

## **TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MINUTES**

### **1. Welcome and Approval of Minutes from the June 26, 2009 Technical Committee Meeting**

Minutes were approved as written.

### **2. Update on Proposed Amendments to the FY 2010-2015 TIP to Include Additional American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Funded Projects**

Mr. Srikanth, VDOT, reviewed to the proposed amendment to include ARRA funding for 20 projects in Northern Virginia. He spoke from a VDOT letter dated August 26, 2009 to TPB Chair Charles Jenkins. The proposed amendment would obligate \$56.562 million in ARRA funds set aside for Northern Virginia and will include a range of road, transit, bicycle and sidewalk projects. He said that VDOT worked closely with NVTA on the amendment. The TPB will be asked to act on the amendment at its September meeting.

Mr. Erenrich asked if the projects have been tested for air quality conformity. Mr. Srikanth stated yes, the projects that do impact conformity have already been tested since they were included in the currently approved air quality conformity determination.

Mr. Biesiadny commented that VDOT coordinated the proposed amendment with the Northern Virginia jurisdictions.

### **3. Briefing on Draft Air Quality Conformity Assessment for An Amendment to The 2009 CLRP and FY 2010-2015 TIP to Include the Purple Line Light Rail Project and the Transportation Components Associated with the "Return To L'Enfant" Development Over I-395**

As Ms. Posey distributed the draft air quality conformity report, she stated that the conformity analysis for the 2009 CLRP and FY2010-2015 TIP amendments was complete. She mentioned that she was only distributing the body of the report, but that the version on the web would include the appendices. She noted that the appendices contain correspondence from MDOT and DDOT describing the projects, correspondence related to 7.2A land activity forecasts, and the analysis scope of work.

Ms. Posey noted that the analysis was very similar to the one approved in July. The only changes were the project inputs and the new Round 7.2A land use. Analysis years were 2010, 2020, and 2030. She referred to Exhibits 2 and 3 and noted that there were increases in households and employment for the District, Montgomery County, and Prince George's County. She discussed travel demand results in Exhibits 4A, 4B, and 5. She mentioned that the analysis showed an increase in VMT of 26,000 for 2010, and a decrease of 42,000 and 58,000 for 2020 and 2030 respectively, when compared to the original 2009

CLRP conformity analysis. She noted that transit trips increased for all analysis years when compared to the original analysis, with 9,200 additional transit trips in 2020 and 13000 additional transit trips in 2030.

Ms. Posey reviewed the emission results, and noted that emissions were generally down a negligible amount compared to the original conformity analysis. She pointed out that the bar charts in Exhibits 9A through 11 all show that emission levels are below the mobile budgets for each pollutant, and that forecast year PM pollutants are below 2002 levels. These results indicate that the CLRP and TIP with amendments meet conformity requirements. She noted that EPA had found the 2008 Reasonable Further Progress (RFP) budgets adequate for use in conformity.

Mr. Srikanth summarized, saying that households and employment were up, VMT down, and transit trips up, when compared to the original conformity run. He confirmed the 2020 and 2030 transit trip changes. He noted that changes were small at the regional level. Ms. Posey agreed.

Mr. Erenrich stated that the results were generally as expected. Mr. Weissberg pointed out that the project was a positive one, with decreases in VMT and increases in transit trips.

Mr. Kirby asked if the report should show the incremental changes from the original 2009 CLRP that Ms. Posey mentioned in her presentation. Ms. Erickson said that it should. Ms. Posey pointed out that the changes do not represent a purple line finding because DC's L'Enfant project and K St. changes, as well as land use modifications, are all considered together in the regional analysis. Mr. Kirby suggested providing a table that showed land use, travel demand, and emission changes. Mr. Srikanth suggested that the table could be in the executive summary. Mr. Clifford noted the counterbalancing effects of the increase in trips and the decrease in VMT on the results of the analysis. He stated that the requirement was to assess the Plan and TIP as a whole, not to analyze the increment. Mr. Kirby pointed out that people might ask about the changes. Ms. Erickson noted that there are different numbers in the [purple line] EIS than in the conformity analysis, so we should show the conformity changes right up front. Mr. Kirby stated that staff would provide a differences table. Mr. Srikanth reiterated the fact that it should be part of the executive summary, but not a part of the traditional conformity report.

