

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

### **1. Welcome and Approval of Minutes from the June 27, 2008 Technical Committee Meeting**

Minutes were approved as written.

### **2. Update on Call for Projects and Schedule for the Air Quality Conformity Assessment for the 2009 Financially Constrained Long-Range Transportation Plan (CLRP) and FY 2010-2015 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**

Mr. Austin distributed and discussed the proposed agenda for the Public Forum on the TIP. He said the first part of the Forum would be used to introduce the new brochure on the FY 2009-2014 TIP and to go into a brief analysis of the TIP's financial data followed by a question and answer period. After that, representatives from the three DOTs would be asked to discuss the status of their draft 6-year programs and a schedule of upcoming opportunities for public involvement. The last part of the forum would allow attendees to ask questions of the representatives and have their questions and comments forwarded to the TPB at their next meeting.

Next, Mr. Austin distributed the draft brochure on the FY 2009-2014 TIP. He described the contents, saying that much of the text had been adapted from previously approved documents such as the Citizens Guide to Decision Making and the CLRP and TIP flow chart. He described the financial analysis section and noted that there would be further narrative text to explain each graph or chart. He also noted that the brochure would be considered as a "draft" until it had been revised with updated financial information expected to accompany the revised air quality conformity analysis of the 2008 CLRP and FY 2009-2014 TIP.

Mr. Biesiadny commented on the graph that showed a consistent drop in programming from FY 2009 through 2014 and inquired if it was advisable to point that fact out. Mr. Austin replied that the accompanying narrative would explain a great deal about it, including the fact that the federal regulations only require a four-year programming horizon and that not every agency programs for the full six years. Mr. Kirby also noted that it was easy enough to look through the TIP document and see that trend in the data without the graph.

Mr. Austin then discussed the draft Call for Projects document for the 2009 CLRP and the FY 2010-2015 TIP. He said there were no significant changes to the document aside from the schedule. He pointed out that under the new schedule, initial inputs for the CLRP, TIP and Air Quality Conformity assessment were due by December 5 and that the deadline for full inputs to the FY 2010-2015 TIP would be due by April 24, 2009. Mr. Austin also noted that the Travel Management Subcommittee was reviewing language pertaining to the Congestion Management Process documentation portions of the CLRP forms.

### **3. Update on the Development of the “CLRP Aspirations” and “What Would It Take” Scenarios**

Ms. Bansal provided an update on the development of the two new scenarios, the CLRP Aspirations and What Would it Take scenarios. She went over a PowerPoint presentation stating the new timeline for the scenario study, the current status of the land use and transportation components of the CLRP Aspirations scenario, and the new work being done on the "What Would it Take" scenario, including analysis of strategies regarding effectiveness, cost-effectiveness and timeframe for implementation.

Discussion included questions on whether the two scenarios would be developed and analyzed independently of one another. It was clarified that while the scenarios are analyzing different sets of strategies and have different goals, they will feed into one another and there will be interaction between the two scenarios throughout the process.

There were several questions regarding the methodology of the land use component of the scenario, such as whether the previous scenarios were treated equally, how it was determined where growth would be shifted, and specifically if the Jobs Out scenario should be included. Staff agreed to provide a description of the methodology employed at the next work session of the Scenario Study Task Force on September 17 at 10am before the TPB meeting.

### **4. Briefing on Proposed Principles for the 2009 Authorization of Federal Surface Transportation Programs**

Mr. Kirby provided an overview of a memorandum, which summarized the various proposals for the next transportation funding authorization and an assessment of the common themes within those proposals. He first presented the work of two congressionally mandated commissions, tasked specifically to evaluate the current transportation system and identify alternatives to the current funding and programmatic structure. He also presented various proposals for alternative financing mechanisms, such as the establishment of a national infrastructure bank to finance major new infrastructure projects, including transportation. The memo also included summaries of Mr. Kirby's testimony to the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, an overview of the newly created Metropolitan Mobility Caucus, which will serve as an advocacy platform for major metropolitan concerns, and the newly released U.S. DOT proposal.

