

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

### **1. Welcome and Approval of Minutes from the March 6, 2009 Technical Committee Meeting**

The minutes were approved as written.

### **2. Update on Accountability Information for American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Transportation Projects, and Proposed Amendments to the FY 2009-2014 TIP to Include ARRA Funded Projects.**

Mr. Kirby reviewed a handout with the February 27 letter he received from the House of Representatives Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure requesting accountability information from MPOs on projects funded by the sub allocated amounts under the Highway Infrastructure funding of ARRA. The request called for detailed project data to be submitted by April 4. He then reviewed more recent information from the House Committee that made it clear that MPOs should not respond directly and that the states will provide the MPO project information.

Mr. Kirby then highlighted TPB actions at the March 18 meeting. He explained that the TPB amended the FY 2009-2014 TIP to include ARRA funded projects for VDOT, DDOT, and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) - Eastern Federal Lands Highway Division. He mentioned that TPB staff has also made administrative modifications for ARRA projects in the TIP for MDOT. He asked the DOTs and WMATA to brief the Committee on the ARRA transportation funding and project information that they will submit to the House of Representatives Committee.

Mr. Rawlings said that DDOT was working on its response and that all of the District's ARRA funds have been committed. He mentioned that DDOT would have a new amendment for the April 15 TPB meeting to realign some STP project funding that was replaced by ARRA funding.

Ms. Erickson said that MDOT will send its response to the House Committee and provide TPB with a copy. She mentioned that 50 percent of the Maryland state ARRA funds had been committed in the first phase and that in the second phase additional projects would be identified in a TIP administrative modification request to TPB staff. She indicated that the locally selected ARRA funded projects would be submitted for TIP amendments in May.

Mr. Ashby said that WMATA would be providing a letter to TPB today requesting a TIP amendment to the \$230 million ARRA amendment it approved in February. The new amendment is for \$202 million and reflects a recent WMATA Board action that changes some project budgets.

Mr. Biesiadny reported that VDOT would submit a letter to the House Committee. He said that the state transit funds were committed and highlighted how VDOT was proceeding to identify projects for ARRA funding. He explained that a web site has been established to receive project lists from across the state. He said that the state priorities for funding are pavement and bridge rehabilitation, BRAC projects, and recently cut projects. He said that the Northern Virginia region is allocated about \$50 million and the NVTA will approve a list of these regional projects in April. VDOT will then submit these projects for a TIP amendment in May. He mentioned that the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) will meet April 16 to approve the statewide projects .

Chairman Erenrich commented that WMATA and local jurisdictions are applying for ARRA funding from the Department of Energy and other federal programs. He inquired if these projects need to be in the TIP.

Mr. Miller said that only ARRA funds administered by the USDOT need to be included in the TIP.

Mr. Kirby commented that any transportation related ARRA funded project information should be made available to the TPB. He asked if anyone was aware of interest in pursuing high speed rail grants under ARRA.

Chairman Erenrich explained that he had attended a briefing on the new high speed rail program and that the Federal Rail Administration (FRA) will submit a strategic plan for the program to Congress on April 16. He said that the FTA web site has a Q&A on the program. He commented that the rail projects must be ready to go which means that they have cleared NEPA, can be built in 2 years, and should be a route of more than 100 miles.

Mr. Kirby asked about any potential rail projects in the Northeast Corridor. Mr. Biesiadny mentioned that Virginia is very interested in new rail service in the Washington to Richmond corridor. Mr. Kirby commented that it would be a good idea to look at upgrading the existing rail lines and choke points in the Northeast Corridor so that current trains could achieve much higher speeds.

### **3. Briefing on Activities for Regional Bike to Work Day 2009**

Mr. Ramfos distributed a PowerPoint presentation and discussed the fact that Bike to Work Day coincides with National Bike to Work Week and the event is designed to celebrate bicycling to work as a viable commute option. The annual event was started by the Washington Area Bicyclist Association as a District of Columbia event and in 1998 Commuter Connections rolled it out as a regional event. Participation has increase dramatically from several hundred to over 7,000.

Next, Mr. Ramfos stated that a regional survey is conducted of Bike to Work Day event participants every three years as part of the Commuter Connections TERM Analysis. The purpose of survey is to identify the experience of event participants, to assess use of bicycles for commute travel before and after event.

Mr. Ramfos stated that the most recent survey results were used in the July 2005 - June 2008 Transportation Emission Reduction Measure Analysis Report. The survey was administered via e-mail to 6,600 event participants and 2,411 completed questionnaires were received, representing a 37% response rate.

Mr. Ramfos reviewed additional results from the survey including that Bike to Work Day event increases bicycle commuting; 21% of survey respondents never commuted by bicycle before participating in annual event. The Bike to Work Day event also expands the frequency of bicycle commuting; 12% of survey respondents who commuted by bicycle previous to event started bicycling more after participating.