**4. Briefing on the TPB Regional Priority Bus Project Grant Application for Funding under the Transportation Investments Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) Program of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA)**

Ms. Bansal, Mr. Eichler and Mr. Canan provided an overview of TPB's draft grant application for an ARRA TIGER competitive discretionary grant. They handed out five documents: a project table, a project map, a summary of the cost-benefit analysis, a project schedule and the draft application, which was handed out at the end of the presentation. Ms. Bansal presented the project map and table, providing a brief description of the 20 project components. Mr. Erenrich provided

an update to the project description for the Medical Center Pedestrian Tunnel project. Comments on the map were received highlighting errors and suggesting different graphical depictions for projects, such as a “blob” to show the full extent and connectivity of the bike-sharing system. Ms. Haldeman raised the point that the current graphic depiction did not make it clear the total number of bike-stations and made it appear as though there were only a few stations when there are in fact going to be over 300. Staff noted that the locations of bike-stations have not been determined yet, but the map could be revised to show the entire location covered by bike-sharing to make the geography more clear. Staff also informed the committee that the City of Greenbelt had dropped out of the bike-sharing system due to their inability to provide the necessary operating funds at this time.

Mr. Eichler presented the summary of the cost-benefit analysis, explaining that the table would be updated for the final submission. Mr. Erenrich asked a question regarding the Rosslyn project’s extremely high performance in the analysis. Ms. Bansal explained the benefits included and that the primary reason for Rosslyn’s high rate of return was high economic development benefits, since future land use developments would be constrained by the Metrorail station’s capacity. Other comments on the cost-benefit also include whether the cost-benefit analysis was done separately for each of the bus projects, particularly K Street. Mr. Eichler explained that the analysis was done for all of the bus projects as a whole and that because of network effects on hundreds of bus routes, it would have been very difficult to separate the analysis. Ms. Bansal also stated that the models were developed with assistance by HDR Decision Economics and would be on the web for public viewing. Mr. Eichler also spoke to the project schedule, explaining that all but one project (the I-66 priority bus project) would be completed by 2012. Mr. Kirby expressed concerns that this project would not be completed in the timeframe desired by U.S. DOT for the purposes of this grant and explained that the projects were packaged in order to make it easier for DOT to remove projects that do not meet their requirements. Ms. Barlow from FTA asked whether projects were prioritized for DOT to choose amongst. Mr. Kirby explained that they were merely packaged in groups for funding, but not prioritized.

Staff handed out the draft application at the end of the presentation and requested all comments from committee members by Wednesday September 9.

**5. Briefing on Maryland Technical Assistance Projects Recommended for Funding Under the FY 2010 Transportation/Land Use Connections (TLC) Program**

Mr. Swanson briefed the Committee on projects recommended for funding under the FY2010 TLC program using funds made available through the MDOT technical assistance account in the TPB’s Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). He described three projects that had been recommended by the TLC Selection Panel, which met on September 2:

- 1) Prince George's County (MNCPPC), Developing a Package of Interim Pedestrian Safety Measures for the New Carrollton Metro Station (\$30,000);
- 2) Prince George's County (DPWT), Pedestrian-to-Transit Accessibility Prioritization Project (\$30,000); and
- 3) Montgomery County (MNCPPC), Trip-Generation Data for Basic Services in Smart Growth Development (\$40,000).

Mr. Swanson said that the TPB would be asked to approve the recommended projects at its September 16 meeting.

Ms. Haldeman noted that it would be important to coordinate the Prince George's Pedestrian-to-Transit Accessibility Prioritization Project with WMATA's systemwide study of station accessibility.

Mr. Weissberg agreed that it would be important to coordinate.

Mr. Owolobi asked why the projects under discussion were all in Maryland.

Mr. Swanson answered that these projects under discussion would be using funding made available through the MDOT technical assistance account in the UPWP. He said that in July, the TPB had approved seven other projects for FY2010, which included three in Virginia.

Mr. Kirby noted the TLC Selection Panel included national organizations reflecting a high level of expertise. He asked if the committee had any general opinions or comments about the program.

Mr. Swanson said the panel is very supportive of the program and has assumed a sense of "investment" in its future. He said the committee has expressed very strong opinions about the kinds of projects that should be pursued. For example, he noted that they were very interested in projects that gathered data, such as the Montgomery County project.

Ms. Haldeman asked Mr. Erenrich whether the Montgomery project would be collecting data related to weekend trips.

Mr. Erenrich answered that the project would be limited to weekday counts. He acknowledged the importance of weekend travel.

