October, 2025

The Freight Landscape

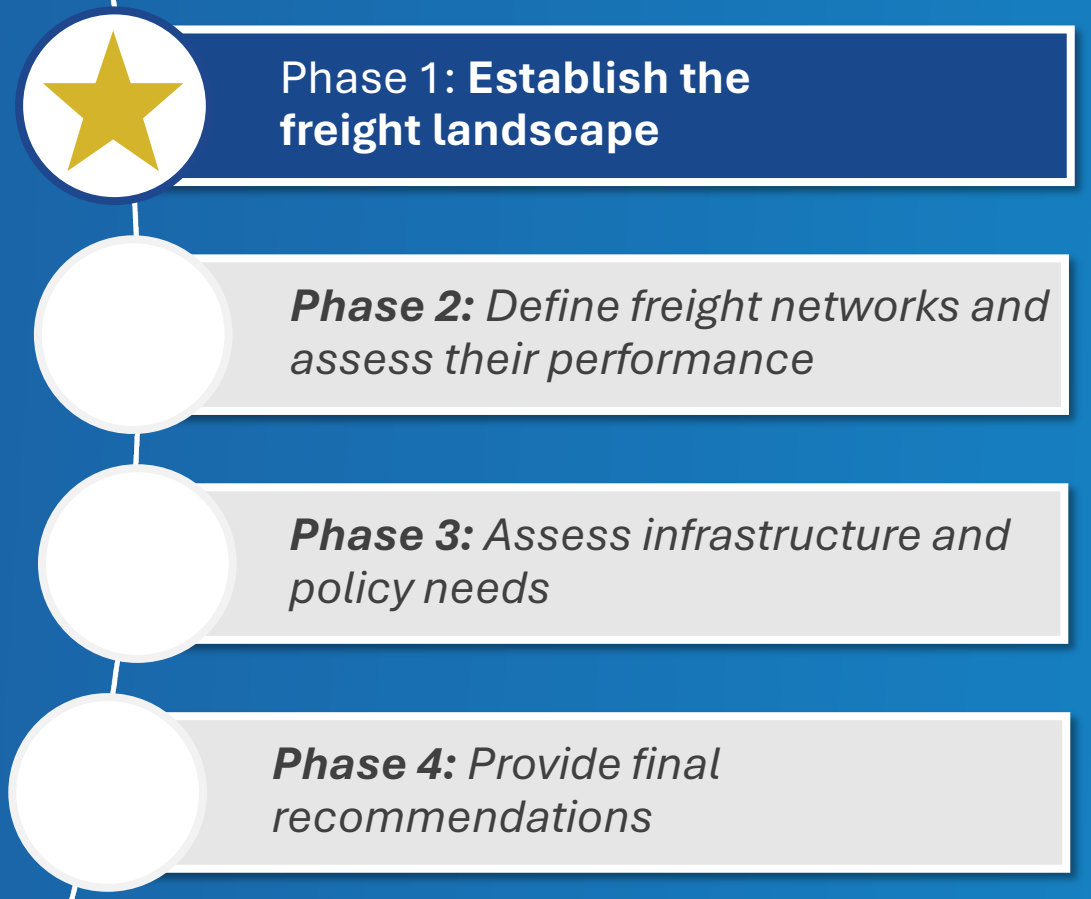
Regional Freight System Assessment
Phase 1

Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning

Regional Freight System Assessment

The Regional Freight System Assessment reviews planning issues for the multimodal freight network in northeastern Illinois, including infrastructure, public policy, and investment programs. The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) conducts this work as part of its ongoing research and analysis in the development of the next Regional Transportation Plan — which is expected in October 2026 — as well as the Century Plan. This work includes four deliverables:

- **Phase 1** establishes the freight landscape, defining key terms and concepts, as well as introducing goods movement as a key planning topic for the region.
- **Phase 2** defines freight networks, assesses their performance, providing maps and other technical reference materials.
- **Phase 3** identifies both capital investment and public policy opportunities to support the regional freight system.
- **Phase 4** provides final recommendations synthesizing the findings.



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Section 1: Why focus on the freight system?

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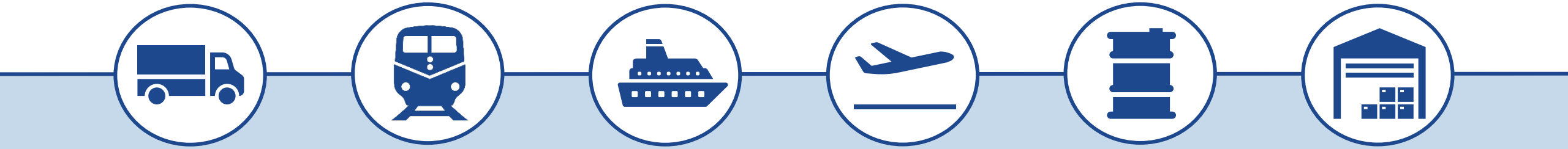
Northeastern Illinois is a multimodal freight hub

The region* is home to extensive multimodal freight activity. The freight network includes:



A **trucking** industry made up of over 12,000 establishments with 108,000 employees

A **rail** network that transports more than 11 million rail cars each year

Three **marine** ports with access to the Great Lakes, the Saint Lawrence Seaway, and the Mississippi River

Two **airports**, including O'Hare — one of the nation's largest air cargo hubs

Pipelines that transport crude oil, natural gas, and refined petroleum products

More than 1,800 **freight support** establishments, including a rapidly growing warehouse sector

* Throughout the Regional Freight Assessment, CMAP's focus is on the seven-county region including Cook, DuPage, Lake, Kane, Kendall, McHenry, and Will counties. In some cases, data are only available at a scale that differs from CMAP's planning area, in which case the report will indicate the unit of analysis.

The region’s freight economy is robust

Freight has long been a critical element of northeastern Illinois’ economy and exceeds pre-pandemic levels by many measures, driven in part by growth in the local trucking and urban freight and warehousing sectors.

The freight network:

Transported goods to, from, and within the region in 2023 weighing **nearly 700 million tons** and worth **over a trillion dollars**.*

Provided more than **210,000 jobs** in 2024, primarily in trucking and freight support industries like warehousing and arrangement, but also in the rail, maritime, pipeline, and aviation industries.

Supported more than 14,000 freight and freight-support **establishments** in 2022**.**

Enables the 8.5 million residents to access the goods they need and want, connecting the region’s many businesses to national and international markets.

* Total freight flow statistics are based on Freight Analysis Framework (FAF) data, which uses a larger definition of the Chicago region that exceeds CMAP’s seven-county planning area. Dollar figures are quoted in constant 2017 dollars, consistent with FAF v5.

Freight operations affect everyone

While the freight network is an essential part of the northeastern Illinois' supply chain, the freight network is also a significant source of emissions and other externalities. It impacts everyone in the region, including both people who work in the freight industry and the millions people who do not.

The freight network:

Produces emissions that worsen air quality and contribute to negative public health impacts.

Leads to crashes and spills that harm workers, travelers, and nearby residents.

Runs partly on public infrastructure, such as highways, that are built and maintained with public funds and shared with other users including emergency responders and private citizens.

The region can work together to create the freight system we deserve

The freight system is shaped by many private and public stakeholders with the diverse (though often complementary) goals, such as:

Efficiency

Safety

Sustainability

Economic development

Public health

Our current system has made progress toward these goals, crystalized from previously adopted plans (e.g., ON TO 2050 or the Illinois State Freight Plan's vision statement). Still, the system could work better: goods could flow with reliability and lower cost; crashes and emissions could be reduced; and freight-related land uses could coexist with, and even promote, thriving communities.

That system is within reach.

Section 2: Introduction to freight concepts and trends

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What is freight?

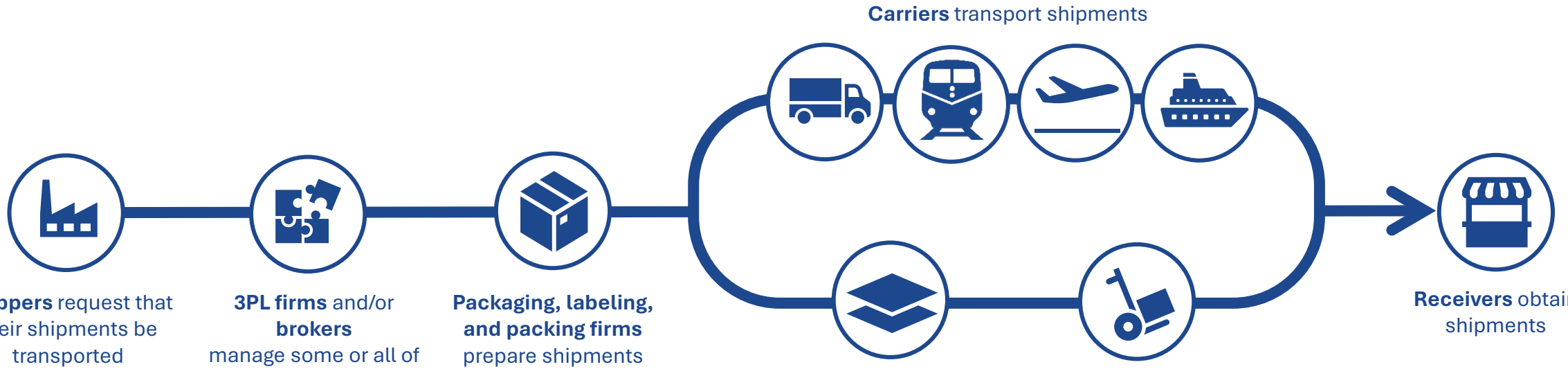
- Freight consists of goods or merchandise carried from place to place.
- Freight shipments range in size from bulk commodities carried in barges (like those pictured on the right) down to small packages. Even waste being transported is considered freight.
- Shipments can flow between combinations of businesses and consumers. Freight may be shipped internationally or, more likely, just across town.

Barges on the Calumet River, Port of Chicago

How does freight move?

Freight movement, or **logistics**, is facilitated by many different parties who each perform a specialized function. Freight logistics is an essential stage of the **supply chain**. Terms of trade are established to define responsibilities, costs, and risks; to simplify transactions; and to ensure clear agreements.*

Fundamentally, freight logistics involves moving goods from **shippers to carriers to receivers**. Sometimes, shippers handle their own logistics requirements with their own fleets of trucks and other equipment. Often, shippers seek additional logistics support from freight brokers, 3rd party logistics (3PL) firms, specialized shipment preparation firms, and others.



* Clarity of commercial terms is critical for goods transferred across town or across an ocean. See a discussion of the International Chamber of Commerce's terms at https://incodocs.com/blog/incoterms-2020-explained-the-complete-guide/.

What happens en route? Intermodalism

Our freight system is multimodal. That is, there are choices about what mode a shipment will use (rail, marine, truck, etc.). Sometimes, freight travels from shipper to receiver by a single mode, as when a truck transports a shipment directly from factory to retail center. Often, though, logistics is more complex.

Freight is intermodal when it is moved by more than one mode of transportation, such as via a ship, then via a train, then via a truck. Intermodalism allows the lowest-cost or most practical mode to be used for each segment of a shipment's journey.

Freight is transferred between modes at **intermodal terminals**. A common form of intermodal freight transportation is **drayage**, or the transportation of shipping containers a short distance via truck.

Containers lifted between trains and truck chassis, UP Joliet Intermodal Terminal

What happens en route? Urban freight and last-mile delivery

Often, freight must go to a store or individual consumer located in a dense urban area. Transporting freight the **last mile** to these destinations is often the most expensive and challenging segment of the journey. Carriers sometimes use special modes such as couriers, or even cargo bikes, robots, and drones. Consolidating delivery points can reduce negative impacts of urban freight in congested locations.

Substantial urban congestion has resulted in many innovations in last-mile deliveries as firms seek to reduce congestion-related expenses.

A Coco delivery robot in Chicago's Fulton Market District

What happens en route?
Interdependencies among freight modes

One mode of freight transportation may increasingly depend on another mode for the beginning or end of a shipment. Because of this, challenges in one mode's performance may echo in a related freight transportation mode. For example, intermodal rail may depend on marine transportation for a shipment's journey across the ocean, then truck transportation for the shipment's delivery to a local distribution center. The graphic below summarizes important relationships between the modes.

Important interdependencies between freight modes

Mode	Is this mode often a first-mile or last-mile mode?	Is this mode often a line-haul mode?	Related first- and last-mile modes	Related line-haul modes
Truck	✓	✓		
Rail (intermodal)	✗	✓		
Rail (carload)	✓	✓	None	
Marine	✓	✓		
Aviation	✗	✓		None
Urban Freight	✓	✗	None	

Freight volume trends: data shows little changes in volume, but continued economic strength.

The tonnages and dollar-values of freight flows to, from, and within USDOT's 13-county Chicago freight analysis zone show full recovery to pre-pandemic levels of freight activity, but not substantial growth to higher levels. The data also show that the region's imports are greater than exports on a tonnage basis, although the value of exports is more than $100 billion greater than imports.

Freight flows to, from, and within the greater Chicago region, 2019 and 2023

Type of flow	Thousands of tons, 2019	Thousands of tons, 2023	Change in tons, in thousands	Value, 2019 (millions of 2017 dollars)	Value, 2023 (millions of 2017 dollars)	Change in value, in millions
Inbound flows	284,358	300,204	15,846	376,334	381,033	4,699
Outbound flows	193,405	187,048	(6,357)	476,679	496,254	19,575
Internal flows	205,005	199,676	(5,329)	282,846	294,378	11,532
Total flows	682,768	686,928	4,160	1,135,859	1,171,665	35,806

Data source: Freight Analysis Framework V5.6.1 data tabulation tool, January 2025. The Illinois part of the current FAF zone consists of the counties of Bureau, Cook, DeKalb, DuPage, Grundy, Kane, Kankakee, Kendall, Lake, LaSalle, McHenry, Putnam, and Will. Excludes urban freight and local distribution.

Section 3: Freight landscape review, by mode

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3.1: Trucking landscape

The trucking industry carries business and consumer goods using the region's public roads. Most goods in the region are carried by truck. Trucks carried 372,847,000 tons of commodities to, from, or within a 13-county Chicago freight analysis area in 2023. More than 108,000 people were employed in the seven-county region in trucking in 2024.

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Inside the trucking industry

Who's who

Regulators

The **Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA)** oversees interstate commercial motor vehicle safety and enforcement, including commercial driver's license (CDL) standards, motor carrier registration, and hours-of-service regulations. FMCSA and the **Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA)** each have responsibilities for hazardous materials regulation. At the state level, the **Illinois Secretary of State** issues commercial drivers' licenses and commercial vehicle registrations. The **Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT)** partners with the **Illinois State Police** on compliance reviews and safety audits. IDOT also conducts periodic safety inspections required for intrastate vehicles and, on behalf of FMCSA, interstate vehicles as well. Lastly, IDOT and **local agencies** establish truck size and weight regulations on highways under their jurisdiction, and issue permits for oversized vehicles, consistent with Illinois statutes.

Other players

The trucking industry is comprised of thousands of private-sector carriers. Many shippers also maintain their own dedicated fleets, termed "private fleets."

What's what

Truck types

Truck **weight class** refers to a truck's total weight capacity including both truck and load.

Single-unit trucks include all vehicles on a single frame, such as a standard box truck, dump truck, or van. **Multi-unit trucks** have more than one frame and are usually comprised of a truck connected to one or more semi-trailers.

Contract arrangements

Truckload (TL) trucking refers to an arrangement in which a truck carries freight from one shipper at a time. **Less-than-truckload (LTL)** trucking refers to an arrangement in which a truck carries freight from multiple shippers at the same time.

Other equipment

A **chassis** is a trailer used to transport a container.

