

**Importance of Metropolitan
Planning Organizations in Economic Development**

KELLY O'BRIEN: We are going to move right into our next panel. In the economic development world a metropolitan planning organization, an MPO is quite influential. Within our Milwaukee, Chicagoland and northwest Indiana corridors, we have three, and we are very fortunate to have the three leaders of the MPOs here with us today.

These leaders are working on strategies that help address transportation, housing, economic development, open space, the environment, and many other quality-of-life issues.

Our panel moderator for today is a true agent of change. As the president of the Metropolitan Planning Council, MPC, she is involved daily with the very demanding challenges of planning and development. MPC is at the forefront of changing public policies. Ladies and gentlemen, please welcome to lead this panel discussion, The Importance of Metropolitan Planning Organizations and Economic Development, MarySue Barrett.

MARYSUE BARRETT: I'm going to invite my other panelists to come right on up. The great thing about

having a well-prepared bio book is that you can see for yourself the impressive backgrounds of Ty and Joe and Ken who are joining me on the stage.

Again, I am MarySue Barrett, and I also spent some time in government. A lot of us have played various roles by geography. I grew up in Milwaukee. I went to school here in Chicago. My work has taken me to work in northwest Indiana as well as across the tristate region; so not just where my office is in downtown Chicago. And I have a daily appreciation for the complexity of this work and the work that each of the panelists do.

They bring that passion of running metropolitan planning organizations, which were of course created several decades ago as a requirement for the receiving of federal funds. So it was essentially a transportation compliance mechanism. You had to have a regional game plan in order to receive and spend transportation dollars.

Well, the world has changed quite a bit. Each of these gentlemen runs an organization within an already-complex region that deals with all of the interplay of growth and development challenges; not necessarily the funding to support, providing the leadership to tackle those challenges, but they are at their doorstep every day.

And so we've decided, in preparing for today, because

we do have limited time, instead of having a few minutes for each panelist to lay out what their organizations are doing, we would try to tackle the elephant in the room, and that is, how are we working across our borders.

So this is our hypothesis; this is our starting point: that we recognize that this tristate region and all of its component parts have enormous assets and have enormous shared assets. The reason why we are, as Rick helped crystallize in painful clarity, we are falling behind national averages on growth in every one of our three states is because we have not put those assets together in a way that makes them have maximum impact.

So that's not anything to feel comfortable with or to feel like, "Well, how's that working for you?" It's not working so well for this region. We at the Metropolitan Planning Council take an approach that is very different than what you just heard from Governor Rauner's representative. The idea of battling it out on Saturdays like the Big Ten and then trying to figure out a way to compete together at another time is not the right analogy.

It's more like building an Olympic team where you do need to have strong individual parts and then they need to compete together because when we're talking about our competitors in southeast Asia or in western Europe they

have a metropolitan agenda that understands strengths by sector, by infrastructure, by talent, by amenities, all of the cultural assets that we jointly benefit from, and they put those together to sell their megaregion.

We can do this. We don't do this, and that's why we are growing below the national averages. So if you like to have your share of zero percent growth then this is not the conversation for you. If you want to have growth in our metropolitan region, then these are some people who can help us figure out how to do that.

I think all of us who have been in government and now I am in a civic role but work with government every day, work with the private sector with community organizations, we are very aware of the opportunity that we face. And so each of us are going to try to weigh in on a set of questions. They may be the obvious questions.

I'd asked each of the Metropolitan Planning Organization directors here representing -- each one has a multi-county very complex agenda, but these folks know each other. They meet regularly including with counterparts in Michigan, and so they're very aware of the border issues, and we would like to try to share with you not just a presentation that covers each organization's priorities -- that's important -- but how they interface.

Talk about the border issues, talk about the shared issues, talk about the interactions, and what we might crystallize, more clearly than I think we could when we walked in the door today, the opportunities for joint action because unless we can answer that question, our shared congressional delegations, our individual general assemblies, our governors who all share a party, cannot pursue these priorities together.