## **6. Briefing on the CSX National Gateway Freight Rail Initiative**

Mr. Kirby, introduced the item in the context that CSX has asked for the TPB's support of the National Gateway Initiative that the Technical Committee was briefed on at a prior meeting. A draft letter to CSX was included in the Technical Committee package for the meeting. Mr. Flippin, CSX Director of Federal Affairs, provided new details on how the Initiative would compliment regional rail plans and passenger rail. He mentioned how the National Gateway would impact

triple-track from Alexandria to Richmond. He also discussed the Long Bridge Enhancement Study, the Maryland Avenue Project, the Virginia Avenue Tunnel Capacity Expansion, and the MARC Wedge Yard Enhancement Project. Mr. Flippin explained that although the Virginia Avenue Tunnel is a freight only tunnel, it is a major bottleneck because freight trains that travel on either end of the tunnel must queue in Maryland and Virginia, impacting passenger train movement in the region. CSX has a Memorandum of Understanding with MARC for four additional trains and Amtrak also has an agreement to add four additional trains from VA to DC under the Initiative. Mr. Flippin noted that MARC's 2035 vision increases capacity from 11,000 daily seats to 43,000, and VRE's vision looks to add 44 daily commuter trains. On average, 80-90 passenger and freight trains travel per day through the CSX DC Corridor.

Discussion followed on the length of the presentation as it would be given to the TPB. Mr. Flippin responded that he would shorten it for the TPB.

In response to a comment by Mr. Erenrich on CSX's willingness to work on passenger rail issues with the community, Mr. Meese announced the upcoming Freight Subcommittee meeting on September 10, 2009 and that both Norfolk Southern and CSX would make presentations.

Mr. Biesiadny suggested four changes to the draft letter. The first edit was to the first sentence of the second paragraph. Mr. Biesiadny recommended adding "and projects like" after the words "National Gateway Initiative." The second edit is at the end of the same sentence, "improve mobility." The third edit suggests a deletion of the third paragraph second sentence and to replace it with "TPB urges CSX to coordinate with MARC, VRE, AMTRAK, state and local governments..." His last edit was to strike the first sentence from the fourth paragraph.

Mr. Kirby asked if the drawbridge function of the Long Bridge is in use. Mr. Flippin responded that the drawbridge function has not been used at least since CSX purchased the bridge from Conrail.

**7. Briefing on the TPB Citizens Advisory Committee's (CAC) Proposal  
"Moving Forward with the Development of a Regional Transportation Plan"**

Referring to a draft document that had been included in the Technical Committee mailout, Mr. Keough, Chairman of the TPB Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC), presented draft CAC recommendations for the development of a Regional Transportation Priorities Plan. He said the region needs a regional plan that would provide an over-riding perspective on how funds would be spent if it were to become available. He said that no such regional collection of regional priorities currently exists. Acknowledging that this is a period of limited resources, he said that this is a good time in which to take the time to identify regional priorities.

Mr. Kirby said he appreciated Mr. Keough's perspective. However, he took issue with Mr. Keough's assertion that the region is not prepared to identify regional priorities. He said the recent development of the TIGER grant proposal was a

good indication that the region is well poised to respond to opportunities for new funding.

Mr. Srikanth thanked Mr. Keough and expressed appreciation for the CAC's work. However, he said he was disappointed with the CAC's perception that the process is uncoordinated. He said he could not support many of Mr. Keough's assertions. He noted that the Northern Virginia TransAction 2030 plan provides a good example of the development of a regional priorities plan. He noted that extensive coordination occurs among key agencies. He said that the CLRP underlies all transportation planning activities in Northern Virginia.

Mr. Keough said he did not want to diminish the coordination efforts among TPB stakeholders. But he noted that TransAction 2030 is a priorities plan for Northern Virginia only, and such a document is lacking at the regional level.

Mr. Srikanth emphasized that the TPB's analysis and planning activities make great efforts to be inter-jurisdictional.

Mr. Erenrich asked if the CAC has looked at other MPOs to identify a model for the TPB to use.

Mr. Keough answered that the CAC does not want to suggest a pre-made model.

Ms. Erickson said she agreed with Mr. Srikanth. She noted that the members of the Technical Committee are in nearly constant contact and the level of coordination is quite extensive. However, she noted that if the CAC perceives there to be a lack of coordination than the inaccuracy of this perception is itself a problem.

Mr. Kirby emphasized the enormity of the regional transportation funding shortfall, noting that this was the real challenge for the region, not a failure to identify unfunded projects.

Mr. Keough said long-range plans should not be built on today's funding limitations.

Mr. Biesiadny said it was ironic that the CAC would be telling the Technical Committee that there was a lack of coordination at the very time that the TIGER grant application had demonstrated a high level of coordination.

Mr. Erenrich said a lot of groundwork had been laid in identifying regional priorities through the bus subcommittee and the freight subcommittee. He said the TPB has a good planning structure in place. However, he said he looked forward to more discussion with the CAC.

**8. Briefing on the Washington Metropolitan Area Transportation Operations Coordinations (MATOC) Program**

Mr. Ey, the MATOC Facilitator, reported. He described his continuing MATOC coordination activities during a number of incidents that occurred in July and August. He was to describe at his upcoming presentation at the TPB two incidents that he handled to illustrate MATOC's impacts. Both incidents involved a major closure of the Beltway in Northern Virginia, one for a cement truck fire, the other for a motorcycle crash. He described his proactive contacting of DC and Maryland roadway agencies, as well as transit agencies, to ensure they knew about the extended impacts of these incidents.