Inside the trucking industry

How it fits together

Public roads

The trucking industry runs on roadway infrastructure that is funded and maintained by several levels of government. The **Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)** administers federal highway investments through formula and competitive grant programs. Additional funding and maintenance are provided by the **Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT)** as well as county, township, and municipal departments of transportation. **CMAP** convenes stakeholders to coordinate investments.

The trucking industry's use of public roads sometimes raises maintenance and operational concerns. Trucks, with their heavy loads, have a greater effect on roadway wear and tear than personal vehicles. Building and maintaining infrastructure to withstand the deterioration increases costs for the public sector. Highway jurisdiction agencies must frequently balance trucking-industry interests with cost constraints and community impacts. From the trucking industry's perspective, roadways are a resource critical to industry operations, but which the industry has no control over. Sometimes, local shippers and receivers may make shipping arrangements that are not optimal given local infrastructure and traffic operations. Better coordination about issues like geometric constraints and regulations is a concern for the industry and highway agencies alike.

Intra-regional (local) and long-distance (over-the-road) trucking

Much of the trucking industry's activities (and employees) are strictly local or regional in scope. There are many trucking-industry workers that work strictly on local deliveries, with goods varying from parcels delivered to homes, to groceries taken from warehouses to neighborhood stores, to construction equipment delivered to a job site. Such workers can be at home each night and often have good insight into delivery route conditions.

On the other hand, over-the-road trucking involves shipments that can range in the hundreds or even thousands of miles. Drivers are sometimes unfamiliar with the route. In addition, over-the-road drivers are often independent contractors or are part of a small trucking firm, so local depots for parking and a place to sleep are unavailable. Basics like rest and a safe parking space are often a big challenge for over-the-road drivers. Some agencies are working with the trucking industry to improve conditions for over-the-road drivers. Over-the road trucking is also a challenge for emissions reductions and other technological changes, since infrastructure and other support may be necessary in many jurisdictions across North America. For example, an over-the-road electric truck may require new charging infrastructure everywhere it operates.

Truck weight classes

Trucks are categorized by weight class.

Light-duty trucks carry gross weights (including loads) up to 10,000 pounds.

Medium-duty trucks carry gross weights up to 26,000 pounds.

Heavy-duty trucks carry loads greater than 26,000 pounds.

	Federal Highway Administration vehicle classifications by gross vehicle weight, medium-duty and heavy-duty trucks		
	Vehicle Class	**Gross Weight**	**Estimated Illinois statewide vehicles from the 2021 Vehicle Inventory and Use Survey (VIUS)**
Medium-duty	Class 3	10,001 – 14,000 lbs.	63,330
	Class 4	14,001 – 16,000 lbs.	24,257
	Class 5	16,001 – 19,500 lbs.	19,496
	Class 6	19,501 – 26,000 lbs.	21,136
Heavy-duty	Class 7	26,001 – 33,000 lbs.	21,145
	Class 8	> 33,000 lbs.	144,659

Source: These estimated counts are for Illinois-registered trucks from the U.S. Census 2021 Vehicle Inventory and Use Survey (VIUS).

Single-unit truck examples

Single-unit trucking is mostly a local service. The average travel is less than 100 miles per day.

Box truck

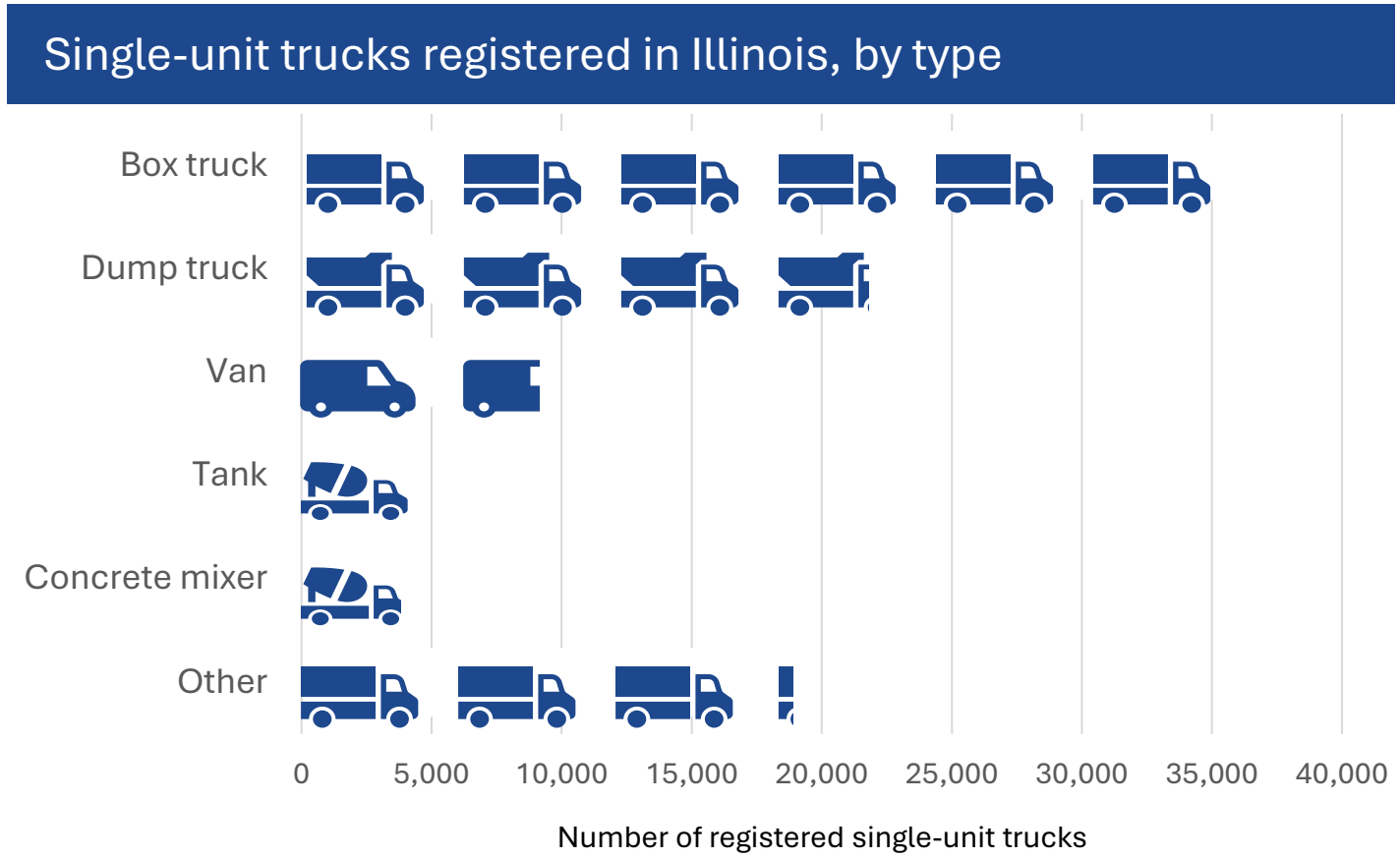
Stakebed truck

Van

Types of single-unit trucks

Box trucks and **dump trucks** are the most common single-unit trucks, comprising 60% of single-unit trucks registered in Illinois.

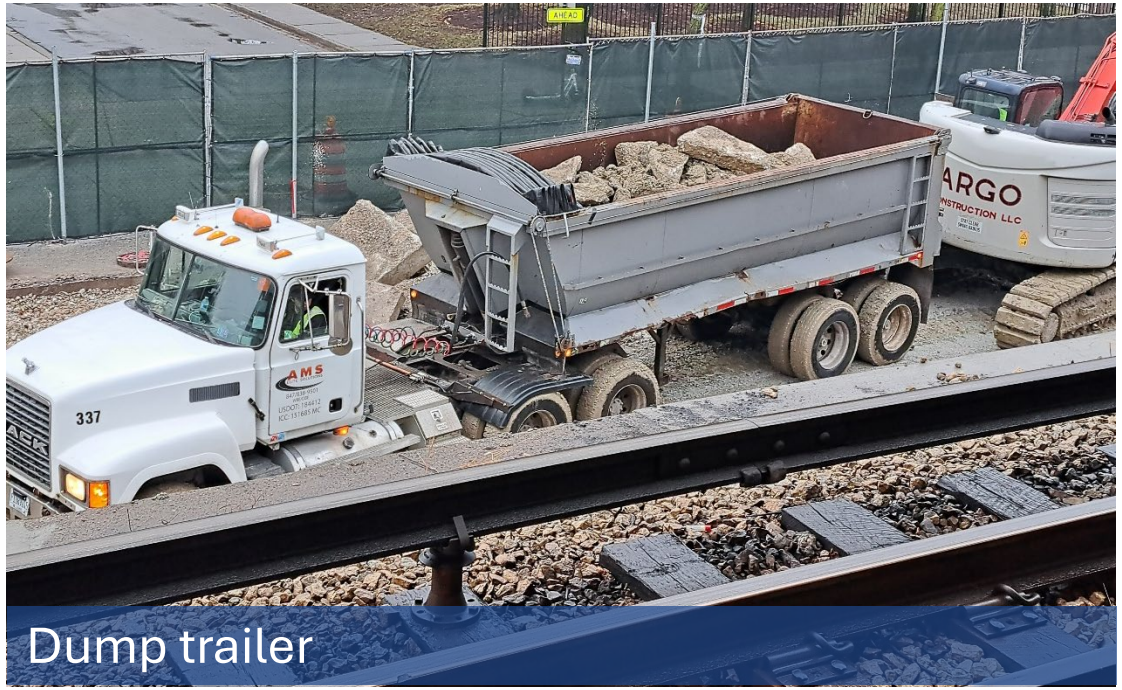
However, carriers also operate thousands of more **specialized trucks** across the state, including garbage trucks, tow trucks, cranes, vacuum trucks, beverage or bay trucks, and hooklifts.



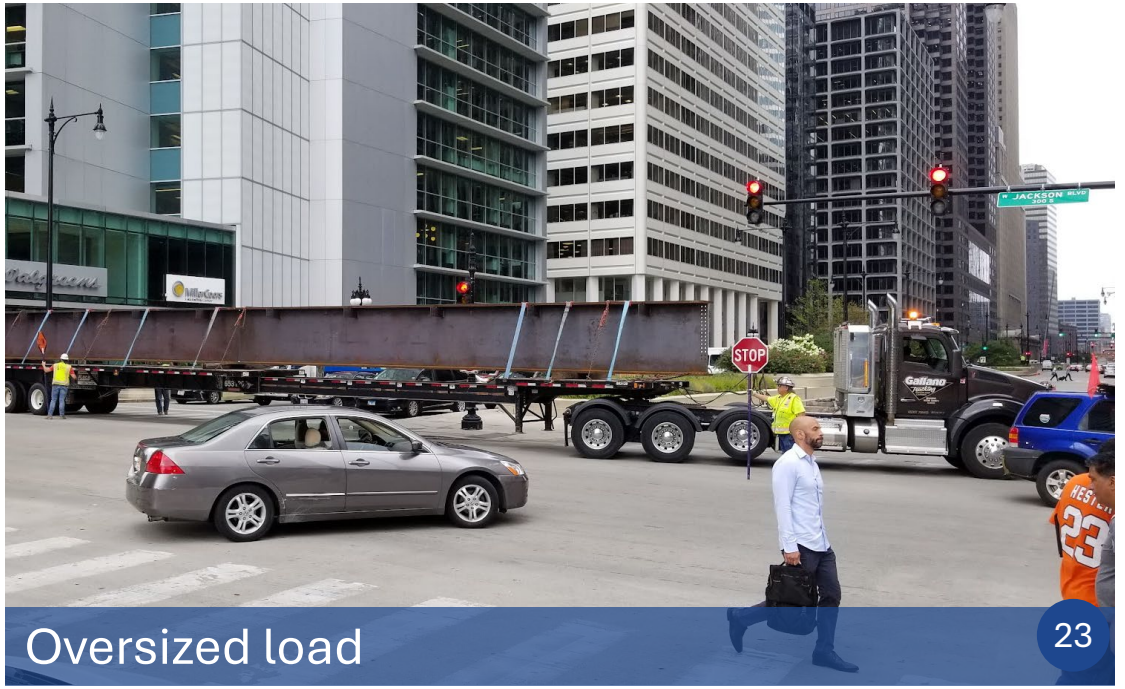
Source: These estimated counts and average mileage for Illinois-registered single-unit trucks are from the 2021 Vehicle Inventory and Use Survey (VIUS). Excludes light-duty vehicles, service vehicles, and body types with fewer than 500 vehicles. Percentages do not reflect light-duty or service vehicles.

Multi-unit truck examples

Tractor semi-trailer combination



Dump trailer

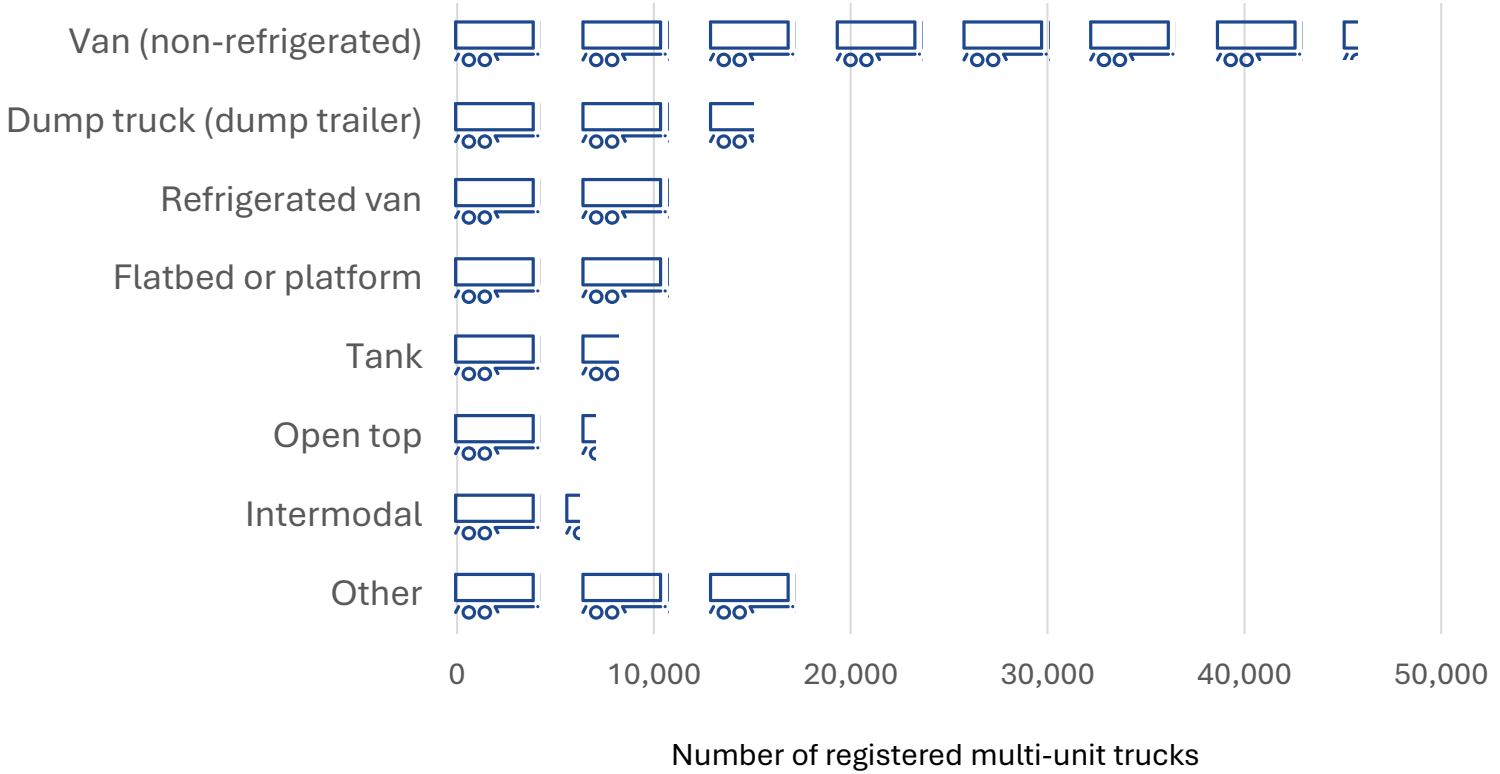


Oversized load

Types of multi-unit trucks

Multi-unit truck markets are also very highly specialized. Annual mileage for multi-unit trucks tends to be higher than for single-unit trucks.

