery.
- **Public and Private Sector Collaboration:** He stressed the importance of collaboration between the public sector and the private sector, which operates most freight movements, to develop technologies and share information effectively.

Jeff Purdy's comments underscored the importance of real-time traffic information, including disruptions and precise details on bridge clearances and load postings, which are crucial for efficient routing of trucks. By planning freight trips to avoid peak traffic and considering the entire supply chain, Jeff highlighted strategies for enhancing the efficiency of freight delivery. Furthermore, he stressed the critical need for collaboration between the public and private sectors, fostering a synergistic environment where information and technologies are shared effectively. These points collectively underscore the transformative impact on innovative corridors and AV freight movement, heralding a

future where freight logistics are optimized through advanced, interoperable technologies and robust public-private partnerships.

### Conclusion:

In conclusion, the discussion highlighted the critical role of technology, collaboration, and strategic vision in the development of intelligent corridors. Both Elise and Jeff underscored the necessity of interoperable technologies and real-time information sharing to optimize freight movements and enhance driver experience. This is particularly important for AV freight movement, which relies heavily on seamless communication and data exchange. Key to this endeavor is proactive involvement and a unified commitment from the public and private sectors alike. By embracing innovative solutions and fostering cross-sector collaborations, we can lead the way in advancing intelligent transportation systems that are efficient, seamless, and beneficial for all stakeholders involved.