So that's all of our collective job is to figure out what we need to unlock the kind of dramatic growth that is happening in other places of the country and is not happening here. It's a big challenge.

So let's talk first about assets, Joe and Ty and Ken, and I'd like any of you -- we're just going to jump in and keep this informal -- to talk a little bit about what you see as our greatest assets, and again each is going to try to address this not just from the organization that they run but from the larger regions perspective.

Joe, I'm sitting next to you. Would you mind starting? Because I skipped over formal introductions, I'm also encouraging our panelists to bring a little bit of their personal experience into their answers because there's a lot of talent and experience represented here.

JOSEPH SZABO: I think the bios are in the program

booklet so there's not a lot of reason to get into that, but I think when you think about the economy you always come back to the fundamental role that transportation has to play.

It's very simple. No economy can ever grow any faster than its transportation network is going to carry it. So for us in this tristate region, that's both a blessing and a curse and a challenge. Clearly we have a transportation network that is unrivaled by other regions when you take a look at our rail network that hubs here in Chicago and so strongly serves the Midwest, the highway network, our waterways, and of course our air network.

But there is also no question of what congestion is doing to us today in stunting our economic growth and in hindering the fluid mobility of people and access to jobs.

I think that -- we are doing this and we need to do a better job of it -- but as we continue to work together as the MPOs in the three states take stock of those assets that we have in transportation, take a look at the challenges that we face.

Clearly in Chicagoland we have made a priority out of the CREATE program because the critical importance that it means to the movement, the global flow of goods, and we are the bottleneck for the nation. So this isn't a Chicago

problem, it's a national problem, it's a regional problem. It's actually a global problem. So creating CREATE needs to be a priority for the nation.

Having said that, when CREATE was put together a decade ago it magically stopped at the Illinois-Indiana border. The goods don't stop -- in some respects they do because one of the biggest challenges is northwest Indiana. We not only need to complete CREATE, we need to be taking a look at what are the next steps because creating CREATE isn't going to be good enough. I could keep talking but I'll stop.

MS. BARRETT: Joe, one of the things that is in your bio is your experience in Washington, and I'm curious if you have been impressed as you've worked across the country of other places who have understood that their growth is limited by their infrastructure capacity and moved beyond that.

MR. SZABO: Clearly, yes. The regions that recognize it are the ones that have begun to prosper the most.

MS. BARRETT: Like?

MR. SZABO: There's examples, and I won't say so much in transportation, MarySue, as much as it has been reassessing their strengths and as a region focusing on those strengths together. Colorado is a great example. At

Brookings -- was it Bruce Katz, I believe, his book talks about the fact that these are regions -- you've got to stop waiting for Washington, stop waiting for the state to come in and ride on a white horse and figure out how you are going to come together and start generating your own fixes for your challenges.

MS. BARRETT: The Metropolitan Revolution book Joe is referring to is a great primer.

Ty, you have also worked on lots of different geographies currently heading up NIRPC. We'd love to hear your take on this challenge of assessing your assets from beyond just what you are responsible for but thinking about the interplay across our three states.

TYSON WARNER: Absolutely. From the perspective of northwestern Indiana, I think northwestern Indiana is very conscious of its place in the Chicago metropolitan region. In fact, part of our message lately has really been to help Indianapolis realize that Chicago is so critical to the state through northwestern Indiana and that we are truly in this together.

As MarySue said, I worked in -- and my colleagues in the Will County over here for many years, and I was planning director there. I was also at CMAP for a while and NIPC before the merger. So frankly, I think that's

partly why the NIRPC commission hired me is because I'm very conscious of this interplay across the state lines.

Also with Michael Noland who is the head of the South Shore, Northern Indiana Regional Transportation also came from Metra for 28 years. So I think there's a great awareness of this interplay across state lines.

In terms of assets, I think Joe is right on. The transportation history that really formed the basis of all three of our regions also share the position on Lake Michigan. There is a great shot on the cover of this program and on the back, thank you, Paige, that really sums it up, those borders are not there, and you can look across that entire region and see our position on Lake Michigan and what an asset that is.