Multi-unit trucks registered in Illinois, by trailer type



Source: These estimated counts and average mileage for Illinois-registered multi-unit trucks are from the 2021 Vehicle Inventory and Use Survey (VIUS). They reflect the type of trailer most often used. Excludes service vehicles and trailer types with fewer than 500 vehicles. Percentages do not reflect service vehicles.

Trucking volumes

According to USDOT estimates, the region's trucking industry handled 372,847,000 tons of commodities shipped to, from, or within the 13-county Chicago area used for commodity-flow analysis.* Almost half of these shipments were within the Chicago analysis area, but the remainder comprised truck-based trade with the remainder of the nation and, for 21,595,000 tons, international trade.

Local distribution, mail, parcels, and construction are not included. Intermodal containerized trade is tabulated with rail transport. Though intermodal transportation could involve truck transportation, it is not tabulated here.

* The Chicago commodity flow survey analysis area (Illinois part) consists of the Illinois counties of Bureau, Cook, DeKalb, DuPage, Grundy, Kane, Kankakee, Kendall, Lake, LaSalle, McHenry, Putnam, and Will. Data limited to just the seven-county CMAP region is not available.

Truck shipments by direction of flow in the Chicago economic analysis area, 2023

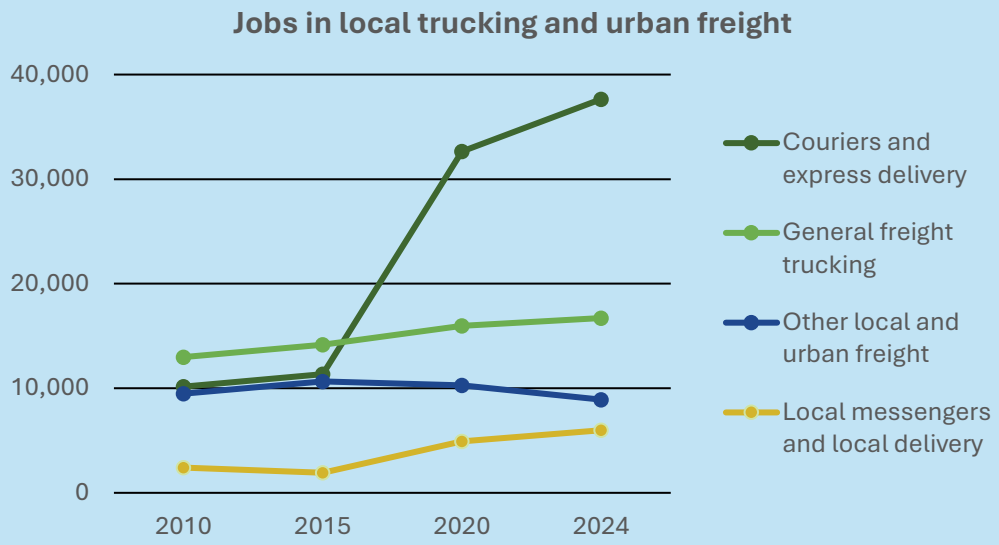
Outbound flows	Domestic: 84,619,000 tons; International: 9,696,000 tons; Total: 94,312,000 tons
	Top five domestic outbound commodity groups: base metals; other foodstuffs; cereal grains; chemical products; basic chemicals
	Top five international outbound commodity groups: coal; machinery; motorized vehicles; waste and scrap; other foodstuffs
	Shares of top five commodity groups: Domestic: 39%; International: 44%
Inbound flows	Domestic: 95,857,000 tons; International: 11,902,000 tons; Total: 107,758,000 tons
	Top five domestic inbound commodity groups: cereal grains; other foodstuffs; base metals; animal feed; mixed freight.
	Top five international inbound commodity groups: plastics/rubber; electronics; machinery; base metals; non-metal mineral products
	Shares of top five commodity groups: Domestic: 45%; International: 37%
Intra-regional flows	Total flows: 170,777,000 tons
	Top five commodity groups for intra-regional flows: Gasoline; non-metal mineral products; fuel oils; natural gas and other fossil fuel products; waste and scrap
	Share of top 5 commodity groups: 59.3%

"Intraregional" means that both origin and destination are within the analysis area. Source: CMAP analysis of USDOT, FAF v5.6.1. Top commodities for more than one directional flow are colored alike. More detail is in the Addendum.

Local trucking and urban freight in the regional economy

Employment

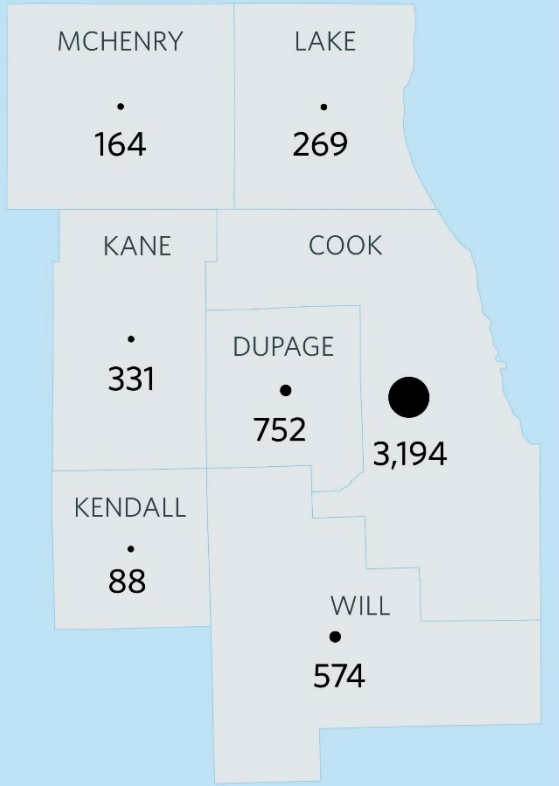
Local and urban freight is the largest carrier employment sector in the region's freight system. Partly to support rapidly growing e-commerce, sector employment nearly doubled in the period from 2010 to 2024.



Note: "Other local and urban freight" includes (1) used household and office goods moving, (2) specialized freight trucking, and (3) solid, hazardous, and other waste collection.
Source: CMAP analysis of EMSI Lightcast Q4 2024 dataset.

Establishments

Local trucking and urban-freight establishments are concentrated in Cook County. As a share of all establishments, they are close to the regional average share of 2.34% for local trucking/urban freight.

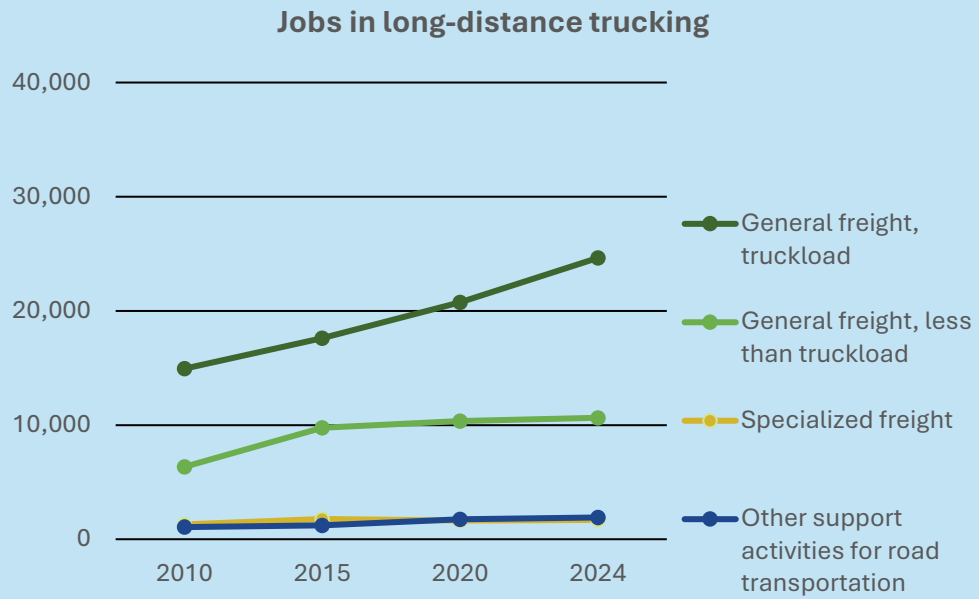


Note: An "establishment" is a single location for a business. A business may have many establishments. Detailed establishment counts by industry and county are in the appendix.
Source: CMAP analysis of US Census County Business Patterns, 2022

Long-distance (over-the-road) trucking in the regional economy

Employment

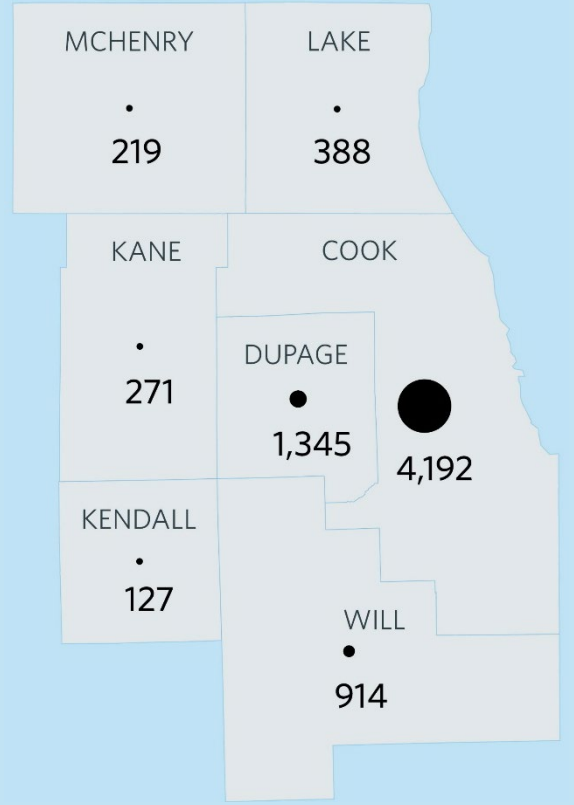
The long-distance trucking sector in northeastern Illinois has a little more than half of the jobs as the local and urban freight sector. Growth has been strong, but not as fast as the local and urban freight sector.



Source: CMAP analysis of EMSI Lightcast Q4 2024 dataset.

Establishments

As with local trucking, there are thousands of long-distance general trucking establishments. While long-distance trucking establishments are concentrated in Cook, DuPage, and Will counties also have many establishments.



Note: An "establishment" is a single location for a business. A business may have many establishments. Detailed establishment counts by industry and county are in the appendix.
Source: CMAP analysis of US Census County Business Patterns, 2022

3.2: Rail landscape

Northeastern Illinois is the nation's busiest rail hub. In 2022, of an estimated 33,884,432 rail cars loaded in the U.S., 11,073,055 (nearly one-third), originated, terminated, or passed through Illinois.*

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*Source: The Surface Transportation Board provides a tabulation of annual cars loaded and terminated by state at https://www.stb.gov/reports-data/economic-data/ (in the carloads and volumes tab). The total of cars loaded was estimated from the 2022 public waybill sample posted at https://www.stb.gov/reports-data/waybill/. The estimate is the total of the "expanded carloads" field in the database.

The Norfolk Southern Railway's 47th Street intermodal rail terminal on the South Side of Chicago

Inside the rail industry

Who's who

Regulators

Regulators include the **Federal Railroad Administration (FRA)** and the **Surface Transportation Board (STB)** at the federal level, and the **Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC)** at the state level. FRA is concerned with the safety and efficiency of equipment and infrastructure. STB is concerned with the economic regulation of common carriers engaged in interstate commerce. ICC is concerned with highway-rail crossing safety and hazardous material safety.

Carriers

Class I, class II, and class III railroads are designated by the STB for regulatory purposes based on annual revenues. Class I railroads have annual revenues greater than $1.0537 billion, as of 2024. Class II and Class III railroads are, collectively, **short-line railroads**.

Other players

The **Association of American Railroads (AAR)** coordinates standards, technologies, and data sharing among railroads to assure interoperability, network fluidity, and safety. Much of the data management is through AAR's subsidiary, Railinc. **The Federal Highway Administration** and **IDOT** administer Section 130 highway-rail crossing safety funds.

What's what

Carload equipment

Carload trains are comprised of railcars that never leave the rail system. Boxcars, tank cars, and hopper cars are typical carload railcars. Carload trains are broken up in classification yards and rearranged in a new train to send off to a different line or a different carrier.

Unit trains are a shipment composed of usually identical railcars with the same origin and destination. Unit trains can skip classification yards.

Intermodal equipment

Intermodal containers are standardized shipping boxes that are transferred among ships, trains, and trucks. **Intermodal trains** are comprised only of intermodal containers and trailers. On trains, the containers are nestled in specially designed **wellcars**. On trucks, the containers are placed on specially designed **intermodal chassis**. An older and declining technology, **intermodal trailers,** sit on **flatcars.** Trailers can be hooked up to a truck tractor. Intermodal containers and trailers are moved between trains and trucks at large **intermodal terminals** in Cook, DuPage, and Will Counties**.**

Inside the rail industry

How it fits together

Rail services are an important component of many shippers' logistics portfolios. Shippers of bulk material seek property abutting rail lines so those shippers can ship carload rail freight. In northeastern Illinois, Class II and Class III railroads (collectively, "short-line" railroads) are some of the most important carload rail carriers for local shippers. Still, almost all goods shipped by rail eventually end up on a Class I railroad. Class I railroads link Chicago and the Midwest to shipment origins and destinations across the country, across Canada and Mexico, and to the ports that serve as gateways to international trade.

When railroads dominated freight service more than 100 years ago, all rail service was carload-based and slow. As shippers and receivers increasingly used highways and trucks to speed up their transportation, those businesses relocated away from railroad tracks. The related trends of containerization and intermodalism in the last seventy-five years allowed railroads to still serve shippers and receivers that were not located adjacent to railroad lines. Rather, specialized trucking services (drayage) provided the link between intermodal terminals and dispersed businesses. Shippers that can containerize their products can access rail service from anywhere.

In addition to the six Class I freight railroads, northeastern Illinois is served by 17 short-line railroads including lines extending to Iowa, Wisconsin, and Indiana. But some of the most heavily-trafficked lines in the region are those "switching and terminal railroads," some jointly owned by larger Class-I railroads, that connect the Class I railroads to each other's classification yards and terminals. Belt Railway Company of Chicago and the Indiana Harbor Belt Railway are important terminal railroads. A full list of railways in the region is provided on the next slide.

Source: The STB classification process is explained here: https://www.stb.gov/reports-data/economic-data/ (in the Revenue Deflator tab). Annual STB deflator factors are posted here: https://www.stb.gov/reports-data/economic-data/railroad-revenue-deflator-factors/. Terminal railroads: 49 CFR 1201 Part A 1-1 (d).

Local carriers

All six **Class I freight railroads** operate in northeastern Illinois, as do many regional and short-line railroads.

Short-line railroads have an important role in the development of rail-served industrial sites.

