

# **TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MINUTES**

## **1. Welcome and Approval of Minutes from the December 7, 2007 Technical Committee Meeting**

Minutes were approved with a clarification to a statement on page 6 by Mr. Srikanth under Item 8.

## **2. Update on the TPB Participation Plan**

Mr. Swanson said the TPB was scheduled to approve the Participation Plan on December 19. He said the Plan was released for the 45-day public comment period on September 13. He said the Plan was developed over the past year and was required by the regulations released under the federal SAFETEA-LU legislation. The Plan replaces the TPB's current Public Involvement Process. It incorporated some of the suggestions made in a consultant evaluation of the TPB's public involvement activities. In addition, it builds upon recent enhancements in the TPB's tools and activities for public participation. Staff made numerous presentations to stakeholders throughout the year to gather input for the Plan.

Mr. Swanson said the Participation Plan is designed to move beyond a one-size-fits-all approach. It creates a framework for the strategic development of tools and activities that will be tailored to constituencies with different levels of interest and involvement in regional transportation planning issues.

Mr. Swanson described the comments on the Plan that had been received. He said that for the most part, these comments referred to steps that would be taken during the Plan's implementation, which will be accomplished through an annual programming process.

Mr. Foster asked how people with limited English proficiency would be addressed in the Plan.

Mr. Swanson answered that Plan establishes a policy for developing tailored information for such audiences. He also said that the TPB will continue to seek to work through community leaders to ensure the interests of LEP populations are met.

Ms. Klancher noted that the website now has a translation feature.

## **3. Briefing on Air Quality Conformity Assessment for the 2007 Financially Constrained Long Range Transportation Plan (CLRP) and FY 2008-2013 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**

Mr. Clifford distributed a draft memo to the TPB which provided a summary report on the conformity assessment. He noted that the report will go to the TPB at the December Board meeting. He indicated that the travel demand and emissions calculations were complete, but that staff was doing quality checking so there might be some slight changes to the numbers. Mr. Clifford informed the group that the public comment period is scheduled to begin on Thursday, December 13<sup>th</sup>, and that the Board is scheduled to adopt the document at its January 16, 2008 meeting.

Mr. Clifford reminded the group that the work had started in May. He pointed out that the significant changes in project inputs are included as Attachment A of the report. The analysis included the use of Round 7.1 cooperative forecasts (household and employment summaries are shown in Attachment B), the Version 2.2 travel demand model, and some slight updates to the Mobile model inputs provided by the air management agencies. He noted that this was the first time using the Version 2.2 travel demand model for a conformity analysis. He listed the analysis years as: 2002 base, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2020, and 2030.

Mr. Clifford explained that ozone season pollutants are reported to meet both the 1-hour and 8-hour requirements, as the timing of EPA's approval for the 8-hour budgets is unknown. The reporting varies by pollutant: daily totals for ozone season and winter CO, and annual totals for PM2.5.

Mr. Clifford reviewed each of the exhibits in the summary conformity report. He pointed out that Exhibit 1 is a map delineating the nonattainment areas for each pollutant. Exhibit 2 summarizes the travel demand results. Exhibit 3 is a sample of NOx rates showing a dramatic reduction over time due to vehicle fleet turnover. Exhibit 4 shows PM2.5 rates, by season, also showing a reduction through time. Exhibit 5 shows 1-hour and 8-hour VOC emissions and budget lines. Exhibit 6 shows 1-hour and 8-hour NOx with budget lines. The NOx budgets are set at inventory level, so the pollutant levels are close to the budget levels. Exhibit 7 displays PM2.5 pollutant results. No budget has yet been approved for PM2.5, so it is only necessary to show that emissions do not increase from the 2002 base.

Mr. Clifford mentioned that Attachment C shows the TERM tracking table. Part A includes daily ozone precursor emissions, and Part B includes annual direct PM2.5 and precursor NOx. He noted that the table reflected status reports from the implementing agencies for their programmed TERMS.

Mr. Clifford concluded his discussion by summarizing that all results indicate that the Plan and TIP meet conformity requirements for all pollutants.

Mr. Kirby noted that in Exhibits 5 & 6 there was a gap of one ton between emissions levels and budgets, i.e., that the budgets are very tight due to being set at inventory levels.