I think we are very aware of this. MarySue mentioned we meet on a regular basis also with southwestern Michigan, something called the Wingspread Accord that all four of us have signed to agree to cooperate and work on these issues.

So I think that's really the meat of what brings us to the table and why this is so important for us to interact today.

MS. BARRETT: Ken, how about from southeastern Wisconsin? How you see it?

KENNETH YUNKER: Well, as a regional planning agency,

we're responsible to work with local, state, and federal government and the private sector to identify the infrastructure necessary to maintain the economy and grow the economy in southeastern Wisconsin and the broader region.

The transportation that's necessary; water. And clearly, one of our major assets in this region is access to Lake Michigan. A large water source, source of fresh water, which will increasingly become important as we look to future decades.

We have other assets as well and plan for -- quality-of-life infrastructure. Maintaining our best natural resources; preserving and enhancing them. Parks and open space. Tremendous assets in southeastern Wisconsin and the broader region.

I think as well as we look to the future and what it holds for labor force, studies we have done, studies that have been done by the state of Wisconsin, studies that have been done across the nation point out that the generations following the baby boomer -- no larger than the baby boom generation -- to grow the labor force in future years, there will be an intense competition across metropolitan regions if jobs are to grow because you need the labor force to grow the jobs.

You are not going to have natural growth from a higher proportion of women entering the labor force -- they're almost at the same proportion as men -- or from more people coming of age. There's going to be intense competition as the economy turns around in the nation and which regions are better poised to take advantage of that. We are a large metropolitan region, southeastern Wisconsin, northeastern Illinois, northwest Indiana.

We have to take advantage of that, and our plans, their plans, the states' plans have long identified the projects necessary to better knit these regions together, but there has been a lack of action, and we need to move not to more planning, and I'm saying that as a planning director, but to implementation, better high-speed train service linking our regions, and commuter train service linking our regions.

Why do we have a single intermodal facility on the south side of Chicago so you get to bear all of the trucks that are carrying containers from Wisconsin through your region and then as well other containers back to our region that don't really need to be there? These things need to move to implementation not to more planning.

MR. SZABO: If I can echo on a lot of the comments that Ken made -- let's stay on rail for a second, which I

love talking about and then I will shift to water. Rail is my wheelhouse. I think he hit on a very important point when he talks about both the commuter rail but also the need for a robust intercity passenger rail network that ties together the 40 major economies of the Midwest like the Midwest Regional Rail Initiative with fast, frequent, reliable service.

This is going to really be critical in attracting the millennial generation to the region because this is the way they choose to travel. They're getting fewer and fewer drivers licenses and those that are getting their licenses are getting them later; vehicle miles driven by that cohort I believe is down about 27 percent last time I looked at the numbers; use of rail and mass transits up by a whopping 40 percent.

So tying the region together with that fast, frequent, robust intercity passenger rail network is critical. Making sure then we have the transit system in place and commuter rail system in place and the other modes like bike sharing, car sharing, et cetera to make sure that that final mile is convenient. These are the tools that are just going to be critically necessary to track the next generation talent.

Ken talked about water. We so badly underestimate the

value of this asset that we have right outside our door, and he's on the mark when he talks about in the coming years, the coming decades, it's going to be an invaluable tool, but we have got to be doing a couple of things here.

One, making sure that we are absolutely protecting it first and foremost and then looking at those ways -- and I'm going to use the word exploit although I don't mean it in a negative context, I mean it positively -- those ways that we have the opportunity to exploit that asset for economic benefit because the other regions around the country, and frankly most of them around the world, would kill to have this asset that we have.

Milwaukee, up in Wisconsin, they're doing great work on water. Chicago has now picked up the ball on that, and I think as a region, it's an area where we really have to strengthen our efforts.

MS. BARRETT: Thank you for the perfect bridge. We wanted to lay out assets and then transition into a discussion of the opportunities for joint action.