Northeastern Illinois freight railroads, 2023

Class I railroads	Reporting Mark	Railroad Name
	BNSF	BNSF Railway
	CN	Canadian National Railway
	CPKC	CPKC
	CSXT	CSX Transportation
	NS	Norfolk Southern
	UP	Union Pacific Railroad
Class II railroads	IAIS	Iowa Interstate Railroad
	WSOR	Wisconsin and Southern Railroad
Class III railroads	CSS	Chicago, South Shore, and South Bend Railroad
	IR	Illinois Railway

Switching and terminal railroads (Class III)	Reporting Mark	Railroad Name
	AVRR	Ag Valley Railroad
	BJRY	Burlington Junction Railway
	BRC	Belt Railway Company of Chicago
	CCUO	Chicago Chemung Railroad
	CERR	Cicero Central RR
	CJR	Chicago Junction Railway
	CLCY	Chessie Logistics Co.
	CPRR	Chicago Port Railroad
	CRL	Chicago Rail Link
	CSPX	Chicago, St Paul & Pacific Railroad
	IHB	Indiana Harbor Belt Railroad
	MWRD	Metropolitan Water Reclamation
	SCIH	South Chicago & Indiana Harbor

Source: CMAP, with assistance of Illinois Commerce Commission. The table does not include switching and terminal railroads without reporting marks.

Types of railcars

Rail serves a wide variety of shipments. The table on this page shows the type of railcar used for outbound shipments, from Chicago to other regions, while the next page shows commodities moved.

Key points: (1) Although intermodal trailers and containers make up most units, they are less than half of the tonnage. (2) The average intermodal shipment (trailers/ containers) weight is 13 tons, while hopper cars are, for example, 103 tons.

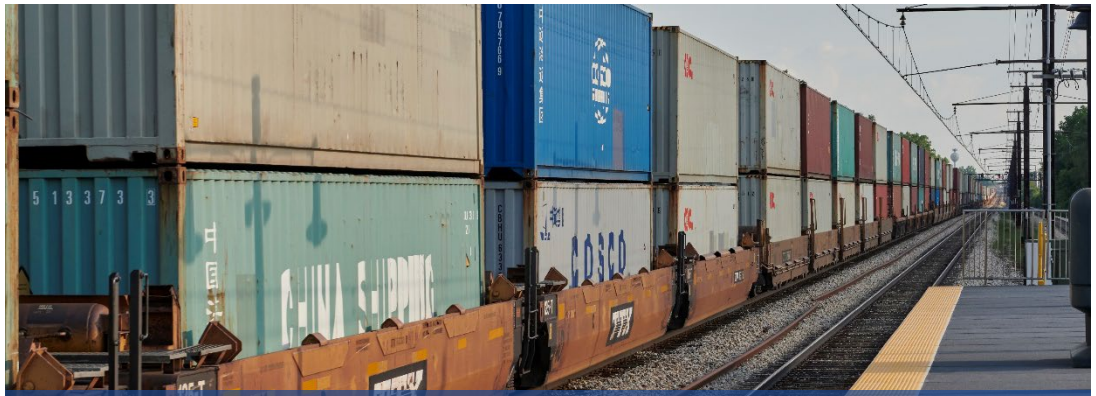
Rail shipments originating in the Chicago economic analysis area, 2022

Type of railcar	Tons	Units (carloads, containers, or trailers)
Containers and trailers	37,339,165 (46.8%)	2,901,420 (85.6%)
Hopper cars	25,111,507 (31.5%)	243,283 (7.2%)
Gondola cars	8,011,897 (10.0%)	85,752 (2.5%)
Tank cars	6,767,188 (8.5%)	82,352 (2.4%)
Other flatcars	1,662,235 (2.1%)	56,565 (1.7%)
Boxcars	439,271 (0.6%)	10,555 (0.3%)
Other rail equipment	322,702 (0.4%)	4,087 (0.1%)
Refrigerated railcars	84,845 (0.1%)	3,995 (0.1%)
Total	79,738,810 (100.0%)	3,388,009 (100%)

Source: STB, Public Waybill Sample, 2022. The STB's Chicago analysis area includes these Illinois counties: Boone, Bureau, Carroll, Cook, DeKalb, DeWitt, DuPage, Grundy, Iroquois, Kane, Kankakee, Kendall, LaSalle, Lake, Lee, Livingston, McHenry, McLean, Ogle, Putnam, Stephenson, Will, and Winnebago; the Indiana counties of Jasper, LaPorte, Lake, Newton, and Porter; and the Wisconsin counties of Rock and Kenosha. This geography corresponds to the 1995 US Bureau of Economic Analysis area for Chicago. Excludes rebilled shipments except those originating in the Chicago analysis area.

Examples of rail freight in the region

Locomotives are mobile power stations. They generate electricity that is used by small motors that move the wheels.



Double-stacked intermodal containers in well cars

Tank cars

Rail freight volumes

Rail serves a variety of commodities and industries. The table on this page shows the top commodities for inbound, outbound, and through traffic. Top commodities for more than one directional flow are similarly colored. For inbound and outbound loads, containerized mixed goods (often consumer goods) are the top commodity. For through shipments, industrial commodities are more important. All these industries are stakeholders in the region's rail network. For more details, see the data addendum.

Rail shipment commodities by direction of flow in the Chicago economic analysis area, 2022

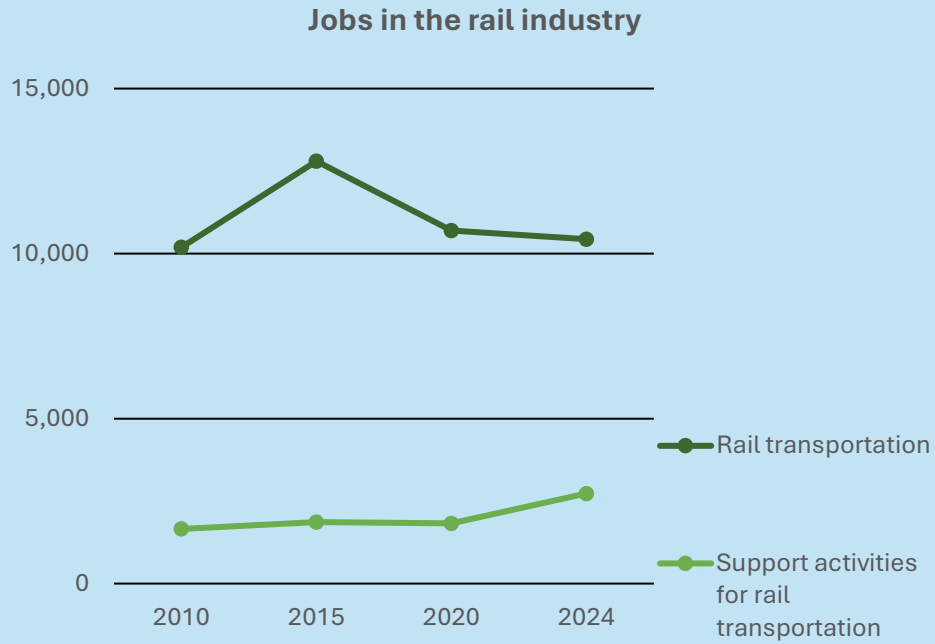
Outbound flows	Total flows: 79,738,810 tons
	Top five outbound commodity groups: miscellaneous mixed shipments (in containers); farm products; nonmetallic minerals (except fuels); primary metal products; and chemicals or allied products
	Share of top five commodity groups: 72.0%
	Number of outbound commodity groups: 28
Inbound flows	Total flows: 75,266,376 tons
	Top five inbound commodity groups: miscellaneous mixed shipments (in containers); chemicals or allied products; coal; food or kindred products; and pulp, paper, or allied products
	Share of top five commodity groups: 73.2%
	Number of inbound commodity groups: 30
Through flows	Total flows: 151,130,412 tons
	Top five commodity groups for through flows: chemicals or allied products; coal; food or kindred products; nonmetallic minerals (except fuels); and miscellaneous mixed shipments (in containers).
	Share of top 5 commodity groups: 76.5%
	Number of commodity groups for through flows: 29

Source: CMAP analysis of STB, Public Waybill Sample, 2022. Top commodities for more than one directional flow are colored alike. More detail is in the Addendum.

Rail freight in the regional economy

Employment

Employment in the freight-rail sector in northeastern Illinois is substantial but smaller than in the trucking sectors. Carrier employment has remained flat since 2010, but employment growth has been seen in related support industries.



Source: CMAP analysis of EMSI Lightcast Q4 2024 dataset.

Establishments

An “establishment” is a single location for a business. A business may have many establishments.

Many railroads operate in the northeastern Illinois region, including all six Class 1 railroads as well as numerous regional and short-line railroads.

Rail carrier business operation locations are not covered by our source, the Census Bureau’s County Business Patterns dataset. However, they are listed in “Local Carriers” on p. 28 and will be mapped in a subsequent report.

The region is also home to 66 establishments providing support activities for rail transportation. These rail-support firms are concentrated in Cook and Will Counties.

Source: CMAP analysis of US Census County Business Patterns, 2022

3.3: Marine landscape

Northeastern Illinois has marine freight access to both the Great Lakes/Saint Lawrence Seaway and the Mississippi River waterways. The Great Lakes/Saint Lawrence Seaway is primarily served by the Calumet Harbor, the Calumet River, and Lake Calumet on the southwest corner of Lake Michigan. Conversely, access to the Mississippi River is via interconnected waterways, the Chicago Area Waterway System (CAWS). In turn, CAWS is part of the Illinois Waterway, which also includes the Illinois River as the final link to the Mississippi River.

In this section	

Inside the maritime industry

Who's who

Federal regulators

The **U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)** operates and maintains federally-designated waterways. USACE infrastructure includes locks, dams, navigation channels, and navigation aids. The **Federal Maritime Commission (FMC)** regulates the U.S. international ocean transportation system, including operations on the Great Lakes. The **U.S. Coast Guard (USCG)** is focused on safety and port security but also tasks like icebreaking. The **U.S. DOT - Maritime Administration (MARAD)**, while not a regulatory agency, promotes the maritime industry, supporting vessel operators and port development.

Local players

The **Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD**) maintains much of the Chicago Area Waterway System (CAWS) and supporting infrastructure. **Port districts** are established in Chicago (**Illinois International Port District**), Waukegan Port District (focused on aviation and a marina), and Joliet Regional Port District (focused on aviation but expanding to marine markets with its Strategic Marine and Port Master Plan). Port districts may own and operate water facilities. Shoreline land is subject to **municipal or county zoning**.

What's what

Ships

Ships that operate strictly on the Great Lakes are called **lakers. Salties** come from the Atlantic Ocean via the Great Lakes/Saint Lawrence Seaway. Lakers and salties have deep drafts, so are limited to a few regional waterways with deep channels. **Barges** operate with shallow drafts, so barges can operate on the entire Chicago Area Waterway System (CAWS) and on the Illinois Waterway. Barges from the CAWS can travel on Lake Michigan to the Port of Milwaukee or the Port of Indiana – Burns Harbor, but no further.

Waterways

The **Chicago Area Waterway System** and the **Illinois Waterway** have shallow channels. Channels, locks, and dams are maintained on these waterways to enable barge traffic. Movable bridges can be raised or moved to allow ships to pass. Bridge responsibilities (design, operation, and maintenance) typically fall on IDOT, CDOT, and railroads. Deep channels are available from **Calumet Harbor on Lake Michigan** to the **Calumet River** and thence to portions of **Lake Calumet**, including lands owned and managed by the Illinois International Port District. Some **piers and docks** are owned or maintained by government agencies, but most are privately owned. Carriers (vessel owners), receivers, and shippers maintain these facilities. Local municipalities regulate shoreline, pier, and dock construction activities and zoning for shorelines, piers, and docks.

Inside the maritime industry

How it fits together

Where available, maritime transportation is among the freight options with both the lowest cost and greatest energy efficiency. But much of the maritime-system infrastructure is aging, so periodic maintenance and upgrades are necessary. As is the case for the highway system, maritime infrastructure requires a lot of inter-agency cooperation at multiple levels of government. But much more than the highway system, coordination with the carriers and shippers is also required since there are few economical alternatives for bulk transportation when the maritime facilities are closed for repairs. Careful planning is required – while bulk shipments can often be moved a long time in advance of when they are required, notice is still required.

In addition to aging infrastructure, maritime transportation constraints include weather and climate issues. Most notably, while the Coast Guard deploys icebreakers, they are not sufficient to keep the Great Lakes open to navigation year-round. Locks that allow transit of vessels between the lakes, along the Saint Lawrence Seaway are closed for the winter months, typically from January to late March. However, in recent years, the closure periods have been gradually shortening. The Mississippi and Illinois waterways close to navigation during the winter months too, but for shorter time periods, primarily for routine maintenance. In addition, drought conditions sometimes limit the amount of freight that can be transported on the Illinois or Mississippi waterways. As a result, the region's maritime industry cannot accommodate the shipping needs of modern industries that use "just-in-time" deliveries.

That said, the region's maritime industry thrives within these limitations. The Chicago region's access to both the Illinois Waterway and Great Lakes allows each waterway's fleets to serve Illinois industries with low-cost transportation for bulk goods.

Source: Seaway opening and closing information is posted here: https://greatlakes-seaway.com/en/commercial-shipping/seaway-opening-and-closing-information/

Maritime fleet composition

Maritime freight moves through the Chicago Area Waterway System on a variety of vessels. Vessels over five tons must be documented, subject to certain conditions.

For documented vehicles, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers provides information for the following types of vessels involved in maritime commerce:

Decked barge: a barge topped with a platform on which equipment and other cargo can be placed. Such a barge can be used not only for moving equipment, but also sometimes as a work location for bridge or waterway work.

Covered dry-cargo barge: a barge that carries loads of solid bulk cargo, such as agricultural goods or building materials, that need to be kept dry.

Open dry-cargo barge: a barge that carries bulk cargo that does not require protection from the weather.

Tank barge: a barge that carries liquid products.

Towboat: a motorized vessel that moves barges along the waterways. Note that the region's towboats are, on average, quite old. USACE data shows that the average construction year for towboats based in Chicago is 1981; in Lockport, it's 1975; and in Lemont, it's 1969. Some of the constraints on the region's waterways lead to adaptive designs: one towboat for the Middle River Marine company has a retractable pilot house (where the boat is controlled) to fit under the region's low bridges.

Count of cargo vessels based in Northeastern Illinois, 2022

Type of Vessel	Count of vessels
Decked barge	107
Covered dry-cargo barge	288
Open dry-cargo barge	99
Tank barges	5
Towboats	66
Total	565

Sources: CMAP analysis of U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Institute for Water Resources, Vessel company summary and vessel characteristics, 2022. Posted at https://usace.contentdm.oclc.org/utils/getfile/collection/p16021coll2/id/14468.

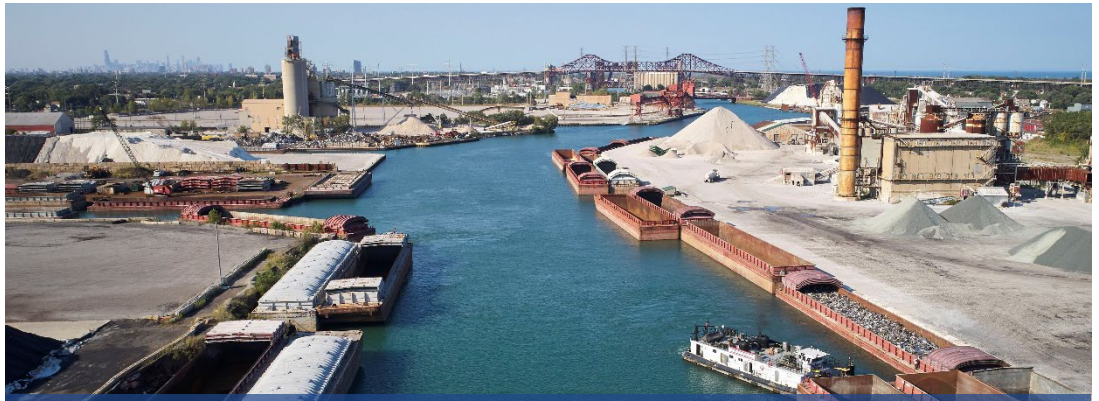
Notes: Information was sought on lake-wise vessels. No active lakers or salties are based in the region, though they call at the port regularly.