Mr. Ramfos then stated that Bike to Work Day for this year will be held on Friday May 15, 2009 and the goal set for 2009 is a 10% increase which will mean 7,700 event participants and there will be 26 "pit stop" celebrations throughout region. . The TPB will be asked to adopt a proclamation at its meeting in April. He also stated that the Nationals have added a bike "pit stop" at the ballpark and will be teaming up with other employers in their corridor to promote the event.

Next, Mr. Ramfos showed a map of the 26 pit stop locations. Then he showed the marketing materials and stated that the event is free and open to all commuters in the National Capital Region. This year there were over 32 corporate sponsors that were recruited to support the event. Interested participants can register at [www.waba.org](http://www.waba.org). Participants will receive free t-shirts, refreshments, and a chance to win free donated bicycles.

Mr. Ramfos also said that there was an employer focus to the event. The event encourages the business community to support bicycle-friendly culture and participating bicyclists collectively work for over 1,000 different employers throughout region. He stated that bicycling to work benefits employers through reduced parking overhead, and better employee health and fitness by lowering absenteeism and health care costs. He also stated that an "Employer Challenge" luncheon will be held for one of five employers that have the highest amount of participants. The winner will be selected through a prize drawing after the event. The purpose of the event will be to honor those employees from that employment site that participated in the event with a luncheon.

As part of the event, Washington Area Bicyclist Association (WABA) forms Commuter Convoys led by experienced bicyclists to help empower commuters to try bicycling to work. Free Bike to Work guides are also available from Commuter Connections as well as free Confident City Cycling classes offered by WABA.

Next, Mr. Ramfos explained and showed screen shots from the Commuter Connections new Bike Path Finder. He said that Bicycling to and from work is covered through Commuter Connections' Guaranteed Ride Home program.

Ms. Blackmon asked how the pit stops are selected for the event. Mr. Ramfos stated that it was an open process and most pit stops are volunteered by either a

local jurisdiction, private company, or a private developer. Chairman Erenrich asked how the event is coordinated with Metro. Mr. Ramfos stated that all transit properties are encouraged to participate in the event by promoting their bicyclist transit-access policies. The Bike to Work Day Steering Committee also advocates for relaxing some of those policies for the event, however given the over-crowding situation on transit it may be challenging to implement this type of policy change.

Lastly, Mr. Ramfos stated that a new federal tax-free benefit of \$20 per month for bicycling was adopted. Guidance from the Internal Revenue Service is pending.

#### **4. Briefing on the Regional “Street Smart” Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Education Campaign**

Mr. Farrell spoke to a PowerPoint presentation on the Street Smart Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Campaign.

Mr. Ashby noted that WMATA had donated \$150,000 for the campaign, which was spent on ad space on WMATA properties.

Mr. Mokhtari asked how the program was evaluated, what was the cost-benefit analysis, and whether the program should focus on improving high crash locations.

Mr. Farrell replied that the principal measure of success was the before and after survey of area motorists, which shows whether the target audience is hearing and remembering the messages, and which tracks reported observed behavior. He explained we also look at pedestrian and bicyclist death and injury rates. The per-capita pedestrian injury rate has been decreasing, but 2007, the most recent year for which we have complete regional data, was a terrible year for pedestrian and bicyclist deaths, with 110 fatalities, versus a long-run average of 91. Improving high-crash locations is important, but staff is not well-equipped to carry out engineering improvements.

Mr. Mokhtari suggested that the program might model itself on the TLC program, which proposes improvements for specific areas. Mr. Farrell replied that he could bring that suggestion to the Street Smart Advisory group. Restrictions on the federal money would need to be investigated.

Chairman Erenrich suggested that Street Smart be coordinated with the TLC program. Mr. Jenkins agreed, and suggested that it was time for a fresh look at the program.

Mr. Meese suggested that these proposals be brought to the Transportation Safety Subcommittee at its next meeting.

Mr. Biesadny noted that each jurisdiction has the opportunity to do its own safety program. \$700,000 would not buy a lot of hard improvements, but it does buy a

regional media campaign. For a media campaign, pooling regional funds makes sense.

Mr. Kirby agreed that in a big media market only a regional media campaign was feasible. The TPB is interested in pedestrian safety. However, TPB work program funds are reserved for planning, and cannot be used for engineering improvements.

Chairman Erenrich suggested that pedestrians needed to be more visible.

Mr. Franklin noted that the previous year's campaign had been very visual and dramatic, while the current campaign was much less so. Mr. Farrell replied that last year the Advisory Group had wanted to get people's attention, but this year they wanted images that were tailored to the specific messages. Last year was a shock campaign; this year's is more instructional. The before and after survey results will tell us whether people are remembering the messages.