So in organizing our thoughts we do see this cluster of environmental opportunities where water is clearly high on the list, within intermodal, a series of multimodal transportation investments that we already also started to talk about, and then thirdly a cluster related to economic

development and specifically talent which Ken started us on that path as well.

So we're going to try to build on each of these comments briefly, and let's start with water. The Milwaukee Water Council has gotten a lot of buzz that's of great interest. The counterpart organizations, World Business Chicago, in our backyard here in Chicago, I think there are lots of places at chambers and other tables where the conversation of this asset is recognized and there's a lot of energy around that.

It's both on the water supply and the innovations that go with fiscal efficiency and better delivery and water quality because you want to be able to deliver on that for sure and then also on water technology. So water-intensive industries and how can we, given our tremendous supply, access to supply, attract industries that need that?

So I'm talking about not just serving our public with water supply but also supporting the businesses as a sector for growth. What opportunities do you see for this to be one of those things that our governors and other elected officials might see as a win-win-win, and how do we start on that framework as opposed to -- well, we're competing against each other for those industries? Anybody.

MR. WARNER: I think Lake Michigan is obviously one of

the things that has drawn the states together, that the governors really can unite around; the compacts related to the Great Lakes overall. When we talked about the importance of monitoring water withdrawal even down to the minute issues of water quality that I know in northwestern Indiana we're dealing with, trying to address our septic systems and whatnot, it's from the nonpoint stuff as well as the industry.

The industry has really cleaned up its act a lot and at least in northwestern Indiana I can say things have vastly improved over the years, but it is an asset that draws industry. You need not only -- and I can't help but relate it back to these other topics -- not only do you have this need for water and some industries more intensive than others, but you have this need to draw from Lake Michigan to do that, but you combine that with no other place in the country where you have this combination of ports and rail and roads and air capacity all brought together. It's a very, very powerful combination.

MS. BARRETT: Could we be utilizing the Indiana Port - Burns Harbor, as a megaregion better than we are today?

MR. WARNER: I think absolutely so. The Port of Indiana has just about done phenomenally well, and I think has a lot more potential to call for it. Again, when you

talk about trying to bring -- whatever was said earlier I think was a fantastic point -- is it's not really about -- you have to talk about the competition that is constructive not destructive. This is not port versus port. This is ports for the entire region, and so it's not helpful to try to pit port against port. It's really about we are all in here with three states.

MS. BARRETT: Ken?

MR. YUNKER: I hate to say on video that I was pleased to hear the problem that Washington D.C. was having where you can't drink the water, but for our region, that's positive.

We don't have that problem. We have a safe supply. We have a supply that is advanced treatment and all of our regions, water treatment plants that are utilizing that water. There are no questions about water supply in our region both with respect to quality and quantity, and I think that has great potential in the future.

It's something that we are clearly, in our region and I think across our region, emphasizing. The other thing the Milwaukee 7, the regional economic development groups and as well the local economic development groups in our region have focused on is as we looked at clusters of industries and looked at what are the clusters that we

have, where do we dominate across the nation, one that didn't originally pop up until there was some more detailed analysis and I see the professor who was involved in that and Alice (phonetic) is here today, but through more in-depth analysis showed we have a water cluster in our region with respect to industries involved in technology of water supply. As well, as there are similar clusters probably in the other regions as well and we need to focus on that to bring that focus of water to our regions.

MS. BARRETT: Absolutely.

MR. SZABO: I do think it's a real opportunity for economic growth and to Ken's point that water-based cluster is one that has not received proper focus in the past and so one that we do need to be focusing on much more intensely. And then back to your question to Ty, I don't have the answer to this yet, but in my own mind I keep saying, "All right we have these challenges with moving goods in our region," and it makes me question whether we are in fact using our waterways to their maximum potential in the good movements area.

MS. BARRETT: A really good point, and I want to broaden it one step further in a second to talk about storm water issues and water technology in relation to solutions there because I think an innovative region that we all call

home is well-positioned for the environmental climate-driven challenges that are stressing so many sectors.