Vessels are regulated subject to the Jones Act. The Jones Act stipulates that cargo being shipped by water between U.S. ports may be "shipped only aboard vessels that are U.S.-built, U.S.-citizen owned, and registered in the U.S., which means crewed by Americans" (https://www.maritime.dot.gov/ports/domestic-shipping/domestic-shipping). However, production of new U.S.-built lakers has been limited to one ship in thirty-five years https://www.greatlakesnow.org/2022/09/new-great-lakes-freighter-joins-fleet/.

Examples of maritime freight in the region

A tow – consisting of a towboat and barges – under movable bridges in Joliet

A deep-draft vessel at the Illinois International Port District



Open and covered barges and a towboat on the Calumet River

Maritime freight volumes, by port

The Illinois International Port District and the Joliet Regional Port both make it into the top 50 ports nationally in terms of annual tonnages. Owing to its access to the Great Lakes, Illinois International Port District has a substantial volume of international commerce, though almost all of it was imported in 2022 (much "domestic" commerce is transloaded to ships in Louisiana for export).

For comparison, the Northern Indiana Port had 25,447,430 tons in 2022 (ranked 25th), of which 360,172 tons were international.

The tonnages to the right reflect statistical areas of the port districts' jurisdictions, not the port districts' property. While the Illinois International Port District's lands are at Iroquois Landing (at the mouth of the Calumet River) and at Lake Calumet, Illinois International Port District's jurisdiction extends to the entire City of Chicago, and the statistics in the table reflect that. The Joliet Regional Port owns no land on the Illinois Waterway, but the jurisdiction includes the Will County townships of DuPage, Lockport, Joliet, Troy, and Channahon.

Tonnages for selected Northeastern Illinois ports, 2022

Type of shipment	Illinois International Port District	Joliet Regional Port
Domestic total	7,554,267	9,291,339
International exports	233	0
International imports	2,500,229	0
International total	2,500,462	0
Grand Total	10,054,729	9,291,339

Sources: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Institute for Water Resources, Waterborne Tonnage for Principal U.S. Ports and all 50 States and the U.S. Territories. Posted at https://www.iwr.usace.army.mil/About/Technical-Centers/WCSC-Waterborne-Commerce-Statistics-Center/WCSC-Waterborne-Commerce/.

Maritime freight volumes, by waterway

The two most important anchors for maritime freight in Northeastern Illinois are (1) Calumet Harbor and Lake Calumet, the region's connection to the Great Lakes and Saint Lawrence Seaway, and (2) the Illinois River, which connects to the Mississippi waterway. As shown on the map to the right and the table below, these waterways have high freight tonnages.

Aside from the two anchor waterways, overall volumes are highest on the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal and the Calumet-Sag Channel. Through volumes, connecting to other waterways, make up a big part of the maritime traffic on both waterways. Freight is also transported via the Chicago River and Chicago Harbor.

Tonnages for selected waterways (millions), by direction, 2022

Waterway	Through	In	Out	Local	Total
Calumet Harbor and River	2.4	4.8	1.7	0	8.9
Lake Calumet	0	1.0	0.1	0	1.1
Illinois River	6.5	5.5	17.7	0.4	30.1
Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal	4.4	3.2	2.2	0.9	10.7
Calumet-Sag Channel	3.8	0.3	0.1	0	4.2

Source: CMAP analysis of U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Institute for Water Resources, Waterborne cargo and trips data files (manuscript files), WCSC 2022 cargo for Mississippi Valley/Gulf Coast (14576) and Great Lakes (14575).

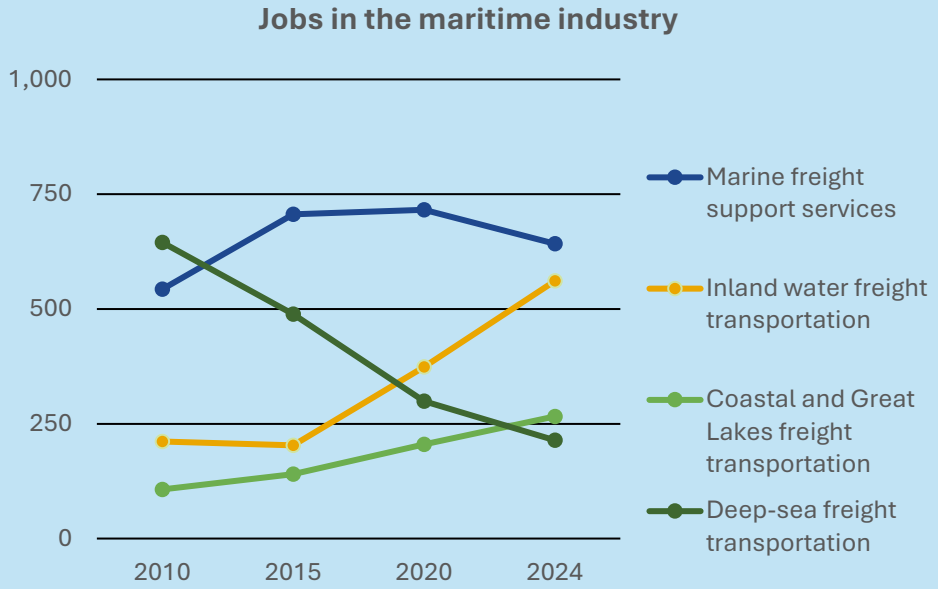
Tonnages for selected waterways (millions), all directions, 2022

Source: CMAP analysis of U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Institute for Water Resources, Link commodity data for 2022.

Maritime freight in the regional economy

Employment

Marine employment in northeastern Illinois has seen slow, steady growth since 2010, but overall employment levels are relatively small among carrier sectors.



Source: CMAP analysis of EMSI Lightcast Q4 2024 dataset.
Note: "Marine freight support services" includes (1) port and harbor operations, (2) marine cargo handling, (3) navigational services to shipping, and (4) other support services to water transportation.

Establishments

Statewide, there are 5 deep-sea freight transportation establishments, 10 coastal and Great Lakes freight transportation establishments, and 14 inland-water freight establishments.

There are limited data for marine cargo carriers at the regional level.

However, there are 26 firms in various marine freight support services. These are located in Cook, Will, and DuPage counties.

Source: CMAP analysis of US Census County Business Patterns, 2022
Note: An "establishment" is a single location for a business. A business may have many establishments.

3.4: Air freight landscape

Air freight in northeastern Illinois is largely handled at Chicago O'Hare International Airport, although some is handled in the cargo holds of passenger aircraft at Chicago Midway International Airport. International trade comprises a large share of air cargo.

Air freight tends to be higher-value with time-sensitive delivery deadlines — medicines, parcels, fresh foods, and even flowers are carried by air. Air freight can be carried by dedicated aircraft or in the holds of passenger aircraft.

In this section

A cargo plan landing at Chicago O'Hare International Airport. Source: Chicago Department of Aviation.

Inside the aviation industry

Who's who

Federal regulator

The **Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)** regulates civil aviation, plans airspace, and operates the air traffic control system, among other activities.

Local government

The **Chicago Department of Aviation (CDA)** manages the region's two major airports, including by setting service standards. CDA works with airlines and the FAA to develop airfield, terminal, and landside plans to accommodate anticipated freight and passenger demand for aviation.

Private sector

Aircraft are operated by a host of private carriers, including **passenger airlines** like United Airlines and American Airlines as well as more than 30 **cargo airlines**.

Robust **freight-forwarder** and **ground services** cargo support industries have grown up in and around O'Hare International Airport for air-freight handling and documentation, including customs documentation for international shipments. Except for express-freight services such as FedEx and UPS that handle shipments (usually packages and documents) from shipper to consignee, freight forwarders and ground service companies handle most air-freight processes off the aircraft.

What's what

Aircraft

Freighters are aircraft dedicated to transporting cargo. Passenger aircraft can also transport **belly freight** alongside passenger baggage in the lower deck.

Airports

O'Hare International Airport is one of the world's largest air cargo hubs, processing over $300 billion in freight each year. **Midway International Airport** transports some belly freight as well.

Airports such as DuPage Airport, Chicago Executive Airport, Lewis University Airport, Waukegan National Airport, and Aurora Municipal Airport can accommodate the Cessna Caravan and Beechcraft 1900, both available as small cargo planes. However, cargo volumes at these airports are limited and not reported. A new airport has also been proposed to accommodate air cargo needs in the south suburbs.

Transload infrastructure

Freight is transloaded from trucks to aircraft, and vice versa, at **transload terminals** on the edge of the airfield. Planes operate on one side of the terminal, and trucks operate on the other side, making air freight intermodal like some rail freight. Like intermodal rail, air cargo requires good truck access.

Inside the aviation industry

How it fits together

As of February 2025, O'Hare originates 854 daily domestic passenger flights to 166 U.S. cities and 98 daily international passenger flights to 61 cities. These flights all have the capability to carry freight to complement the operations of dedicated air freighters that fly higher-volume air-freight origin-destination pairs (referred to as lanes). The combination of belly freight, freighters, and the air-freight support system makes the air freight industry in northeastern Illinois a substantial competitive asset for the region's high-value shippers. While air freight costs per ton are much higher than alternative modes, the global connectivity provided through aviation allows high-value freight to ship quicky to domestic and international destinations.

That said, the air-freight system is subject to disruptions such as the COVID-19 pandemic, the Great Recession, and the aftermath of the attacks on the World Trade Center in New York City. Hence, the ability to switch between belly-freight and freighter services has allowed for increased resilience for high-value, time-sensitive cargo on higher-volume lanes.

Air freight is mostly shipped by freighter, but a substantial portion is by belly freight. Freighters allow taller and larger shipments to be made and sometimes allow greater flexibility with shipment scheduling. On the other hand, belly freight shipment prices can be lower.

In addition, express carriers like FedEx and UPS, are both active in the region, but their largest operations are outside the region. Rockford is a nearby hub for UPS air operations (rail operations are located in Hodgkins); FedEx operates a major hub in Indianapolis.

Air cargo is measured in a couple ways, **landed weight** and **loaded/unloaded weight**. As aviation expert Joe Schwieterman has explained, landed weights of aircraft refers to the cumulative weight of all freighters, including fuel, the payload, and the plane itself. But landed weight does not include belly freight. Although the Federal Aviation Administration typically reports landed weight, the alternative loaded/unloaded weight measure is used by the region's airports and the International Air Transport Association. Landed weight does not account for cargo being shipped in the belly holds of passenger airplanes. We will focus on loaded/unloaded weight, consistent with our regional partners at the Chicago Department of Aviation.

Sources: O'Hare daily flights: https://www.flychicago.com/ohare/myflight/non-stop/pages/default.aspx#:~:text=A%E2%80%8Bs%20of%20January,flights%20to%2061%20international%20destinations; Joe Schwieterman and Euan Hague, "The rise of cargo-focused hub airports: pandemic year 2020." Chaddick Institute Policy Brief, March 2021. Posted at https://las.depaul.edu/centers-and-institutes/chaddick-institute-for-metropolitan-development/research-and-publications/Documents/Rise%20of%20Cargo%20Airport%20Final%202.pdf.

Air freight volumes

As shown in the table at right, at O'Hare, both air cargo operations (flights) and loaded/unloaded weight are mostly to or from international locations. O'Hare's activity included 81 freighters per day in 2024.

Midway has a small amount of air cargo, as measured by loaded/unloaded weight. All of Midway's air cargo is belly freight. Due to Midway's short runways, no freighters serve the airport.

As mentioned above, Chicago Rockford International Airport is an air-cargo hub for UPS. Still, the loaded/unloaded weight at Rockford in 2024 was 449,828 metric tons, which is substantially less than the 2,074,006 metric tons loaded/unloaded at O'Hare.

Among airports in North America, O'Hare ranks sixth in air cargo, behind Memphis (the main hub for FedEx), Anchorage (a refueling stop for trans-Pacific flights), Louisville (the main air-freight hub for UPS), Miami, and Los Angeles. Nearby Rockford ranks 20th.

Source: Airports Council International – North America. 2024 ACI-NA Airport Traffic Report posted at https://airportscouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/NAM2024-Top50.xlsx.

Air freight activity for Northeastern Illinois airports, 2024

	Measure (metric tons reported as loaded/unloaded weight)	Chicago O'Hare International Airport	Chicago Midway International Airport
Metric Tons	Domestic Freight Metric Tons	634,701	15,669
	International Freight Metric Tons	1,439,304	0
	Total Freight Metric Tons	2,074,006	15,669
Operations	Domestic Cargo Aircraft Operations	12,609	0
	International Cargo Aircraft Operations	16,852	0
	Total Cargo Aircraft Operations	29,461	0

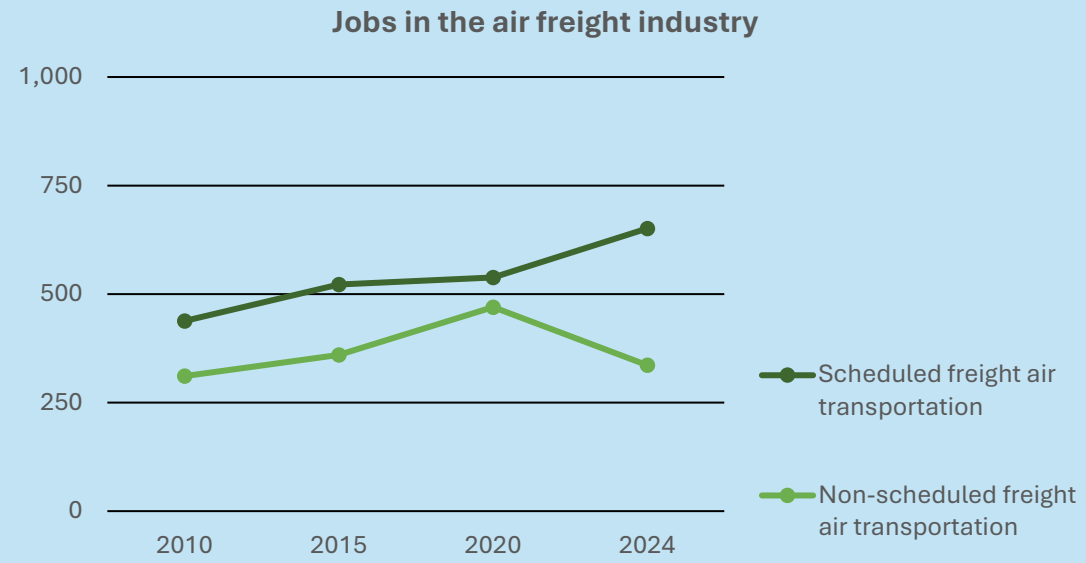
Note: Freight includes volumes on domestic passenger flights.

Source: Chicago Department of Aviation, Year-to-date operations, passengers, cargo summary by class as of December 2024, https://www.flychicago.com/business/CDA/factsfigures/Pages/airtraffic.aspx

Air freight in the regional economy

Employment

Air cargo employment in northeastern Illinois has seen steady growth since 2010, concentrated in scheduled services, but overall employment levels are relatively small. Employment tabulated here is limited to air-cargo freighters (excluding belly freight on passenger planes); scheduled air-passenger transportation carriers (NAICS 481111) employed another 36,209 employees in 2024 in northeastern Illinois.



Source: CMAP analysis of EMSI Lightcast Q4 2024 dataset.

Establishments

The region is home to 42 air freight establishments, located in Cook County and, in smaller numbers, DuPage County.

In addition, considering belly-freight operations on passenger planes (NAICS 481111), an additional 57 scheduled passenger-air transportation establishments are in Cook County.