Mr. Kirby presented nine common themes running throughout the various proposals. He stated that following the presentations regarding transportation reauthorization at the July 16 TPB meeting, staff was asked to draft policy positions that the TPB could formally support. The end of the memo contained five major points largely drawn from the common themes that will be presented to the TPB as a first cut at policy principles. Committee members stated they would review the memo, but also asked if staff had looked at AASHTO or APTA principles. It was stated that staff had reviewed interest group proposals, but confined the memo to federal level or legislatively endorsed proposals. It was also suggested to strengthen the policy position regarding metropolitan areas in order to bring decision-making closer to affected areas.

## 5. Briefing on the Review Draft of the COG Climate Change Report, and Proposed TPB Comments

Ms. Rohlfs briefly summarized the group's *Climate Change Report*, which is currently out for public comment with a link on COG's website for posting comments, through use of a 20-slide PowerPoint presentation that was given to the COG Board in July. She mentioned that during its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary year in 2007, COG passed Resolution R31-07 establishing a Climate Change Steering Committee (CCSC). The report covers the science of climate change, including a greenhouse gas inventory. It lists the main sources of greenhouse gas emissions in the region as: electricity (41%), transportation (30%), and fuel use (home heating) (25%), and shows emissions increasing over time through 2050. The report includes the group's goals of reducing emissions by 10% below "business as usual" by 2012, 20% below 2005 levels by 2020, and 80% below 2005 levels by 2050. The report lists 78 recommendations for meeting these goals; including using programs currently being advanced by local governments. Energy and transportation source reductions were emphasized, in addition to reductions through land use strategies.

Ms. Rohlfs noted that the public comment period ends on September 30<sup>th</sup>, and that the COG Board is scheduled to act on the final report in November. She mentioned that approximately 20 comments have been received to date, 19 of which are positive. She listed highlights from a *Best Practices Guide* developed by the CCSC. She noted energy and climate change advocacy positions, both at the federal and regional level. Ms. Mercedes White asked for a copy of the presentation. Ms. Rohlfs said it would be put on the website.

Mr. Clifford went over a handout discussing the climate change and transportation. He mentioned that he had presented the same materials at an EPA/FHWA conference in Baltimore last month. He noted that the TPB's involvement with the CCSC involved activities similar to those for SIP work. TPB staff prepared the inventory of mobile source greenhouse gas emissions and analyzed emission reduction measures.

He pointed out the CO<sub>2</sub> emission factor speed curve on page 17 of the handout, which indicated wide variation in emissions by vehicle speed.

Mr. Clifford mentioned that EPA currently has a notice out for comment on proposed rule-making for green house gases. Comment from other federal agencies suggests that the methods developed in the clean air act amendments are not appropriate for use in regulating greenhouse gases.

Mr. Erenrich expressed concern that some ways of improving carbon emissions are counterintuitive, such as reduction of bus service. He stressed the need to research the trade-off of transit productivity in order to improve carbon emissions. Ms. Bansal said that some of that work is being done.

Mr. Kirby discussed a proposed comment letter from TPB Chair Mr. Mendelson, to MWAQC Chair, Mr. Knapp, on the Climate Change Report. He noted that the letter contains five main points related to: 1) the timeframe of implementation for strategies, 2) the relevance of the current regional conformity process, 3) the need for further economic benefit analysis, 4) TPB's role through the "What Would It Take" scenario study, and 5) the proposed governance structure for a continuing COG Climate Change Initiative. On the first point Mr. Kirby pointed out that the region has never really looked at the cumulative effect of pollutants, as is necessary for CO<sub>2</sub>. For the second point, he

mentioned that the current conformity regulations, based on the Clean Air Act, are made to deal with local emissions and are probably not appropriate to deal with CO<sub>2</sub>. He referenced the EPA's Federal Register notice and comments mentioned earlier by Mr. Clifford. On the third point, Mr. Kirby cited the \$50/ton threshold of cost-effectiveness cut-off value published by McKinsey as a possible comparison number for transportation project cost-effectiveness. He mentioned the need to weigh the value of benefits other than green house gas emissions reductions in project comparisons. He noted that Ms. Bansal had thoroughly covered the "What Would it Take" scenario. On the fifth point, Mr. Kirby emphasized that if the CCSC or some similar group is to become a permanent committee that, at a minimum, membership should include representatives from all the member agencies and jurisdictions of MWAQC and TPB.