But when Ken just commented about the Milwaukee 7, which is the premier business leaders, identifying through data analysis, through sector analysis that they were already a strong player on water technology and water intensive industries and that through coordination and through developing some of the talent pipeline and the credentialing and frankly marketing of the region, they could do more.

I know that entities here in Chicago, World Business Chicago, have done similar analysis and revealed that proportionally that sector is bigger in metropolitan Chicago. So I think we have the same potential throughout and it is similar to -- I've long admired what Germany does with its mega-metropolitan regions. They don't try to support every region in being everything. Now of course, we love the fact that our -- I'm talking the tristate region, the Chicagoland economy, is diversified. Huge strength. So we will never be one or two things.

But understanding as Germany does of what our strengths are and then really focusing federal support to unlocking that. The first panel talked about the broad support for the digital manufacturing center coming here.

That's an example of historic strength and then pivoting to where is the economy going. I think water, storm water, water supply industries are examples of that.

So is there also a research collaborative on data and on the higher education that might help each of our geographies go after this effort? Do you sense that there is that kind of coordination across the economic development organizations and the academic institutions that care about our asset here or can we do more?

MR. WARNER: I think we can do more. I'm just trying to think. There's various efforts going on and various regional collaborations that are helping to start to crack that nut. I think of the -- sorry for the Wisconsin, but the Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant and what they are trying to do across state research and data collection and we have been a part of that and CMAP has as well. That's a piece of it.

There's things such as the Millennium Reserve that has been very successful and is starting to bleed over -- that's probably the wrong word to use, but into Indiana to figure out what is the equivalent in Indiana to make that an even stronger notion and probably the same model should apply going across the boundaries to the north into Wisconsin.

So I think there's some cross collaborative efforts that are coming together. They may not be as unified or as whole as they should be yet, but I think they are on track to do that.

MR. YUNKER: I would say yes, there is a focus in tying the academic institutions in with the economic development organizations, and I would particularly note UWM and Marquette in leading that effort.

MR. WARNER: It would probably be remiss not to mention, it was the subject of the last summit, the tool that was developed with these three agencies to take stock of -- previous speaker I think it was Richard Mattoon that talked about it's also important what government spends its money on and this tool, this GIS tool we all contributed data to do, was to show the assets in the region and how they play out and where our gaps are, et cetera and that was done with some assistance of Purdue. And so I think we are having some good conversations.

MS. BARRETT: That's a great example and one that by mentioning it we hope that more people actually can take advantage of and put to work to tell that story because that is one of the lessons from Milwaukee and the progress they have made is get the right people around the table and then you have to tell your story.

Joe, I think your discussion of CREATE earlier is a terrific example of that, of it's been an asset and transportation distribution logistics, if I move into the economic development side of transportation, is clearly another sector that this region is very well-positioned on and the economy is driving growth in that sector.

So what potential do you see for us to see that growth is locked?

MR. SZABO: Freight good movement accounts for roughly 25 percent of all jobs. There is a nexus to 25 percent of all jobs in the CMAP region. I don't have the numbers for southeast Wisconsin, northwest Indiana, but there are clearly synergies here.

So in order for our economy here to grow cleaning up this bottleneck -- we are the freight bottleneck for the nation whether it's our road network or our rail network, is going to be critically important. As I said in the opening, I think there is clearly the opportunities for synergies with both Wisconsin and northwest Indiana because the flow of these goods don't stop at the state border.

MS. BARRETT: Is it your sense Ty and Ken that that quarter, mapped to a quarter of the jobs of the economy would hold true in Indiana and in Wisconsin? And what does that suggest to you as far as potential?

MR. YUNKER: I don't know if it would be that high. I can't recall the specific figure, but I don't believe it would be that high. Perhaps again some of that is tied to again if you are moving a container, if a business is shipping out a finished product in southeastern Wisconsin or importing something in, a raw material in, and it's coming from the West Coast say in Canada in southeastern Wisconsin we can wave at that container as it goes by on rail, goes down to an intermodal facility on the south side of Chicago, then a truck brings it back up to Wisconsin and the same thing when they send the product out, it gets carried on a container down to the south side of Chicago and then comes back, and they can wave at it as it goes past going to the West Coast.