Source: CMAP analysis of US Census County Business Patterns, 2022
Note: An “establishment” is a single location for a business. A business may have many establishments.

3.5: Pipeline landscape

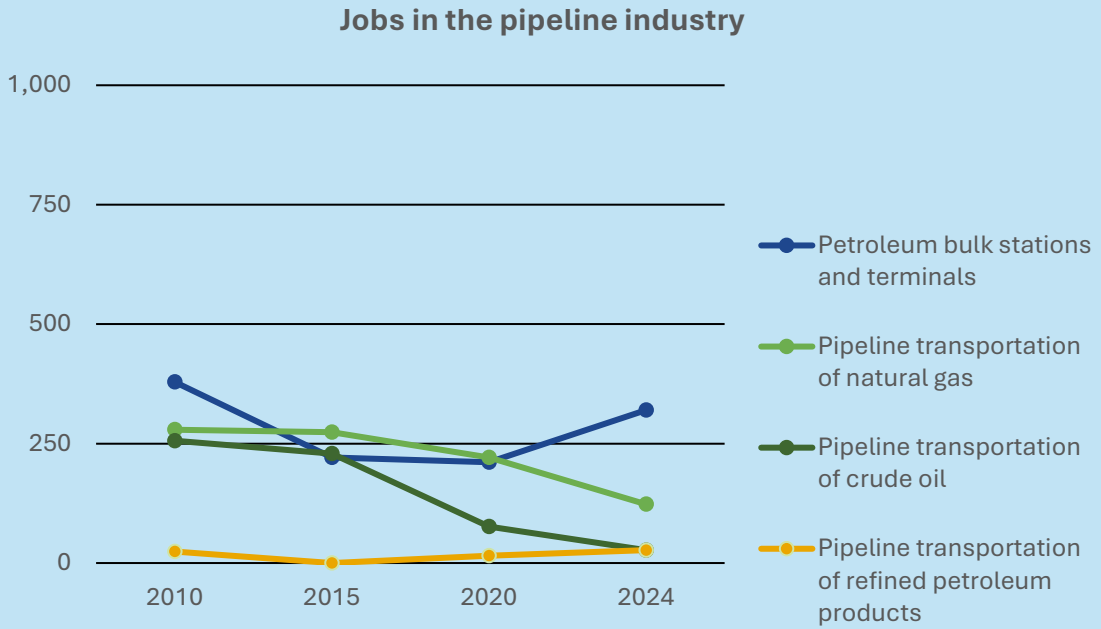
Pipelines transport bulk liquids long distances. Oil and natural gas pipelines crisscross the region (the locations of this network will be discussed in the next section of this study). Oil is generally transported from terminal to terminal, while natural gas has local distribution pipelines extending into communities.

Pipelines support the region's petrochemical industry, including this ExxonMobil refinery in Will County. Source: Nearmap.

Pipelines in the regional economy

Employment

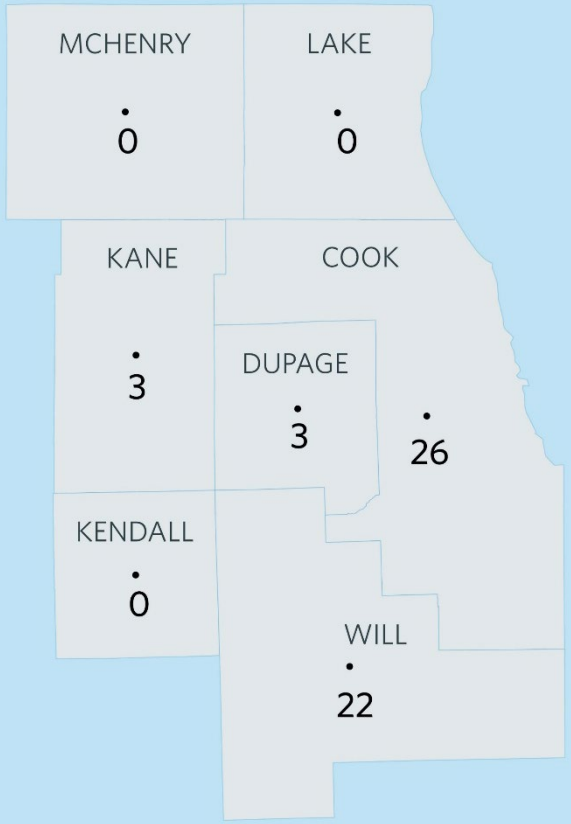
Oil and natural gas pipelines employ relatively small numbers of people in northeastern Illinois. Indeed, the number of jobs in this energy-focused freight sector has declined since 2010.



Source: CMAP analysis of EMSI Lightcast Q4 2024 dataset.

Establishments

The region is home to 54 pipeline establishments, mostly located in Cook County and Will County. Smaller numbers of establishments are in DuPage County and in Kane County.



Source: CMAP analysis of US Census County Business Patterns, 2022
Note: An “establishment” is a single location for a business. A business may have many establishments.

3.6: Freight support landscape

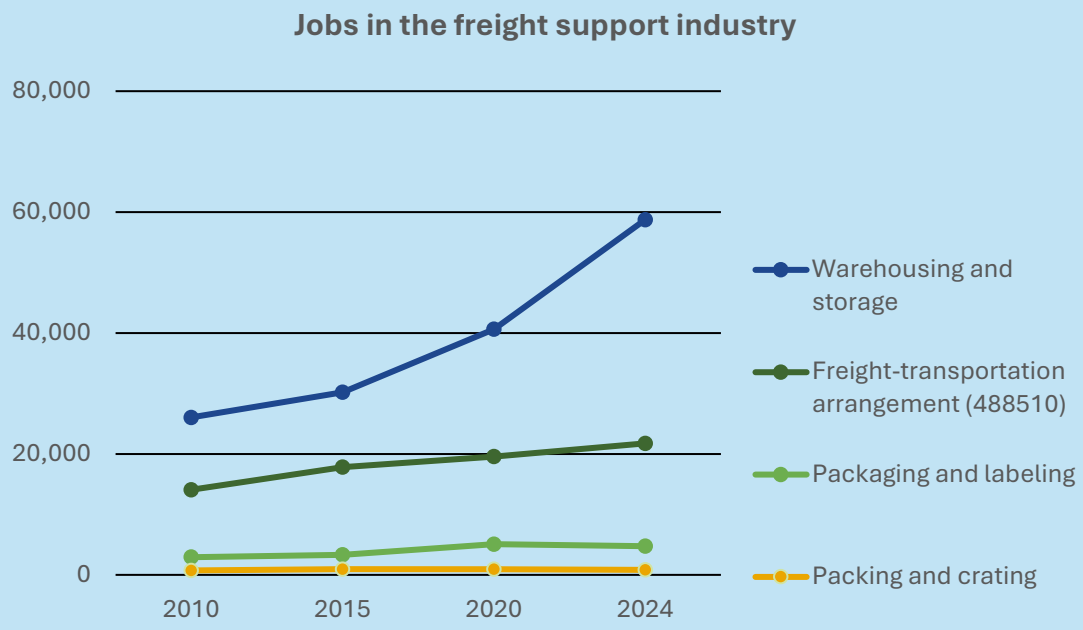
Freight support is a varied sector of the freight industry that includes everything from freight-arrangement activities like third-party logistics for shippers and freight-forwarder firms for the air-freight industry to packing and crating.

Freight support includes those activities separate and distinct from both shippers' activities and the actual carriage of goods, but does include warehouse activities.

Freight support in the regional economy

Employment

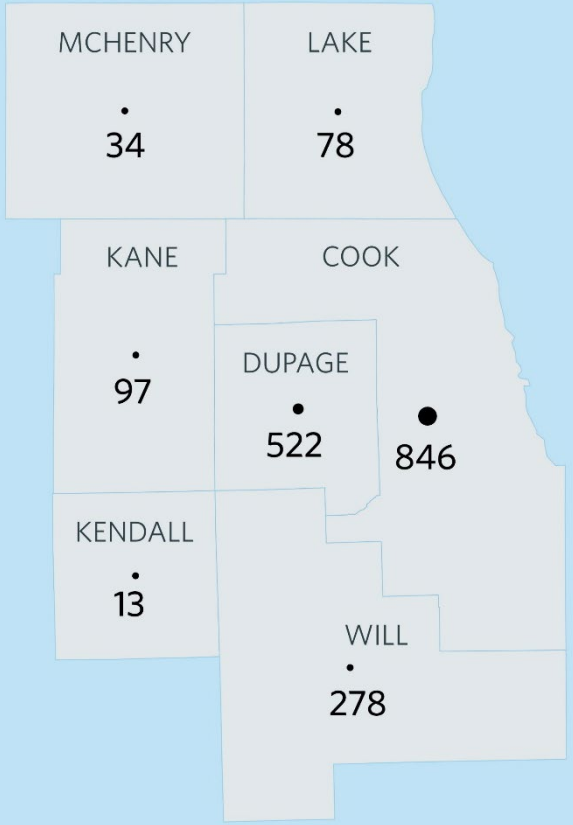
2024 employment in freight-supportive industries totaled more than 86,000 jobs, having nearly doubled from 2010 to 2024.



Source: CMAP analysis of EMSI Lightcast Q4 2024 dataset.
Note: "Warehousing and storage" includes (1) general warehousing and storage, (2) refrigerated warehousing and storage, (3) farm product warehousing and storage, and (4) other warehousing and storage.

Establishments

Freight-supportive industries exist regionwide, with many establishments in Cook, DuPage, and Will Counties.



Source: CMAP analysis of US Census County Business Patterns, 2022
Note: An "establishment" is a single location for a business. A business may have many establishments.

Appendix: Data tables

Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning

Types of single-unit trucks

Box trucks and tractor-semi trailer combination trucks are of course very common. However, understanding the variety of trucks is important. Trucks are often very specific to a single industry need. Estimates of Illinois trucks are below and on the next page.

Single-unit trucks registered in Illinois by body type, 2021

Type of truck	Estimated count	2021 miles per truck
Box truck	35,269 (37.2%)	20,381
Dump truck	21,968 (23.2%)	9,291
Other and not reported	11,075 (11.7%)	26,001
Van (walk-in)	4,873 (5.1%)	17,294
Van (other)	4,701 (5.0%)	9,666
Tank (liquids or gases)	4,549 (4.8%)	19,122
Concrete mixer	4,302 (4.5%)	9,466
Trash, garbage, or recycling	2,206 (2.3%)	11,307
Tow/wrecker	1,919 (2.0%)	12,703
Crane	1,695 (1.8%)	3,825
Vacuum	930 (1.0%)	18,493
Beverage or bay	725 (0.8%)	4,983
Hooklift/roll-off	532 (0.6%)	21,470

Source: These estimated counts and average mileage for Illinois-registered single-unit trucks are from the 2021 Vehicle Inventory and Use Survey (VIUS). Excludes light-duty vehicles, service vehicles, and body types with fewer than 500 vehicles. Percentages do not reflect light-duty or service vehicles.

Types of multi-unit trucks

Multi-unit trucks registered in Illinois, type of trailer, 2021

Type of trailer most often used	Estimated count	2021 miles per truck
Van (non-refrigerated)	45,694 (36.2%)	79,974
Dump truck (dump trailer)	15,685 (12.4%)	47,855
Refrigerated van	11,884 (9.4%)	102,700
Other/Not reported	11,578 (9.2%)	37,482
Flatbed or platform	11,364 (9.0%)	52,387
Open top	7,778 (6.2%)	64,073
Intermodal	7,009 (5.6%)	45,585
Tank (liquids or gases)	6,485 (5.1%)	73,307
Tank (dry bulk)	2,513 (2.0%)	59,045
Auto carrier	2,091 (1.7%)	54,879
Beverage or bay	1,672 (1.3%)	10,484
Livestock	954 (0.8%)	55,149
Curtainside	705 (0.6%)	77,778
Low-boy	643 (0.5%)	23,292

Source: These estimated counts and average mileage for Illinois-registered multi-unit trucks are from the 2021 Vehicle Inventory and Use Survey (VIUS). They reflect the type of trailer most often used. Excludes service vehicles and trailer types with fewer than 500 vehicles. Percentages do not reflect service vehicles.

Commodity shipments by truck

Shipments by truck include many agricultural commodities, but building materials, fuel, and chemicals make up a large part of shipments. The table below (continued on the next page) shows the volume of shipments by commodity and the direction of travel.

Estimated shipments of commodities by truck to, from, or within the Chicago Commodity Flow Survey Area (Illinois Part) by commodity by direction of travel, 2023, in thousands of tons (table one of two)

Commodity Group	Outbound domestic	Outbound international	Inbound domestic	Inbound international	Intra-regional	Total
01-Live animals/fish	70	1	145	46	84	346
02-Cereal grains	6,232	410	14,991	14	2,416	24,063
03-Other ag prods.	2,900	173	3,275	251	2,501	9,099
04-Animal feed	4,483	347	6,184	38	1,940	12,992
05-Meat/seafood	1,590	178	2,827	157	1,124	5,876
06-Milled grain prods.	1,633	189	4,405	291	1,774	8,292
07-Other foodstuffs	6,906	584	8,312	588	7,751	24,141
08-Alcoholic beverages	435	47	1,518	702	3,508	6,209
09-Tobacco prods.	8	0	8	0	1	17
10-Building stone	295	0	22	1	755	1,073
11-Natural sands	2,606	16	357	2	2,992	5,973
12-Gravel	893	9	2,735	14	5,304	8,954
13-Nonmetallic minerals	196	78	1,497	388	303	2,462
14-Metallic ores	17	3	51	293	0	365
15-Coal	3	1,529	194	1	2	1,730
16-Crude petroleum	-	-	-	62	-	62
17-Gasoline	1,227	48	4,661	0	36,974	42,911
18-Fuel oils	862	90	755	76	16,189	17,972
19-Natural gas and other fossil products	3,070	149	764	20	13,928	17,931
20-Basic chemicals	4,928	261	2,363	345	3,576	11,473
21-Pharmaceuticals	279	100	464	176	125	1,145

Source: CMAP analysis of Freight Analysis Framework, v5.6.1, January 2025.

Commodity shipments by truck, continued

Estimated shipments of commodities by truck to, from, or within the Chicago Commodity Flow Survey Area (Illinois Part) by commodity by direction of travel, 2023, in thousands of tons (table two of two)

Commodity Group	Outbound domestic	Outbound international	Inbound domestic	Inbound international	Intra-regional	Total
22-Fertilizers	568	18	622	16	931	2,155
23-Chemical prods.	5,300	460	1,743	353	1,669	9,524
24-Plastics/rubber	3,218	439	3,283	979	3,507	11,427
25-Logs	-	166	43	1	1,146	1,357
26-Wood prods.	1,724	58	2,718	312	5,654	10,466
27-Newsprint/paper	833	247	2,754	404	2,655	6,893
28-Paper articles	1,532	101	1,320	196	1,061	4,211
29-Printed prods.	453	138	997	143	304	2,036
30-Textiles/leather	247	42	406	151	263	1,110
31-Nonmetal min. prods.	2,734	438	2,747	735	24,280	30,934
32-Base metals	9,596	265	7,866	862	4,709	23,299
33-Articles-base metal	2,696	376	2,128	608	1,469	7,278
34-Machinery	1,867	830	1,643	954	549	5,843
35-Electronics	1,280	239	902	974	807	4,201
36-Motorized vehicles	2,600	684	2,525	470	2,693	8,972
37-Transport equip.	80	55	124	79	28	367
38-Precision instruments	296	72	210	66	97	741
39-Furniture	776	31	467	198	808	2,279
40-Misc. mfg. prods.	1,331	153	858	312	978	3,632
41-Waste/scrap	4,185	592	1,208	71	9,856	15,911
43-Mixed freight	4,670	78	5,760	553	6,064	17,126
Total	84,619	9,693	95,857	11,902	170,777	372,847

Source: CMAP analysis of Freight Analysis Framework, v5.6.1, January 2025

Commodity shipments by outbound rail

For outbound shipments, the largest commodity groups were mixed shipments, farm products, non-metallic minerals, primary metals, and chemicals. But the table below shows the diversity of rail shipments originating in the Chicago region.