Mr. Biesiadny noted that the cost-effectiveness point does not take into account measures that local governments have control over compared to those that they do not. Some measures that are not as cost-effective as others might get selected just because of the ability to get the project done. Mr. Kirby suggested that control might depend on how legislation is developed at the Federal level.

Mr. Biesiadny suggested that since MWAQC is already established, that they should be the group that takes over the CCSC tasks instead of creating a new group. Mr. Kirby agreed, but mentioned that there was discussion of bringing in others. Mr. Srikanth also agreed, but noted that some groups, such as the energy sector, would not be represented. He also stated that it should be recognized that the McKinsey report is only one of several with similar information, and that the figures are not unanimously agreed upon. Mr. Kirby responded that the letter is commenting upon the report which references the McKinsey data.

Mr. Rybeck stated that he feels that it is not appropriate to use the current conformity process for CO<sub>2</sub> reduction, but that he wants a process that is binding and "has teeth".

Mr. Kirby replied that there are no federal laws or legislation at this point, and that the issue needs a national approach, not a regional approach. Mr. Rybeck suggested adding to the language of the letter "additionally, the process for selecting strategies must be equitable and enforceable".

Mr. Erenrich asked enforceable by whom. Mr. Kirby responded that it is difficult to anticipate the outcome of EPA's guidance, but that we can move forward in a proactive way looking at and evaluating strategies. Mr. Srikanth suggested that the Federal regulations would supply the "teeth", and that local agencies might then be able to enforce methods of reduction. Mr. Biesiadny did not like the use of the word "equitable", as that differs depending on one's perspective. Mr. Rybeck withdrew his suggested addition.

## **6. Briefing on Washington Region Car-Free Day**

Mr. Ramfos briefed the Committee on the implementation of the Washington Region Car-Free Day which will be held on September 22<sup>nd</sup>. He distributed a PowerPoint presentation and reviewed the background of the event. Car Free Day first took place in three European cities in 1985 and went global in 2000. The region will be joining over 2,000 other cities and towns in 35 countries to give residents, commuters, and visitors a

glimpse of what the area might be like with fewer vehicles crowding the streets. 2008 is the first region-wide Car Free Day event in the National Capital region.

Travelers will be encouraged to use mass transit, carpool, vanpool, telework, bicycle, or walk to their destinations on the 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Mr. Ramfos stated that DDOT has developed and deployed a web site for the event at [www.carfreemetrodcd.com](http://www.carfreemetrodcd.com). The goal is to attract 10,000 individuals to pledge that they will go car-free or "car-lite" on the 22<sup>nd</sup>. Mr. Ramfos then reviewed a number of special events that would be occurring on Car Free Day including the closure of F Street in the District of Columbia between seventh and ninth streets. To publicize the event, a press event with all three of the TPB officer's was held on September 2<sup>nd</sup> at COG.

In addition, Commuter Connections is running a 60 second radio advertisement on several radio stations in the region. Posters were designed and distributed to employers in the region. WMATA donated advertising space on its buses to promote the event. Lastly, a feature article was included in the most recent Commuter Connections newsletter that was mailed to several thousand employers in the region.

#### **7. Update on the Schedule for AQ Conformity Assessment of the 2008 CLRP and FY2009-2014 TIP**

Mr. Clifford discussed the conformity schedule included in the mailout. He noted that work activities were underway, and that the draft report was scheduled to be released in October and to be approved by the TPB in November. He reminded the group that the analysis was being rerun to reflect project changes related to the removal of NVTAF funding. He mentioned that some model revisions were also being incorporated in the analysis. He noted that staff will recalculate CO<sub>2</sub> inventory numbers when the new travel demand results are available.

#### **8. Briefing on an Amendment to the FY 2009 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) to Revise the Budget and Certain Work Tasks**

Mr. Miller briefed the Committee on the draft amendment to the FY 2009 UPWP which would revise the budget to reflect some funding changes and modify certain work tasks.