That's not efficient. It adds to a load on freeways with trucks. It's something that's not of an advantage to either our region or to northeastern Illinois circling out to any driver that's on the highway. It's traffic that doesn't need to be there.

Similarly I'd say as well high-speed train service, there have been plans for decades that have said it is a Hiawatha service between Milwaukee and Chicago should be more frequent, should be higher-speed, and I'm not talking about 300 miles an hour but 115 or 105, something that can

be accomplished. It would be something that would allow people then as they look at their schedule could say, "Yes, it makes sense for me to take that train," as opposed to "I'm going to be wasting time; perhaps I'll drive," or "I will drive part of the way and then can take commuter rail."

MS. BARRETT: Especially Center City to Center City, right?

MR. YUNKER: Yeah.

MR. SZABO: That's the big difference.

MR. YUNKER: And then as well commuter rail for those trips to serve that other market, for trips from suburb to suburb within the southeastern Wisconsin, northeastern Illinois. These are all things that have been planned. It's difficult to do a major public works project. It's difficult to do a major public works project that involves a railroad.

I don't mean to insult anybody with a railroad, but I think that is a fact. It's difficult to do a project that crosses state lines because there are different priorities. The Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee commuter rail line that (inaudible 0:33:26.3) proposed, that had a different priority within Wisconsin compared to Illinois. I think as does the Hiawatha Train Service upgrade, but we've got to

find a way to get those done if we are going to truly knit these regions together and not just talk about it. We have to find a way to get those done.

MR. SZABO: I think to Ken's point it really is a matter of identifying the potential of the markets. There was a time when Chicago-Milwaukee was the fastest growing passenger rail corridor in the nation, but then ultimately its growth got stunted by the fact that there wasn't more frequent service, there wasn't sufficient equipment to make the trains longer, and so it stunted the growth.

It's clearly a very strong market and with a 110-mph service you can have a roughly one-hour trip time from downtown Milwaukee to downtown Chicago. I think Ty wants to jump in and I bet you are going to pivot to commuter rail.

MR. WARNER: I'm going to commuter rail. You read my mind.

MS. BARRETT: Absolutely.

MR. WARNER: But if I could just take a step back, I think if there's a take away here it's how interrelated all of these things are. I think one of the benefits that the regional planning agencies bring to the table is the ability to help connect some of these dots.

We just expanded the runway at Gary Chicago

International Airport, and that was really more about a rail project than it was an airport project because of the Class I railroads that had to literally be moved to allow for that expansion, and you help broker those conversations, and that's something we bring to the table.

With talking about water issues, MPOs might be a thing that comes out of the transportation legislation to be mandated to be created, but we really can't talk about any of these issues independent of water issues, environment, housing, economic development, and all the three of these agencies -- I think one of the strengths for this region -- is that we are looking beyond just the roads and transportation.

That said, even the interplay in northwestern Indiana between freight and commuter rail. We are working really hard to double track the South Shore Line. We have the only commuter rail in Indiana and as opposed to a Metra system, which you have your spokes all across the region and you get to most parts, in Indiana it's only along the North Shore.

So in addition to trying to get the kind of rapid speeds and express service that Metra enjoys, we are also trying to expand commuter rail to the south to help expand the spokes, if you will, in northwestern Indiana to try to

create more rail access for folks across the entire region, and that's a good for the whole region. That expands the talent, workforce, opportunities, all of that by providing more options for folks to be able to get across this region.

MR. SZABO: And a big part of that is making rail capacity improvements in the state of Illinois on the Metra electric line. So those conversations -- this is a great example eventually some synergy to where we have been working together both Ty and I and Metra and NICTD to take a look at the capital improvements that need to be made inside Illinois in order to accommodate both Metra's needs as well as growth on the South Shore.