Mr. Srikanth reiterated that for ozone the region must adhere to the 1-hour budgets until EPA approves the 8-hour budgets. Ms. Rohlfs noted that it is expected that there will be a completeness determination on the 8-hour SIP by December 12<sup>th</sup>, after which EPA would review adequacy of the emissions budgets contained therein.

Mr. Biesiadny referred to Exhibit 2 and asked what year is transit constrained. Mr. Clifford replied that 2010 constrained 2020 and 2030. There was some discussion as to whether 2010 or 2020 was the appropriate transit constraint year. Staff later verified that in fact 2010 was the appropriate year.

Mr. Biesiadny asked about the effects of the CAFE standards. Mr. Clifford responded that there would be some further emissions reductions, but not a dramatic effect.

Ms. Rohlfs thanked Mr. Clifford and his staff for their efforts in the SIP development, which occurred in the same time frame as the conformity assessment.

#### **4. Briefing on Draft 2007 CLRP Documentation and Draft FY 2008-2013 TIP**

Mr. Austin demonstrated the newly revised website for the 2007 Update of the CLRP. He discussed the organization of the content and highlighted several new sections of content related to new SAFETEA-LU regulations. Ms. Bansal presented the Draft 2007 Update brochure and explained that it was designed as a companion piece to the website. The content of the brochure was very similar to the previous year's document, with some enhancements and reformatting. This was an interim version of the brochure and it will be expanded with more detailed analysis of the CLRP when that becomes available later in the winter. Comments on the website and brochure were requested by December 10. Mr. Austin explained that the language translation feature that operates on the current CLRP site is being upgraded and will be activated at a later time.

Mr. Austin addressed the Draft FY 2008-2013 TIP. He noted that there was a very short amount of time for review and that any changes needed to be completed in the iTIP database by noon on Monday, December 10. All changes in Virginia were to be directed through Mr. Barr at VDOT, Northern Virginia.

Mr. Austin stated that following the December 10 deadline, the iTIP database should be used for inputs for the 2008 CLRP and FY 2009-2014 TIP conformity analysis cycle. He reminded the Committee that those inputs are due by January 11, and are scheduled to be released for public comment on January 16. Mr. Biesiadny said that NVTA had released a list of projects for public comment and that once they were approved they are expected to be submitted by January 11.

#### **5. Briefing on Proposed TPB Responses to the Fredericksburg Area Metropolitan Planning Organization's (FAMPO) Policies on Allocating and Sharing of Regional Transit Funds**

Mr. Kirby briefed the Committee on a draft version of a TPB response letter to the Fredericksburg Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (FAMPO) resolutions presented to the TPB on September 20, 2006, which delineate FAMPO's policies with respect to the allocation and sharing of FTA formula funds for the Washington urbanized area. He explained that this version reflected the comments received at the November 2 Technical Committee meeting. He said that the draft letter is scheduled to be presented as an information item to the TPB in December, and the Board would be asked to approve the letter at its January 16, 2008 meeting.

Ms. Jia said that WMATA had updated 2007 numbers for the figures in the letter on FAMPO Metrorail riders and subsidies.

Mr. Biesiadny reported that this draft letter was reviewed at the recent NVTA meeting and that some NVTA Board members expressed concerns that the letter was too optimistic. He provided some suggestions for re-phrasing some paragraphs and for changing their order.

Mr. Verzosa said that the letter should not offer any positive responses to the FAMPO requests.

Mr. Kirby said that the wording would be crafted to be more discouraging. He noted that the last three paragraphs were factual and need not be changed. He suggested some possible wording changes and reordering of the transition paragraphs.

Mr. Srikanth commented that the policy makers will be able to review the wording in the draft letter at the December TPB meeting. .

Mr. Kirby said that he would revise the current draft to reflect the comments and suggestions. He said that the revised draft letter will more clearly present TPB's positions and provide no basis for legal challenges. He expressed his appreciation to everyone for their comments.