Rail shipments originating in the Chicago economic analysis area, 2022

Commodity Group	Annual shipments in tons
Miscellaneous mixed shipments	21,423,175 (26.9%)
Farm Products	10,539,979 (13.2%)
Non-metallic minerals, except fuels	9,498,626 (11.9%)
Primary metal products, including galvanized coating or other allied processing	8,181,501 (10.3%)
Chemicals or allied products	7,766,737 (9.7%)
Food or kindred products	6,109,957 (7.7%)
Petroleum or coal products	4,976,347 (6.2%)
Transportation equipment	1,822,908 (2.3%)
Freight forwarder	1,613,240 (2.0%)
Pulp, paper, or allied products	1,143,915 (1.4%)

Commodity Group	Annual shipments in tons
Waste or scrap material not identified by producing industry	1,077,175 (1.4%)
Apparel or other textile products or knit apparel	887,635 (1.1%)
Small packaged freight shipments	867,600 (1.1%)
Clay, concrete, glass, or stone products	843,415 (1.1%)
Furniture or fixtures	706,160 (0.9%)
Rubber or miscellaneous plastic products	624,695 (0.8%)
Lumber or wood products except furniture	470,420 (0.6%)
Other (Electrical machinery, machinery, printed matter, instruments, empty containers, textiles, coal, hazardous waste, miscellaneous)	1,185,325 (1.5%)
Total	79,738,810 (100%

Source: CMAP analysis of Surface Transportation Board Public Use Waybill Sample, 2022.

Commodity shipments by inbound rail

For inbound shipments, the largest commodity groups were mixed shipments, chemicals, coal, food, and primary metals. But the important story is the diversity of products and industries.

Rail shipments terminating in the Chicago economic analysis area, 2022

Commodity Group	Annual shipments in tons
Miscellaneous mixed shipments	27,411,720 (36.4%)
Chemicals or allied products	9,695,804 (12.9%)
Coal	7,858,293 (10.4%)
Food or kindred products	7,051,207 (9.4%)
Pulp, paper, or allied products	3,102,685 (4.1%)
Farm products	2,988,470 (4.0%)
Primary metal products	2,733,892 (3.6%)
Transportation equipment	2,627,254 (3.5%)
Waste or scrap material not identified by producing industry	1,703,114 (2.3%)
Petroleum or coal products	1,610,543 (2.1%)
Lumber or wood products except furniture	1,503,505 (2.0%)

Commodity Group	Annual shipments in tons
Clay, concrete, glass, or stone products	1,233,915 (1.6%)
Freight forwarder	896,120 (1.2%)
Rubber or miscellaneous plastic products	822,755 (1.1%)
Apparel or other textile products or knit apparel	818,715 (1.1%)
Small packaged freight shipments	744,320 (1.0%)
Furniture or fixtures	658,720 (0.9%)
Other (Non-metallic minerals, electrical machinery, crude petroleum, natural gas, or gasoline, miscellaneous, machinery, instruments, fabricated metal, printed matter, empty containers, textiles, fresh fish., and hazardous waste)	1,805,304 (2.4%)
Total	75,266,376 (100%)

Source: CMAP analysis of Surface Transportation Board Public Use Waybill Sample, 2022.

Commodity shipments by through rail

Bulk commodities dominate through shipments, which are typically billed by multiple railroads with an interchange in Chicago. Many industries have an important stake Chicago's rail system, even when not delivering to the region.

Through rail shipments in the Chicago economic analysis area, 2022

Commodity Group	Annual shipments in tons
Chemicals or allied products	49,485,449 (31.5%)
Coal	21,570,960 (13.7%)
Food or kindred products	20,548,544 (13.1%)
Nonmetallic minerals, except fuels	17,466,297 (11.1%)
Miscellaneous mixed shipments	11,130,960 (7.1%)
Transportation equipment	8,253,801 (5.3%)
Farm Products	7,781,015 (5.0%)
Lumber or wood products except furniture	6,069,220 (3.9%)
Petroleum or coal products	5,225,590 (3.3%)
Clay, concrete, glass, or stone products	2,186,855 (1.4%)

Commodity Group	Annual shipments in tons
Waste or scrap materials not identified by producing industry	1,640,541 (1.0%)
Pulp, paper, or allied products	1,624,830 (1.0%)
Apparel or other textile products or knit apparel	859,935 (0.5%)
Primary metal products	823,490 (0.5%)
Rubber or miscellaneous plastic products	708,340 (0.5%)
Small packaged freight shipments	455,400 (0.3%)
Freight forwarder	369,615 (0.2%)
Other (Furniture or fixtures, electrical machinery, machinery, fabricated metal, crude petroleum, natural gas, or gasoline, hazardous waste, instruments, miscellaneous products and freight shipments, printed matter, empty containers, and textile mill products)	929,570 (0.6%)
Total	157,130,412 (100%)

Source: CMAP analysis of Surface Transportation Board Public Use Waybill Sample, 2022.

Maritime Commodities: Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal and the Illinois River

The tables at the right show the tonnages for the freight on the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal and the Illinois River. Industrial and construction material dominate the Canal, while agricultural products comprise an additional large portion of traffic on the Illinois River.

Sources: CMAP analysis of US Army Corps of Engineers, Institute for Water Resources, Waterborne cargo and trips data files (manuscript files). WCSC 2022 cargo for Mississippi Valley/Gulf Coast (14576) posted at https://usace.contentdm.oclc.org/utils/getfile/collection/p16021coll2/id/14579%3Cbr%20/%3E; USACE Commodity Code Reference: https://usace.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p16021coll2/id/2108/.

Maritime shipments on the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal, 2022, in tons. Includes inbound, outbound, through and local shipments

Commodity group	Tons
Sand, Gravel, Stone, Rock, Limestone, Soil, Dredged Material	2,935,925 (27.5%)
Petroleum Pitches, Coke, Asphalt, Naptha and Solvents	1,409,534 (13.2%)
Other Chemicals and Related Products	1,260,973 (11.8%)
Primary Iron and Steel Products (Ingots,Bars,Rods,etc.)	1,212,263 (11.4%)
Distillate,Residual & Other Fuel Oils; Lube Oil & Greases	893,132 (8.4%)
Building Cement & Concrete; Lime; Glass	811,384 (7.6%)
Sulphur (Dry), Clay & Salt	771,222 (7.2%)
Iron Ore and Iron & Steel Waste & Scrap	505,909 (4.7%)
Gasoline, Jet Fuel, Kerosene	165,167 (1.5%)
Primary Non-Ferrous Metal Products;Fabricated Metal Prods.	112,538 (1.1%)
Coal,Lignite & Coal Coke	88,019 (0.8%)
Forest Products, Lumber, Logs, Woodchips	79,988 (0.7%)
Fertilizers	72,621 (0.7%)
Oilseeds (Soybean, Flaxseed and Others)	63,201 (0.6%)
Other Agricultural Products; Food and Kindred Products	50,835 (0.5%)
Slag	50,447 (0.5%)
Wheat	46,858 (0.4%)
Non-Ferrous Ores and Scrap	35,098 (0.3%)
All Manufactured Equipment, Machinery and Products	23,968 (0.2%)
Barley, Rye, Oats, Rice and Sorghum Grains	23,236 (0.2%)
Petroleum Products NEC	17,284 (0.2%)
Corn	14,222 (0.1%)
Other Non-Metal. Min.	10,014 (0.1%)
Vegetable Products	8,450 (0.1%)
Primary Wood Products; Veneer; Plywood	6,358 (0.1%)
Animal Feed, Grain Mill Products, Flour, Processed Grains	3,585 (0.0%)
Pulp and Waste Paper	3,130 (0.0%)
Crude Petroleum	0 (0.0%)
Total	10,675,361

Maritime shipments on the Illinois River, 2022, in tons. Includes inbound, outbound, through and local shipments

Commodity group	Tons
Corn	5,687,554 (18.9%)
Oilseeds (Soybean, Flaxseed and Others)	5,340,606 (17.8%)
Petroleum Pitches, Coke, Asphalt, Naptha and Solvents	3,432,658 (11.4%)
Other Chemicals and Related Products	2,976,401 (9.9%)
Distillate,Residual & Other Fuel Oils; Lube Oil & Greases	2,310,057 (7.7%)
Animal Feed, Grain Mill Products, Flour, Processed Grains	1,740,534 (5.8%)
Fertilizers	1,672,041 (5.6%)
Primary Iron and Steel Products (Ingots,Bars,Rods,etc.)	1,653,468 (5.5%)
Sand, Gravel, Stone, Rock, Limestone, Soil, Dredged Material	1,626,737 (5.4%)
Building Cement & Concrete; Lime; Glass	1,184,547 (3.9%)
Sulphur (Dry), Clay & Salt	615,310 (2.0%)
Iron Ore and Iron & Steel Waste & Scrap	571,170 (1.9%)
Vegetable Products	240,484 (0.8%)
Gasoline, Jet Fuel, Kerosene	190,741 (0.6%)
Forest Products, Lumber, Logs, Woodchips	189,080 (0.6%)
Coal,Lignite & Coal Coke	130,069 (0.4%)
Primary Non-Ferrous Metal Products;Fabricated Metal Prods.	113,895 (0.3%)
Wheat	90,986 (0.3%)
Other Agricultural Products; Food and Kindred Products	89,374 (0.3%)
Non-Ferrous Ores and Scrap	53,416 (0.3%)
Slag	48,083 (0.2%)
All Manufactured Equipment, Machinery and Products	25,310 (0.2%)
Petroleum Products NEC	25,138 (0.1%)
Barley, Rye, Oats, Rice and Sorghum Grains	23,236 (0.1%)
Other Non-Metal. Min.	10,014 (0.0%)
Primary Wood Products; Veneer; Plywood	6,358 (0.0%)
Crude Petroleum	5,693 (0.0%)
Pulp and Waste Paper	3,130 (0.0%)
Grand Total	30,056,090

Maritime Commodities: Calumet Harbor and Calumet River, 2022

The table at the right shows the tonnages for the freight on the Calumet River and Lake Calumet. Bulk commodities dominate cargo traffic on this segment of the maritime system as well.

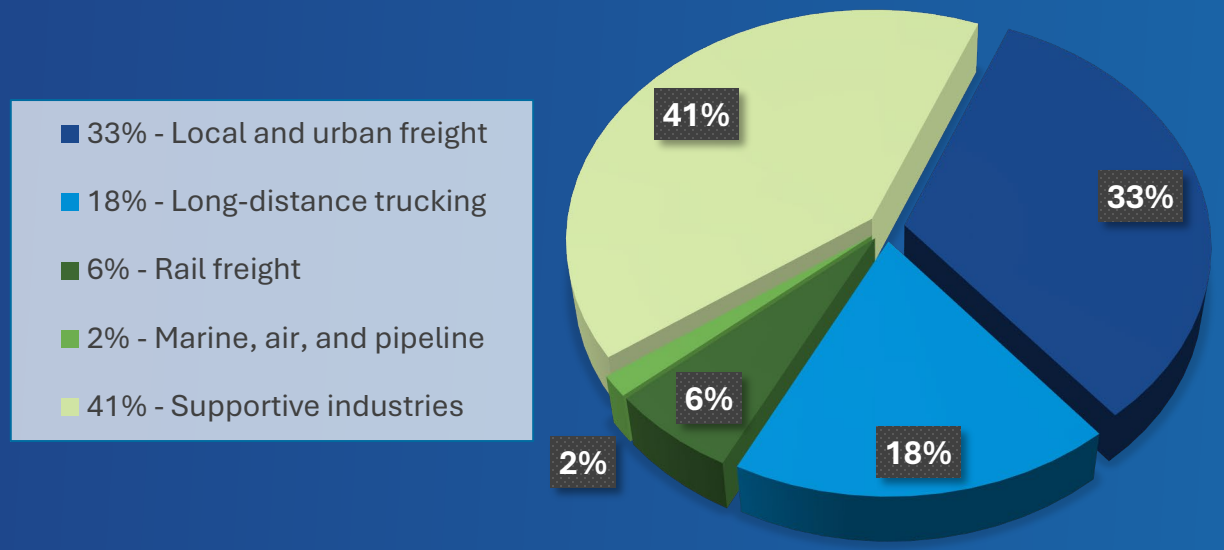
CMAP analysis of US Army Corps of Engineers, Institute for Water Resources, Waterborne cargo and trips data files (manuscript files). WCSC 2022 cargo for Mississippi Valley/Gulf Coast (14576) and Great Lakes (14575), posted at https://usace.contentdm.oclc.org/utils/getfile/collection/p16021coll2/id/14579%3Cbr%20/%3E

Maritime shipments on the Calumet Harbor and Calumet River, 2022, in tons (includes inbound, outbound, through and local shipments)

Commodity Group	Tons
Sulphur (Dry), Clay & Salt	2,142,341 (24.0%)
Petroleum Pitches, Coke, Asphalt, Naptha and Solvents	1,479,549 (16.6%)
Primary Iron and Steel Products (Ingots,Bars,Rods,etc.)	1,436,279 (16.1%)
Building Cement & Concrete; Lime; Glass	1,359,015 (15.2%)
Sand, Gravel, Stone, Rock, Limestone, Soil, Dredged Material	533,501 (6.0%)
Distillate, Residual & Other Fuel Oils; Lube Oil & Greases	418,342 (4.7%)
Iron Ore and Iron & Steel Waste & Scrap	351,587 (3.9%)
Coal, Lignite & Coal Coke	327,918 (3.3%)
Other Chemicals and Related Products	296,214 (1.3%)
Non-Ferrous Ores and Scrap	111,925 (1.0%)
Primary Non-Ferrous Metal Products;Fabricated Metal Prods.	91,208 (0.8%)
Fertilizers	68,056 (0.8%)
Oilseeds (Soybean, Flaxseed and Others)	58,617 (0.7%)
Other Agricultural Products; Food and Kindred Products	52,427 (0.6%)
Wheat	46,858 (0.5%)
Forest Products, Lumber, Logs, Woodchips	41,674 (0.5%)
Barley, Rye, Oats, and Sorgmum Grains	23,431 (0.3%)
Slag	20,398 (0.2%)
Animal Feed, Grain Mill Products, Flour, Processed Grains	20,331 (0.2%)
All Manufactured Equipment, Machinery and Products	15,319 (0.2%)
Corn	12,680 (0.1%)
Vegetable Products	9,179 (0.1%)
Primary Wood Products; Veneer; Plywood	8,474 (0.1%)
Other Non-Metal. Min.	4,144 (0.0%)
Pulp and Waste Paper	3,136 (0.0%)
Paper & Allied Products	808 (0.0%)
Fish	67 (0.0%)
Unknown or Not Elsewhere Classified	55 (0.0%)
Total	8,933,533

Northeastern Illinois freight-industry employment by sector, 2024

210,536 estimated total freight-industry jobs



- Local and urban freight: 69,260 jobs
- Long-distance trucking: 38,884 jobs
- Rail freight: 13,163 jobs
- Marine, air, and pipeline freight: 3,167 jobs
- Supportive industries - warehousing, freight arrangement, packing, packaging: 86,062 jobs

Source: CMAP analysis of EMSI Lightcast Q4 2024 dataset

Local and urban-freight jobs

This slide and the next several slides show freight employment trends by detailed industry sector.

