Development of a Model for Intermodal Corridor
and Terminal Operation and Placement

Project Timeframe: 9/1/2008 – 9/30/2009

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Project Funding
National Center for Intermodal Transportation: $10,000
Federal and Matching Funds: $10,000
Total Funding: $20,000

Project Objective
The objectives of this research will be to provide an in-depth review and identification of the key factors in development of a Model for the Intermodal Corridor and Terminal Operation and Placement in order to identify ways to improve the intermodal transportation system from the perspective of both intermodal terminal operators and urban and community intermodal transportation planners. The proposed research would seek to identify a list of key parameters that could be used in deciding on the economic and operational viability of such projects. A final review of the recommended actions will be made and published. Currently, communities around the country make frequent requests of transportation companies to develop intermodal terminals in their area. Similarly, transportation carriers often find themselves deciding on whether to build or develop terminals in specific locations. These requests and projects presuppose the viability of an intermodal corridor. Presently, there is no model available to attempt to optimize the size, structure, configuration, and economic viability of such a terminal or corridor. Industry experts indicate that such a tool would be useful across the industry for both public and private sector applications.

Project Abstract
The goal of this project is to review and identify ways to improve the intermodal transportation system from the perspective of both intermodal terminal operators and intermodal transportation planners. Currently, communities around the country make frequent requests of transportation companies to develop intermodal terminals in their area. Similarly, transportation carriers often find themselves deciding on whether to build or develop terminals in specific locations. These requests and projects presuppose the viability of an intermodal corridor. Presently, there is no model available to attempt
to optimize the size, structure, configuration, and economic viability of such a terminal or corridor. Industry experts indicate that such a tool would be useful across the industry for both public and private sector applications.

**Task Description**

Several steps will be pursued sequentially and concurrently:

1. Conduct a literature review on the existing methods for determining design and placement of intermodal facilities and corridors.
2. Second, we will conduct on-site focus groups with key industry leaders to determine the existing factors that are examined when considering a decision to develop an intermodal terminal or corridor at a specific location. This will be done through interviews and short questionnaires administered in person and over the internet to key individuals.
3. Third, after obtaining the results of the interviews we will develop a list of factors that have been considered as relevant to making decisions regarding the development of intermodal terminals, corridors and facilities. These factors will be listed and prioritized for further consideration.
4. Fourth, additional analyses will be conducted to determine whether highway and traffic flow models are applicable to the intermodal terminal development question. There are many traffic flow models as well as warehouse models that might be able to be adapted to meet the needs of the intermodal transportation industry.
5. Fifth, we will examine the list of factors thought to influence decisions and create a list of decision rules and parameters.
6. Finally, convene an expert group to review findings and recommend whether to proceed to model and software development.

**Technology Transfer**

At least one paper will be prepared and submitted to a refereed conference, such as the TRB Annual Meeting, for presentation. At least one paper will be submitted to appropriate transportation journals, such as the *World Review of Intermodal Transportation Research*. Results of the proposed project will also be disseminated through the various websites associated with NCIT and ITI where those interested will be able to access the final report.