Mr. Ey also noted that MATOC was slated to move to a more permanent operations home, co-located with the Capital Wireless Information Net (CapWIN) offices in Greenbelt, beginning October 1. MATOC was also in the process of hiring a second operations staff person to provide greater time coverage.

Mr. Ey also noted that finding long-term supporting funding for MATOC remained a challenge. The original SAFETEA-LU earmark provided enough funding to sustain the program through June 30, 2010. The MATOC Steering Committee was actively working to address the funding issue for beyond that date.

Mr. Kirby noted that the cost estimate for continuing the MATOC Program is \$1.2 million per year, only \$400,000 per each state funding agency. But in the current economic conditions, even \$400,000 is a challenge to find. Other options were being explored, notably the use of Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funds.

Ms. Erickson noted that for operations activities, only start-up activities were eligible for CMAQ funding. Mr. Kirby noted that he understood that MATOC would be eligible; the Maryland CHART program was funded significantly by CMAQ funds, showing a similar use for these funds. Also, the new federal authorization, when enacted, may provide new categories or sources of funding for a program such as MATOC, but other funding was needed in the meantime.

In response to a question from Mr. Srikanth, Mr. Kirby noted that any use of the TPB's Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) funds for MATOC would have to be limited to planning activities which are eligible under the federal rules. Staff may be bringing forward later this fall a proposal to provide a limited amount of UPWP funds for MATOC planning.

Mr. Srikanth noted that a challenge of securing funding for MATOC was the non-traditional nature of the program. Mr. Kirby noted that the agency executives that have been briefing indicated that they clearly saw the benefit of the program, but budgets are tight currently.

Mr. Biesiadny noted that if there is an interest in pursuing federal FY2010 CMAQ funds in Northern Virginia for MATOC, the deadline for application to the NTVA

was September 25. Mr. Kirby agreed that staff would begin work on an application to be submitted for MATOC.

**9. Briefing on Draft Analysis Results for the “What Would it Take” Scenario and Progress Report on the CLRP Aspirations**

Mr. Kirby spoke to a three page handout as he briefed the committee on progress made on the “What Would it Take” (WWIT) Scenario. Work on the WWIT scenario has been delayed because of the work on the TIGER grant application. He informed the committee that he has been asked to give a similar presentation to the Climate Energy Environment Policy Committee (CEEPC) on September 23, 2009. There are several activities going on at the federal level regarding greenhouse gases (GHG) including a cap and trade bill (the Waxman-Markey bill) and the Oberstar transportation authorization proposal. He believes the result of any federal action will probably lead to GHG as a planning factor for MPOs, but no “conformity-like” process (since GHG is a global/national issue rather than a metropolitan/local issue).

He then referred to a bar chart on page 2 in the handout that showed the development of four different carbon dioxide inventories for the region. The baseline inventory for GHG calculations begins with “business as usual” and then is reduced for the impacts of the administration’s new CAFE proposal and the committed TERMS for the region. The GHG goals established in the COG Climate Change Report are also on the chart. Mr. Biesiadny asked if reductions can come from other sectors to reach the goals. Mr. Kirby responded that currently the same percentage reduction goals are being applied to all sectors, but that approach is likely to be revisited as more information becomes available on relative cost-effectiveness of measures for different sectors. He then referred to page three of the handout which showed CO<sub>2</sub> emissions reductions estimates and cost effectiveness for select committed TERMS as well as other strategies analyzed by staff, including some from the COG Climate Change Report. The table showed that several of the strategies were cost effective for GHG reductions based on the benchmark of \$50/ton.

Ms. Haldeman asked for more explanation on the cost-effectiveness of the pay-as-you drive program. Mr. Sivasailam answered the question saying that the cost-effectiveness calculations are purely based on the cost to administer the program and not a full cost-benefit analysis. Mr. Kirby added that the same analysis process was used is used for criteria pollutants and in the larger scheme, a lot of these measures have benefits far greater than just GHG reductions. Furthermore, if federal legislation with cap and trade is passed, there will be an increase in gas prices, which would affect not only passenger vehicles, but freight as well. Mr. Clifford commented that on the bar chart on page 2, the fourth bar represents alternative fuel projections which, after discussions, were left out of the baseline because there is no legislation requiring these measures and the estimates are uncertain. Mr. Kirby added that decisions on alternative fuel goals can be made by state and local government for their fleets.

**10. Update on Findings from the 2007/2008 Household Travel Survey**

Delayed to October.

**11. Other Business**

None.

**12. Adjourn**