MS. BARRETT: Each of you have done a good job of bringing projects, specific projects to life in a way that reinforces what we heard from our first panel that mindless budgeting where it's across the board budget cuts make no sense or talking yourself out of we are in a budget crisis we can't afford to invest in anything are both wrongheaded.

You've filled in the blanks on that and that's what sometimes we don't do a good job of laying out for the public. We invest in Illinois because we haven't raised the gas tax in 19 years. An average driver, \$8.25 a month.

Think about how much you pay for your cable bill.

Think about how much you pay for other services including your cell phone and of course if you just have a conversation about the dollar amount, you've also missed it, but if we talk about these specific projects, about job-generating infrastructure whether it's water infrastructure for rail freight infrastructure or passenger rail infrastructure and quantify the time savings, the sector growth, the jobs benefits, that is a return on investment that is going to blow out of the water virtually anything else that we can choose to invest in.

Infrastructure -- economists may disagree on certain things but they agree on infrastructure being the way to prime the pump of our economy. So if we three states are stagnant growth trailing our potential, then these investments, the specific ones you heard about, should be tied to the revenue discussion as opposed to, we need more revenue for a list that maybe people have never heard from.

I almost think we make things too complicated by trying to talk about everything. Each of you have pulled out -- it's and not the whole list of everything as that CMAP is working on --

MR. SZABO: Far from.

MS. BARRETT: Right, but you talk about these are things that could help unlock job growth in Will County,

job access in Lake County, access to the central area. Union Station's upgrade. I was glad to hear Greg Hinz talk about that as an example of something that really all of us in the region understand. It's not just serving Metra, it's serving Amtrak, and it serves more people every day than Midway airport, which shocks most people I talk to, and they also don't know that Union Station is at capacity.

That is a tristate asset. That is not a city of Chicago transportation asset or a northeastern Illinois asset. It's a national asset and so doing so we really have an opportunity. So what do you think about a coordinated message that could perhaps get our business leadership on board with some key freight, water, and transit enhancements in a way that people could understand, "Oh, okay. That's what we are going to invest in. That's what's worth paying for."

MR. WARNER: Well, just real quick to your point talking about Union station and whatnot as we talk about high-speed rail from Chicago to Detroit or Chicago to Columbus, obviously if you haven't figured out where that is going to connect into the center city then you're kind of spinning your wheels a little bit until you figure out the problem, which just goes to show why the micro is

related to the macro picture.

But part of the issue with -- and I'll just use in northwestern Indiana since that's where I'm from for an example is trying to lay out the big picture. I think you hit it earlier, MarySue, what's the end goal that we are trying to get to and then all those other pieces start fitting into place and that's what carries the message.

In the case of NICTD and the South Shore Line, the message has been if we can get to the end state of what travel times are, what does that look like for people in the region. Instead of focusing and starting with here's the infrastructure pieces that have to get done, it's looking at the big picture of we are trying to get to this level of service; now to make that happen, how does that go.

So if this is getting to your question at all, I think something about that end state and then being able to show how these other little decisions that have to get made can contribute to that end state for the region is the message that has to be carried.

MS. BARRETT: Some of you will remember MPC was involved with our governmental partners a number of years ago in doing a study that many regions have done, kind of a cost-to-gridlock study, and it quantified basically the

congestion tax that all of us pay. That might be another part of the equation of we need to invest in these things that will have these benefits and today in Chicago you spend \$3,000 extra on transportation because you are sitting there. That's part of the cost.

MR. SZABO: So to your point about unifying the message, we do have an example here at least in the CMAP region of success on that on our freight principles and where we were able to pull together the seven county board chairs along with the City of Chicago and our CMAP chairman on a unified letter, unified set of principles, on goods movement and talking to congressmen in our Illinois delegation, this was the first time they had ever seen those seven county board chairs come together on an issue. It's an incredibly diverse region for us.

MS. BARRETT: It's a great example.