## **5. Briefing on Findings from the 2007/2008 Household Travel Survey**

Mr. Griffiths gave a PowerPoint presentation highlighting the results of the 2007/2008 Household Travel Survey by trip purpose, mode and distance in miles. He noted that while commuting trips accounted for less than 20% of total daily trips, they had trip length distances 3 times longer than daily trips for other purposes. He also noted that while transit trips accounted for 17% of commuting trips; they only represented about 6% of total daily trips. Walk trips accounted for 4% of commuting trips, but 9% of total trips.

Mr. Griffiths said that in addition to the analysis of trips by purpose and mode he would also be including an analysis of the average daily miles traveled per household in his presentation to the TPB at their April 15<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Mr. Mokhtari suggested that Mr. Griffiths also include some jurisdictional breakout of daily trips by mode and purpose in his presentation to the TPB.

Mr. Griffiths agreed that this was a good suggestion, but said that it might be difficult given the amount data that would have to be presented. He would try to come up with an efficient way to present the jurisdiction data.

Mr. Foster suggested that a footnote should be included on each slide citing the TPB 2007/2008 Household Travel Survey as the source of the data. He stated that it was not clear from just the title of the slide that the data was from the 2007/2008 Household Travel Survey.

Mr. Griffiths responded that he would add footnotes citing the data source to the slides in his presentation.

## 6. Briefing on Draft Round 7.2 Cooperative Forecasts of Population, Households and Employment

Mr. Canan briefed the Subcommittee on the Draft Round 7.2 Cooperative Forecasts of employment, households, and population. These forecasts were approved by the Metropolitan Development Policy Committee for use in Air Quality Conformity Analysis of for the 2009 CLRP and FY2010-2015 TIP. As part of the presentation, Mr. Canan reviewed the regional growth projections, changes from the previous round and key implications for regional transportation planning.

In terms of the overall findings, Mr. Canan reported the following key findings of the Round 7.2 forecasts:

- The region will continue to experience long-term growth through 2030.
- The growth forecasts are more modest compared to the previous round.
- Jobs will grow faster than households and population, which will increase the need to import workers from outside the region to fill jobs within the region, resulting in a slightly higher regional jobs-to-household ratio.
- The outer suburbs will grow the fastest. Jobs, households and population will increase more than twice the rate than either the central jurisdictions or inner suburbs.

The revised forecasts were driven by several key factors, which include, among others, new development in the District of Columbia prompting larger growth, revised BRAC forecasts resulting in employment adjustments for both Fairfax County and the City of Alexandria, and an overall assumption of slower commercial and residential growth resulting from current economic and housing market conditions region wide.

Mr. Canan explained that these forecasts will be used in the forthcoming Air Quality Conformity Analysis for the 2009 CLRP and FY2010-2015 TIP. Final COG Board approval of the Round 7.2 cooperative forecasts is anticipated in July 2009, concurrently with TPB approval of the Air Quality Conformity Assessment for the 2009 CLRP and FY2010-2015 TIP.

Mr. Goodwin explained to Mr. Thomas that three jurisdictions (Frederick County and the Cities of Manassas and Manassas Park) did not submit revised forecasts for Round 7.2.

The Committee discussed the implications for the higher jobs-to-household ratio. Messrs. Canan and Griffiths explained that the employment forecasts for some of the outer Maryland jurisdictions are comparatively high because of inherent differences in employment definitions in the base data used by those jurisdictions.

It was recommended that the similar presentation to be given to the TPB should focus only on member jurisdictions. Moreover, it should focus less on the

differences in forecasts between rounds and instead emphasize the key messages contained in the regional growth forecasts themselves.

**7. Briefing on the Composition of the Vehicle Fleet in the Washington Region in 2008, and Comparisons to the 2005 Fleet**

Mr. Sivasailam spoke to a handout about the changes to the regions vehicle fleet. The main findings were the age of the fleet has increased, and light duty vehicles percentages are increasing as compared to light duty trucks.

There were a number of questions from the committee members on the handout. Was the data for the entire state, the answer is no they are for the jurisdictions in the non-attainment area. What are LDT2s and answer was they are medium sized light duty trucks. A member pointed out that the percentage of new vehicles is down for the first few years then goes up during the middle years and is down again. Another member suggested providing examples of vehicles representing the different classes during the TPB presentation.

Many of the Committee members said they have purchased new buses recently and their transit systems try to use the new buses more than the older buses.

Mr. Sivasailam also pointed out that since the sample size of heavy duty vehicles is small staff combined all the jurisdictions at the state level to produce percentage of diesel vehicles. Members wanted to know if the increase in emissions rate shown will have an impact on conformity and Mr. Clifford replied staff is reviewing the rates and said we may come back next month and provide an update. Members suggested that for the TPB presentation not to single out a single jurisdiction but rather use regional statistics.