He explained that since the TPB approved the UPWP in March, the funding allocations provided by DDOT, MDOT and VDOT have been modified as shown in bold on Table 1 attached to the draft amendment. He said that all of the FTA and DDOT and VDOT FHWA allocations increased slightly. However, the MDOT FHWA funds decreased by \$392,000 so that the total budget needs to be reduced by \$148,000. He reviewed the proposed increases to the DDOT, VDOT and WMATA technical assistance budgets and programs and the \$44,000 reduction for the MDOT program. He highlighted the proposed budget reductions for five work activities as shown in bold in Table 2.

He then explained that the DDOT technical assistance program was being revised to allocate \$17,000 of un-programmed funds to provide additional funding, if needed, to complete a regional sensitivity analysis to examine the potential travel demand impacts of closing the section of I-395 between New York Avenue and Massachusetts Avenue study. He also explained that the text in the III. D Financial Plan work activity is being

revised to clarify that the financial analysis for the 2010 CLRP update will be completed this year and that a consultant will be hired. He said that the TPB Steering Committee will be asked to approve this amendment at its meeting on September 5.

Mr. Srikanth commented that there were two very minor differences in the FHWA funding allocations shown in Table 1 for VDOT. Mr. Miller replied that these would be corrected.

Mr. Biesiadny said that the bold numbers shown in Table 1 were unclear, and suggested that the three columns include headers and that the changes to FTA be shown on the right side.

## **9. Briefing on Status of the Transportation/Land-Use Connections (TLC) Program**

Ms. Crawford and Mr. Smith gave a brief PowerPoint presentation that summarized that the status of the TLC Program, including an overview of the technical assistance projects completed to date and results of program evaluations. Ms. Crawford noted that program participants had cited several benefits from the program, but many suggested that the technical assistance program could be improved with more flexibility in terms of funding and time for project completion.

Mr. Smith reviewed changes made to the TLC program element in the FY 2009 UPWP as a result of recommendations by the TPB Scenario Study Task Force, and briefed the Committee on proposed changes to the technical assistance project application and selection process, in accordance with the UPWP changes. He noted that the TPB would be asked to approve the new procedures, including the formation of an independent panel for project selection, at its October 15 meeting, following another opportunity for comment by the Technical Committee at its October 3 meeting.

Ms. White asked if there had been consideration of providing any funding for implementation of the planning projects funded through the TLC technical assistance program. Mr. Smith responded that the Scenario Study Task Force and TPB staff had discussed this possibility but chose to move the program gradually in that direction through a greater focus in the coming year on identifying implementation funding needs in the course of the planning projects.

Mr. Rybeck asked for clarification on the timeline for TPB approval of the proposed changes to the technical assistance program, and expressed concern that the program timeline appeared to be dependent on prompt approval by the TPB at its October 15 meeting. Mr. Kirby said that staff thought it best to give the Technical Committee more time for consideration of the changes, and that he did not anticipate a need for extensive discussion by the TPB.

Mr. Srikanth asked if the technical assistance program could be started earlier next year to allow more time for project completion by the end of the fiscal year, perhaps even bringing it before the TPB in July. Mr. Smith noted that staff have been trying to begin the process earlier each year since the pilot round, and had needed to allow time for program evaluation before beginning the next round. He said that because the program is now well-established it is probably no longer necessary to have as extensive of an

evaluation process. Mr. Rybeck said that the evaluation could probably take place concurrently with the initiation of the next technical assistance round.

#### **10. Update on Household Travel Survey**

Mr. Griffiths gave a few very brief comments on this item because of the limited time available at the end of this meeting, but stated his full presentation would be available on the Technical Committee webpage.

Mr. Srikanth and Mr. Biesiadny asked that more time on the agenda of the next meeting be devoted to this item and that this item be moved up on this agenda.

#### **11. Briefing on Draft Scope of Work for the Financial Analysis for the 2010 CLRP.**

Ms. Foster provided an overview of the Scope of Work for a consultant to conduct an analysis of financial resources for the 2010 Constrained Long-Range Transportation Plan. She commented that the new financial analysis will extend from 2007 to 2040—a 34 year-year time period. After noting that the first page of the Scope of Work gave a background with a listing of the previous major updates of the CLRP and their corresponding financial analyses, she reviewed the six consultant tasks on listed on page 2.