MR. SZABO: From there then the Illinois delegation came together, a majority of them, not all, but I think roughly 14 of 17 came together on a unified letter to their congressional leadership. So it is perhaps humble beginnings but significant, and we need to look at other opportunities like that to where we can grow on key issues; growth that unified message across state borders.

MS. BARRETT: So you are taking us exactly where we

want to wind up which is if we have a clear understanding of our assets and there are near-term opportunities that we know would make a difference in unlocking sector growth, unlocking job opportunities, quality-of-life, time savings, all of those things that will help us position this region for growth, we need our political leaders to see the value of not being in a boxing ring together.

If you are political advisor, it doesn't have to be to your own governor, you can swap, to any of our leaders, what would you advise them because we know how the narrative normally plays out, which is, "You can't send jobs there. You're elected from the voters from one states, you can't support an intermodal facility in conjunction with the Gary Airport because that's in Indiana." How do we get beyond that knowing that of course a bunch of Illinoisans would get those jobs? What is missing that makes it safe. I'm not just picking on the governors although I'm picking on them a little bit.

MR. WARNER: I'll just take a stab. I think the better definition of the problem helps. What I mean by that is it used to be, we used to think of all of our problems of being solved in very clear jurisdictional boundaries. This is a municipal-level problem. This is a county-level problem. This is a state-level problem. And

really the discussion and the effective solutions have all revolved into more fluid categories. This is a neighborhood problem. This is a regional problem.

It's no longer locked to those municipal boundaries, and the more that we, I think, talk about these issues in terms of the megaregion, depending how you define that -- megaregion might be too large, if you look at the America 2050 definition, but however you define this three-state region. If you look at that area and talk about the problems in that cohesive context, defining the problem I think is going to help.

MS. BARRETT: Connecting a local problem to a system-wide problem.

MR. WARNER: Exactly.

MR. SZABO: And then the solution is dialogue, dialogue, dialogue. It's like real estate; location, location, location.

MS. BARRETT: There are some people in the room here who have relationships with these elected officials, and so we are in part asking for your help.

Ken, did you want to jump in on that?

MR. YUNKER: Yes. I would only echo what has been said to say I think we need to do a better job of explaining why this multi -- it's important to better knit

together this multistate region and then identify the few key projects that are essential to that and then try and get action on those few key projects.

MS. BARRETT: Because success begets success, and we need some.

We are out of time, and I don't want to be the panel that gets us behind schedule, but I'm also told that there may be a quick question or two in the audience, so shall we take a couple more minutes?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Two minutes.

MS. BARRETT: All right. We'll do it really quick. Yes? Here comes the microphone if you could introduce yourself.

ALAN PERLSTEIN: I'm Alan Perlstein for the Mid-West Energy Research Consortium. Is there a role for a regional authority similar to the New York-New Jersey Port Authority for trains, rails, rivers that drive our transportation network?

MR. SZABO: Yes, and if you take a look at the GROW AMERICA Act that the administration introduced a couple of years ago, at least in the rail sector, I was a part of creating a proposal, legislative authority, for states to come together to create regional rail authorities.

Now, I think in your question you would argue that it

could and should be grown, but at least for the rail piece of it, there was in fact a proposal where the states would come together collectively, create this authority, to look at it on a much more regional basis and make sure that everybody was executing based on the bigger picture.

MS. BARRETT: I'm sorry we don't have time for a follow-up just because of our time. I can't quite see on this side of the room, was there anyone else?

MR. YUNKER: Let me just jump in if no one is raising their hand, and I would just say Alan, certainly it makes sense, okay, however I would say as well just having a regional transit authority in southeastern Wisconsin, a transportation authority makes sense too, and we haven't been able to move the needle on that. It's come close, but no cigar yet. I think that that's something that for a number of reasons makes sense to just looking at the commuting that occurs today and will increasingly occur in the future across these multistate regions.

MR. WARNER: We need smart ports, smart rivers, smart rails.

MS. BARRETT: Yes, the multimodal -- we would, I'm sure, concur on that vision.

Is that it? Okay, thank you very much for your attention and for helping us lay the groundwork.

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