**6. Review of Draft TPB Procedures for Processing Revisions to the CLRP and TIP**

Mr. Miller noted that at the November 2 meeting, he had reviewed the draft TPB procedures for an administrative modification or an amendment to the CLRP and TIP between scheduled periodic updates. He noted that the TPB procedures must also be consistent with DDOT, MDOT and VDOT procedures. He briefly reviewed the draft procedures. He pointed out that the main distinction in the procedures is in the definition of the funding limitations that qualify for an administrative modification as adopted by DDOT, MDOT and VDOT for their respective state transportation improvement programs (STIPs). He said that DDOT's definition of the funding limitations that define an administrative modification for its STIP had recently been approved by FHWA. He said that the TPB will be briefed on the procedures on December 19 and will be asked to adopt them at its January 16 meeting.

**7. Review of Draft Agreement Between TPB, State DOTs and Public Transit Operators on Metropolitan Transportation Planning Responsibilities in the Washington Region**

Mr. Miller explained that the final federal transportation planning regulations require that the metropolitan planning organization (MPO), the states and the public transportation operators have a written agreement that identifies their responsibilities for carrying out the metropolitan transportation planning process. He said that this version of the MOU has not been changed from the version presented to the Technical Committee on November 7. He said that this version is essentially complete, except for the names to include on the signature pages. He said that the TPB will be briefed on the MOU on December 19, and asked to authorize the chair to send copies to the appropriate official at the state DOT and public transit agencies for execution. He said that the signatures are expected to be received by the January 16 TPB meeting.

**8. Status Report on Work Activities for the State Implementation Plans (SIP) For Fine Particulate Matter (PM2.5)**

Ms. Rohlfs reported that staff has been working on the annual PM2.5 SIP. She noted that the region started to meet the standard in 2005, and that concentration levels will be still lower in 2009. She stated that on December 6<sup>th</sup> the TAC received a copy of the draft document, and that it was posted on the web and sent to MWAQC for review. On December 12<sup>th</sup> MWAQC was scheduled to approve the document for public comment, with a December 21<sup>st</sup> date as the beginning of the public comment period. Public hearings are scheduled for late January in Falls Church in Virginia, in Silver Spring in Maryland, and probably in the M St. building in the District. On February 12<sup>th</sup> TAC will review comments.

Ms. Rohlfs noted that this region's schedule is ahead of most other areas in the country. She asked about the status of Baltimore. Mr. Carroll replied that Baltimore is waiting to see the Washington region results.

Mr. Kirby asked Ms. Rohlfs to say something about the mobile budgets. Ms. Rohlfs noted that mobile budgets are set for 2009 for NOx and fine particles, and for 2010 there are NOx budgets to satisfy contingency requirements. To meet PM2.5 contingency requirements, a

small portion of mobile NOx reductions (1.8 tons/day that translates into 657 annual tons) will be used in the SIP.

Mr. Kirby noted the letters (available in the back of the room) to and from the chairs of MWAQC and TPB discussing the use of the mobile reductions to meet the PM2.5 SIP contingency requirements. He noted that the response letter from TPB Chair Hudgins, must be signed today to meet the public hearing schedules.

Mr. Biesiadny expressed concern about the simple multiplication of 1.5 tons/day to get the 657 annual total NOx reductions. He noted that weekends have different traffic patterns than weekdays, and so the simple calculation might not be an accurate portrayal of the reduction. Mr. Sivasailam noted that as there is a large cushion, the simple calculation should suffice. Mr. Srikanth noted that the states had reviewed the calculation, and are comfortable with the method used.

## **9. Briefing on Draft Report on Regional Travel Trends Report**

Mr. Griffiths spoke from a power point presentation that highlighted the key findings in the Draft Travel Trends Report .

Mr. Skrikanth commented that lower housing costs in the outer suburban jurisdictions may be one of the reasons why the greatest increase in population growth between 2000 and 2006 was occurring in the outer suburban jurisdictions.

Mr. Biesiadny commented that the chart on the growth in transit ridership in the 2000 to 2006 period was incomplete because it only showed the increase in Metrorail and Metrobus ridership. He asked that the growth in transit ridership on local jurisdiction transit systems be added to this chart in the Travel Trends Report. He further added that this information could be obtained for the Northern Virginia jurisdictions from NVTC because NVTC had just updated this information.

Ms. Jia cited the impressive increase in the share of daily commute trips by transit noted in Mr. Griffiths' presentation and stated that WMATA ridership statistics from the 2007 Metrorail passenger survey also showed transit use increasing for non-commuting trips as well.