Estimated freight-system employment in northeastern Illinois, 2010 – 2024, local trucking and urban-freight sector

Industry sector and industry (NAICS) code	Jobs, 2010	Jobs, 2015	Jobs, 2020	Jobs, 2024
Local and urban freight				
- General freight trucking (484110)	12,980	14,171	15,982	16,715
- Used household and office goods moving (484210)	2,588	2,908	2,870	2,887
- Specialized freight trucking (484230)	3,223	4,091	4,149	3,486
- Couriers and express delivery (492110)	10,155	11,341	32,657	37,649
- Local messengers and local delivery (492210)	2,425	1,920	4,920	5,985
- Solid, hazardous, and other waste collection (562111, 562112, 562119)	3,685	3,655	3,264	2,540
Subtotal – local and urban freight	35,056	38,086	63,842	69,260

Source: CMAP analysis of EMSI Lightcast Q4 2024 dataset.

Long-distance trucking jobs

Estimated freight-system employment in northeastern Illinois, 2010 – 2024, long-distance trucking sector				
Industry sector and industry (NAICS) code	**Jobs, 2010**	**Jobs, 2015**	**Jobs, 2020**	**Jobs, 2024**
Long-distance trucking				
- General freight, truckload (484121)	14,940	17,612	20,757	24,639
- General freight, less than truckload (484122)	6,343	9,764	10,355	10,637
- Specialized freight (484230)	1,299	1,774	1,646	1,702
- Other support activities for road transportation (488490)	1,063	1,205	1,747	1,906
Subtotal – long-distance trucking	23,645	30,355	34,505	38,884

Source: CMAP analysis of EMSI Lightcast Q4 2024 dataset.

Rail employment

Estimated freight-system employment in northeastern Illinois, 2010 – 2024, rail sector

Industry sector and industry (NAICS) code	Jobs, 2010	Jobs, 2015	Jobs, 2020	Jobs, 2024
Rail freight				
- Rail transportation (482110)	10,191	12,800	10,695	10,433
- Support activities for rail transportation (488210)	1,656	1,861	1,823	2,730
Subtotal – rail freight	11,847	14,661	12,518	13,163

Source: CMAP analysis of EMSI Lightcast Q4 2024 dataset.

Marine employment

Estimated freight-system employment in northeastern Illinois, 2010 – 2024, marine sector

Industry sector and industry (NAICS) code	Jobs, 2010	Jobs, 2015	Jobs, 2020	Jobs, 2024
Marine freight				
- Deep-sea freight transportation (483111)	645	489	299	214
- Coastal and Great Lakes freight transportation (483113)	107	140	205	266
- Inland water freight transportation (483211)	211	203	374	561
- Port and harbor operations (488310)	74	155	112	39
- Marine cargo handling (488320)	115	203	272	329
- Navigational services to shipping (488330)	202	282	276	215
- Other support services for water transportation (488390)	152	66	56	59
Subtotal – marine freight	1,506	1,538	1,594	1,683

Source: CMAP analysis of EMSI Lightcast Q4 2024 dataset.

Air-cargo employment

Estimated freight-system employment in northeastern Illinois, 2010 – 2024, air-cargo sector

Industry sector and industry (NAICS) code	Jobs, 2010	Jobs, 2015	Jobs, 2020	Jobs, 2024
Airborne freight				
- Scheduled freight air transportation (481112)	438	522	538	651
- Non-scheduled freight air transportation (481212)	311	360	470	336
Subtotal – air cargo	749	882	1,008	987

Source: CMAP analysis of EMSI Lightcast Q4 2024 dataset.

Pipeline employment

Estimated freight-system employment in northeastern Illinois, 2010 – 2024, pipeline sector

Industry sector and industry (NAICS) code	Jobs, 2010	Jobs, 2015	Jobs, 2020	Jobs, 2024
Pipeline freight				
- Pipeline transportation of crude oil (486110)	256	229	76	27
- Pipeline transportation of natural gas (486210)	279	274	221	123
- Pipeline transportation of refined petroleum products (486910)	24	<10*	15	27
- Petroleum bulk stations and terminals (424710)	379	221	211	320
Subtotal – pipeline freight	938	734	523	497

Source: CMAP analysis of EMSI Lightcast Q4 2024 dataset.

* Industries with fewer than 10 employees were tabulated as 10 employees.

Support-industry employment

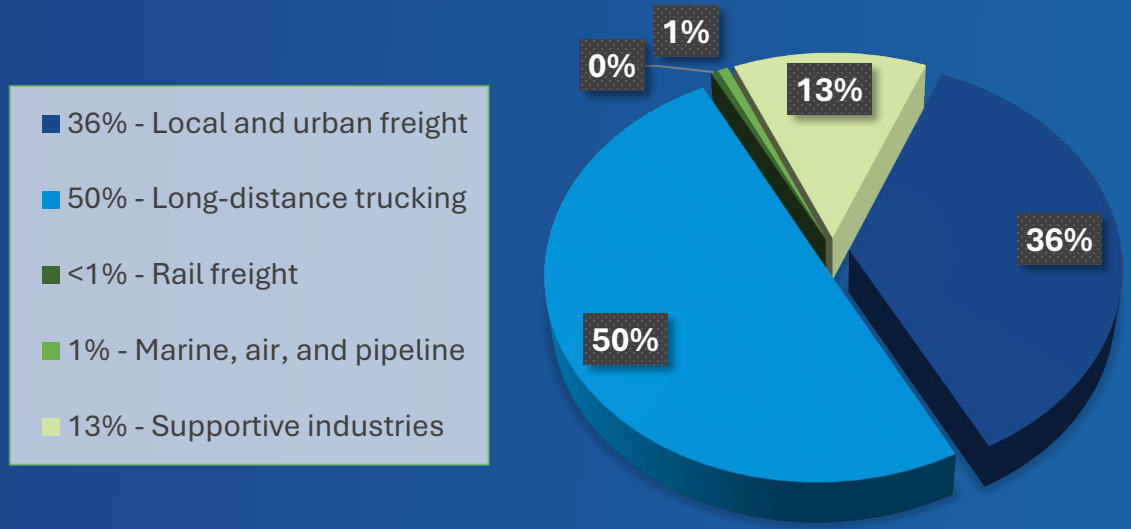
Estimated freight-system employment in northeastern Illinois, 2010 – 2024, arrangement, warehouse, and support

Industry sector and industry (NAICS) code	Jobs, 2010	Jobs, 2015	Jobs, 2020	Jobs, 2024
Freight-transportation arrangement, warehouse and support				
- Freight-transportation arrangement (488510)	14,076	17,841	19,567	21,749
- Packaging and labeling (561910)	2,920	3,318	5,079	4,755
- Packing and crating (488991)	733	946	915	808
- General warehousing and storage (493110)	22,696	27,013	36,610	54,819
- Refrigerated warehousing and storage (493120)	732	1,076	1,486	2,302
- Farm product warehousing and storage (493130)	201	152	283	22
- Other warehousing and storage (493190)	2,416	1,955	2,263	1,607
Subtotal – arrangement, warehouse, and support	43,774	52,301	66,203	86,062

Source: CMAP analysis of EMSI Lightcast Q4 2024 dataset.

Northeastern Illinois freight-industry establishments by sector, 2022

14,866 estimated total freight-industry establishments (excluding rail carriers)



- Local and urban freight: 5,372 establishments
- Long-distance trucking: 7,456 establishments
- Rail freight: 66 support establishments (excludes carriers)
- Marine, air, and pipeline freight: 104 establishments
- Supportive industries: 1,868 establishments

Source: CMAP analysis of EMSI Lightcast Q4 2024 dataset.

Local and urban-freight establishments

This slide and the next several slides show freight establishment distributions by county by detailed industry sector. Note that firms may have multiple establishments. For example, a shipper may have multiple warehouses, each of which is an "establishment."

Estimated number of establishments in northeastern Illinois, 2022, local trucking and urban-freight sector

Industry sector and industry (NAICS) code	Cook County	DuPage County	Kane County	Kendall County	Lake County	McHenry County	Will County	CMAP Region
- General freight trucking (484110)	2,344	516	255	65	188	115	440	3,923
- Used household and office goods moving (484210)	210	48	20	4	22	12	18	334
- Specialized freight trucking (484230)	186	57	21	11	20	18	49	362
- Couriers and express delivery (492110)	201	47	13	3	14	9	28	315
- Local messengers and local delivery (492210)	118	39	4	5	7	5	7	185
- Waste collection (562111, -2, -9)	135	45	18	0	18	5	32	253
Subtotal – local and urban freight	3,194	752	331	88	269	164	574	5,372
Total establishments, all sectors	134,846	34,252	13,441	2,489	20,002	8,082	16,904	230,016
Percent share local/urban freight	2.37%	2.20%	2.46%	3.54%	1.34%	2.03%	3.40%	2.34%

Source: CMAP analysis of U.S. Census County Business Patterns, 2022

Long-distance trucking

Estimated number of establishments by county in northeastern Illinois, 2022, long-distance trucking sector

Industry sector and industry (NAICS) code	Cook County	DuPage County	Kane County	Kendall County	Lake County	McHenry County	Will County	Total
- General freight, truckload (484121)	3,545	1,133	205	105	327	171	771	6,257
- General freight, less than truckload (484122)	322	115	30	7	32	23	57	586
- Specialized freight (484230)	186	57	21	11	20	18	49	362
- Other support activities for road transportation (488490)	139	40	15	4	9	7	37	251
Subtotal – long-distance trucking	4,192	1,345	271	127	388	219	914	7,456
Total establishments, all sectors	134,846	34,252	13,441	2,489	20,002	8,082	16,904	230,016
Percent share local/urban freight	3.11%	3.93%	2.02%	5.10%	1.94%	2.71%	5.41%	3.24%

Source: CMAP analysis of U.S. Census County Business Patterns, 2022

Rail establishments

Estimated number of establishments by county in northeastern Illinois, 2022, rail sector

Industry sector and industry (NAICS) code	Cook County	DuPage County	Kane County	Kendall County	Lake County	McHenry County	Will County	Total
- Rail transportation (482110)	Rail carriers are not covered by our source, the Census Bureau's County Business Patterns dataset. The region's railroads are listed in the modal discussion above and will be mapped in a subsequent report.							
- Support activities for rail transportation (488210)	45	4	3	0	0	0	14	66

Source: CMAP analysis of U.S. Census County Business Patterns, 2022

Marine-freight establishments

Estimated number of establishments by county in northeastern Illinois, 2022, marine sector

Industry sector and industry (NAICS) code	Cook County	DuPage County	Kane County	Kendall County	Lake County	McHenry County	Will County	Total
- Deep-sea freight transportation (483111)	The source for establishment data, the Census Bureau's County Business Patterns, has only limited data on marine-cargo carriers in the region (indicating 3 coastal/Great Lakes establishments in Cook County). Statewide in Illinois, there are 5 deep-sea freight transportation establishments, 10 coastal and Great Lakes freight transportation establishments, and 14 inland-water freight establishments.							
- Coastal and Great Lakes freight transportation (483113)								
- Inland water freight transportation (483211)								
- Port and harbor operations (488310)	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
- Marine cargo handling (488320)	4	0	0	0	0	0	4	8
- Navigational services to shipping (488330)	4	0	0	0	0	0	3	7
- Other support services for water transportation (488390)	5	3	0	0	0	0	0	8

Source: CMAP analysis of U.S. Census County Business Patterns, 2022

Air-cargo establishments

Estimated number of establishments by county in northeastern Illinois, 2022, air-cargo sector

Industry sector and industry (NAICS) code	Cook County	DuPage County	Kane County	Kendall County	Lake County	McHenry County	Will County	Total
- Scheduled freight air transportation (481112)	29	4	0	0	0	0	0	33
- Non-scheduled freight air transportation (481212)	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	9
Subtotal – air cargo	38	4	0	0	0	0	0	42

Source: CMAP analysis of U.S. Census County Business Patterns, 2022

Pipeline establishments

Estimated number of establishments by county in northeastern Illinois, 2022, pipeline sector

Industry sector and industry (NAICS) code	Cook County	DuPage County	Kane County	Kendall County	Lake County	McHenry County	Will County	Total
- Pipeline transportation of crude oil (486110)	3	0	0	0	0	0	7	10
- Pipeline transportation of natural gas (486210)	0	3	0	0	0	0	7	10
- Pipeline transportation of refined petroleum products (486910)	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
- Petroleum bulk stations and terminals (424710)	19	0	3	0	0	0	8	30
Subtotal – pipeline freight	26	3	3	0	0	0	22	54

Source: CMAP analysis of U.S. Census County Business Patterns, 2022

Support-industry establishments

Estimated number of establishments by county in northeastern Illinois, 2022, support-industry sector

Industry and industry (NAICS) code	Cook County	DuPage County	Kane County	Kendall County	Lake County	McHenry County	Will County	Total
- Freight-transportation arrangement (488510)	542	385	41	5	43	22	92	1,130
- Packaging and labeling (561910)	38	21	8	0	12	5	9	93
- Packing and crating (488991)	37	15	7	0	6	0	12	77
- General warehousing and storage (493110)	181	82	41	8	13	7	147	479
- Refrigerated warehousing and storage (493120)	10	0	0	0	0	0	5	15
- Farm product warehousing and storage (493130)	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
- Other warehousing and storage (493190)	35	19	0	0	4	0	13	71
Subtotal – support sector	846	522	97	13	78	34	278	1,868

Source: CMAP analysis of U.S. Census County Business Patterns, 2022

Transportation contribution to real GDP

Transportation industries' contribution to real gross domestic product (GDP) in northeastern Illinois, 2001 – 2023, by county (billions of 2017 dollars)

County	2001	2005	2010	2015	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Cook	14.4	15.3	18.0	17.2	20.8	16.9	19.9	21.0	21.6
DuPage	2.4	3.0	2.7	3.5	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.7	3.6
Kane	0.4	0.4*	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.6
Kendall	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2
Lake	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.7
Will	0.5	0.8	1.0	1.8	1.9	2.1	2.4	2.4	2.4
Total for seven-county region	18.2	20.1	22.6	23.8	27.6	24.0	27.4	28.6	29.1
Statewide for Illinois	24.1	27.0	29.9	32.2	35.1	31.4	35.1	36.0	36.5

Freight-industry GDP is unavailable at the county level, but is included in the broader transportation-industry GDP, shown here. Growth has been steady in most counties, but strong in Will County. The data shows that the industry has recovered from its pandemic low.
Note: data is unavailable for McHenry County. *interpolated

Data source: CMAP analysis of USEDA Regional Economic Accounts, table CAGDP9, industry codes 48-49.

Comparison: Transportation to total GDP

Transportation industries' contribution to real gross domestic product (GDP) in northeastern Illinois, 2001 – 2023, by county (billions of 2017 dollars)

County	**2001 transportation**	**2001 total**	2019 transportation	2019 total	**2023 transportation**	**2023 total**
Cook	**14.4**	**347.2**	20.8	413.3	**21.6**	**427.6**
DuPage	**2.4**	**70.7**	3.6	96.3	**3.6**	**100.9**
Kane	**0.4**	**19.8**	0.5	27.6	**0.6**	**28.1**
Kendall	**0.0**	**1.9**	0.2	3.7	**0.2**	**3.9**
Lake	**0.5**	**45.4**	0.6	62.8	**0.7**	**65.1**
McHenry	**Not available**	**9.6**	Not available	11.7	**Not available**	**11.8**
Will	**0.5**	**19.8**	1.9	34.3	**2.4**	**37.7**
Total for seven-county region	**18.2**	**514.5**	27.6	649.7	**29.1**	**675.1**
Statewide for Illinois	**24.1**	**688.4**	35.1	858.0	**36.5**	**885.7**

Freight-industry GDP is unavailable at the county level, but is included in the broader transportation-industry GDP, shown here. Growth has been steady in most counties, but strong in Will County. The data shows that the industry has recovered from its pandemic low.
Note: data is unavailable for McHenry County.

Data source: CMAP analysis of USEDA Regional Economic Accounts, table CAGDP9, industry codes 48-49.

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