She then distributed a hand out with the proposed timeline for the completion of the tasks and said that it is aggressive, showing that work would begin in November and the final report would be completed by June 2009. She said that a technical steering group to oversee the work would also be established in November. She commented that the timeline is aggressive, but it could slip if more time is required for the consultant, working with the states and local jurisdictions, to develop the cost and revenue information and forecasts.

Mr. Miller commented that the financial analysis needs to be completed by summer or fall at the latest to inform the update of the 2010 CLRP. He said that as in past analyses, the consultant will work closely with a technical steering group to assemble and forecast the financial data and will have a great deal of interaction with agency staff.

He commented that the analysis will face technical and political challenges doing cost and revenue forecasts out to 2040, because the current revenue situation at the federal, state and local levels is so uncertain. It will be important in the analysis to look at new revenue sources. He also commented that inflation in construction and energy costs have been dramatic in the past few years which raise difficult questions for estimating system maintenance or expansion project costs in 2020 or 2040.

Mr. Srikanth commented on the timeline for Task 3 and maybe Task 2 and said that given the Virginia schedule he was not sure if the revenue forecast information will be available by March. He said that we may need to adjust the schedule as we go.

Mr. Miller said that to complete this analysis by next fall, we may have to do a very conservative “what we know now” forecast of revenues and costs and then update them in 2010 or later.

Mr. Kirby commented that some of this costing information could be helpful in making the case that more funding is needed.

Mr. Biesiadny said that the goal in Virginia continues to be to bring more money to the table for transportation. If the Virginia legislature acts this Spring to identify new revenues, it could make a major change in the projections.

Mr. Erenrich commented that there may be some changes in cost and revenue information coming from WMATA too.

Ms. Foster asked if anyone had any additional comments or questions to please send them to [kfoster@mwcoq.org](mailto:kfoster@mwcoq.org) or [gkmiller@mwcoq.org](mailto:gkmiller@mwcoq.org) by Friday September 12, 2008.

## 12. Update on Current Activities of the Travel Forecasting Sub-Committee

Mr. Hogan indicated that the subcommittee had met four times since his last report in December 2007. The subcommittee was given detailed briefings on the Version 2.2 travel demand model in March and the Spring 2007 Performance of High-Occupancy Vehicle Facilities in the Washington Region report in June. Both of these have been reviewed with the TPB Technical Committee. The subcommittee also received detailed briefings on the following topics:

- Updates on the Household Travel Survey;
- Updates on the Regional On-Board Bus Survey;
- Regional Transportation Data Clearinghouse;
- Version 2.3 Travel Demand Model Draft Report;
- Nested Logit Mode Choice Model Update;
- New Truck Models Development;
- Development of New Transportation Analysis Zones;
- Update on Air Systems Planning Activities;
- Metrorail Ridership Forecasts and Capacity Needs;
  
- Update on the Arterial Highway Congestion Monitoring Program; and
- Regional Congestion Management Process and Its Relationship to Travel Forecasting Program Activities.

Sensitivity analyses of the new draft Version 2.3 travel demand model are now underway, ranging from executing the model under varying transit fare assumptions to investigations of shifting travel patterns should capacity on one of the bridges crossing either the Potomac River or Anacostia River be removed. These tests are being performed prior to application of the model in next year's TIP and Plan Conformity analysis.

Additionally, TPB had contracted with VHB, Inc. to perform task order research in the areas of peak-spreading and external travel into the region. Cambridge Systematics, Inc. has won the competitive bid to perform task order research to TPB during FY2009.

Mr. Hogan closed by stating that the coming arrival of much needed new data in the forms of the Household Travel Survey, the on-board bus survey, and recent Metrorail and airport ground access surveys, will lay the groundwork for updating the current trip-based TPB modeling process and for beginning the process of moving to new tour-based and/or activity-based models.

**13. Other Business**

None.

**14. Adjourn**