**8. Update on the Washington Metropolitan Area Transportation Operations Coordination (MATOC) Program**

Mr. Meese spoke. Mr. Ey, the MATOC Facilitator, had last presented to the TPB on MATOC at its February 18 meeting, focusing on MATOC activities during the Presidential Inauguration. At that time, the TPB requested a next MATOC briefing at the April 15 meeting. However, due to late-breaking circumstances, none of the MATOC spokespersons was available to brief the TPB on April 15. Additionally, a long-planned MATOC Executive Committee had now been scheduled for April 27, outcomes of which will be of interest to the TPB. For these reasons, staff recommended rescheduling the MATOC briefing to the May 20 TPB meeting.

Mr. Meese noted that work was continuing on MATOC development and trial phase activities. Mr. Ey, the MATOC Facilitator, was working closely with the operations personnel of member agencies. The MATOC Steering Committee continued to meet regularly on program development. Additionally, a focus group of local government personnel had recently been convened to bring additional advice on MATOC development.

Mr. Kirby recommended, in lieu of an April 15 presentation, that the TPB be provided an update memorandum on MATOC activities, as had been done in the past.

Chairman Erenrich asked that a copy of the agenda of the April 27 MATOC Executive Committee be included in the TPB mailout. Mr. Meese responded that the April 27 agenda would not be available for inclusion because it was not going to be finalized by the time of the TPB mailout. Mr. Kirby suggested that, in lieu of a copy of the agenda, the update memorandum could note the topics anticipated to be addressed at the Executive Committee meeting.

**9. Update on the Development of a Regional BRT Project for Submission for a Competitive Grant under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act**

Mr. Eichler provided a brief update on the development of the regional BRT project for ARRA funding. He noted that the presentation in the mailout packet included a few new slides on cost estimation. He stated that the Technical Committee will receive a full update at the May 1 meeting.

Mr. Weissberg reminded staff that the chair of the Scenario Study Task Force had recommended that the presentation refer to “rapid transit” instead of “bus rapid transit” and expressed disappointment that the selected corridors do little to solve the east/west divide problem in the region.

Mr. Foster inquired as to which agency would be able to apply for the grant. Ms. Bansal replied that a regional agency would be best, but it was not yet clear who was eligible to apply for the grant. The criteria and guidance will be released on or around May 17.

Mr. Weissberg asked whether the US-1 corridor illustrated on the map symbolized that the entire length of the roadway from Laurel to Lorton would be one transit route, stating that it is usually infeasible to have bus transit routes that cover great distances.

Mr. Biesiadny asked whether the feedback presented today would be incorporated into the presentation before the upcoming Scenario Study Task Force meeting. Mr. Eichler replied that it would be.

**10. Update on the Status of the 2009 CLRP and FY 2010-2015 TIP Inputs and Forms**

Mr. Austin reminded Committee members that inputs for the FY 2010-2015 TIP were due by April 24. He said the TIP was still on schedule to be released for public comment on June 11.

**11. Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions Analyses**

Ms. Morrow, speaking from a handout, gave the Committee a status report on the greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions analysis being conducted by DTP staff in response to the Climate Change Steering Committee (CCSC) Report.

She described the three steps which are underway to develop the baseline GHG inventory which will replace the inventory developed two years ago. Work is underway to calculate the emissions reductions due to (Corporate Average Fuel Economy) CAFÉ 35 which call for a 35 mile per gallon automobile fleet by 2020, alternative fuel and alternative technology vehicles and the region's existing TERM commitments. In addition, currently there are scenario assessments underway including new CAFÉ proposals, CCSC recommendations, new TERM proposals and the What Would it Take Scenario. Ms. Morrow discussed the results of the analyses including assessments of different CAFÉ scenarios and examples of CCSC recommendations analyzed to date.

Chairman Erenrich commented that there are no transit or operational measures listed in the table on page nine. Ms. Morrow responded that the analyzed measures listed on page nine are a subset of the entire list of 20-25 transportation-related CCSC recommendations.

Mr. Biesiadny asked if the analyses on pages eight and nine of the handout would be reflected in the bar chart on page 7. Ms. Morrow responded that the eventual goal would be to show all of the analyses in a bar chart.

Mr. Mokhtari asked how the Cash for Clunkers analysis listed on page nine accounted vehicles that are 25 years and older. Ms. Morrow responded that the analysis was based on researching similar programs in place in other areas. Mr. Mokhtari asked if the analysis addressed the increasing number of 25 year and older vehicles that now exist in the region according to the 2008 vehicle registration presentation earlier in the meeting. Ms. Morrow responded that it does not as the analysis was completed before the new vehicle registration was available and was based on a program where incentives were given to people who purchased a vehicle with a 10 mpg improvement over their current vehicle regardless of age.

Mr. Kirby remarked that Cash for Clunkers programs are now part of a national discussion and such a program could play a role in the region.

**12. Other Business**

None.

**13. Adjourn**