Mr. Srikanth' commented that the data in the report also showed a shift from carpooling to transit as well as shift from the SOV mode to transit.

Mr. Biesiadny commented that impacts of higher fuel costs and increased telecommuting may be reasons why average weekday VMT showed a decline between 2005 and 2006.

Mr. Griffiths agreed that these were important factors.

Mr. Srikanth noted that the travel trends report had been in the UPWP for several years and asked when this report and presentation would be going to the TPB. Mr. Kirby responded that it was important that this report provide a complete story on current trends including the effects of worsening congestion on regional travel and that it was worth spending a little more time on it. He stated that he thought that this report would most likely be going to the TPB in either in February or March.

Mr. Rawlings suggested that when this presentation went to the TPB it should specifically address what the travel trends data tell us about progress toward achieving TPB Vision goals.

Mr. Srikanth asked when the Travel Trends presentation would be posted on the TPB Technical Committee website.

Ms. Backmon asked that this presentation not be posed on the website until it included a slide on the growth in ridership on local jurisdiction transit systems.

## 10. Report of TPB Travel Forecasting Subcommittee

Mr. Hogan indicated that the subcommittee had met five times since his last report in February and had received detailed briefings on the following work program products and/or topics:

- Spring 2006 Central Employment Area Cordon Count Report;
- Version 2.2 Travel Demand Model, including sensitivity analyses;
- Arterial Highway Congestion Monitoring;
- Updates on the Household Travel Survey;
- Progress with Development of the Nested Logit Mode Choice Model;
- Commercial Vehicle Model Development;
- Network Development and Models Development Documentation;
- Update on the 2007 Regional Air Passenger Survey;
- Presentations by VHB, Inc., under contract to TPB to conduct task orders documenting the experiences of other MPOs with various topics emerging from the national TRB survey of modeling practice; and
- Recommendations for the TPB work program by Frank Spielberg, VHB, Inc. based upon TRB Special Report 288 – *Metropolitan Travel Forecasting*.

The sensitivity analyses of the new Version 2.2 travel demand model ranged from fare elasticity determination 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 the Anacostia River be removed.

The commercial vehicle model is a product flowing from the TRB panel recommendations for upgrading the TPB travel forecasting procedures in 2004, and it required special traffic counts to be conducted throughout the Washington region prior to model development.

The nested logit mode choice model is currently nearing completion and will be part of a new Version 2.3 travel demand model unveiled early in 2008. This model set will undergo sensitivity testing, similar to the Version 2.2 model, during the next year.

Topics investigated by VHB, Inc. using task orders included model validation outline practices, approaches to modeling peak-spreading, experiences elsewhere with microsimulation and dynamic traffic assignment, applying nested logit mode choice models with speed feedback loops, evaluating transit New Starts with the FTA Summit process, and equilibrium traffic assignment. Ongoing task orders involve expanding the traffic count database to address the larger Washington region and to better understand peak-spreading, and researching changes in external – internal travel patterns in the TPB region over time.

Among the recommendations made by Mr. Spielberg for the TPB work program from the TRB Special Report 288 were 1) to consider adding discrete choice modeling based on population synthesis, 2) to consider developing a destination choice model, 3) to monitor tour-based and activity-based model developments in other MPOs, and 4) to monitor traffic microsimulation at other MPOs.

The recommendations flowing from the information presented to the Subcommittee in 2007 are being reviewed by staff for inclusion in the proposed FY2009 UPWP, to be discussed at both the TPB Technical Committee and TPB Travel Forecasting Subcommittee meetings in January.

Comments and Questions:

Chairman Harrington commented that it was good to see TPB staff considering these new modeling approaches, and he inquired about the data requirements. Mr. Hogan replied that new data will be essential to bringing these techniques into practice. This is one of the reasons that staff will continue to monitor experience elsewhere.

Mr. Kirby observed that there are two divergent points of view expressed within the Special Report 288. Some feel that the new techniques can be fully implemented at the present time, while others remain unconvinced that they are proven. This topic is presently under discussion at the AMPO modeling meeting scheduled for next week. Mr. Hogan closed by noting that these new methods, if successfully brought into practice, may actually save computation time in executing models.

**11. Other Business**

Mr. Kirby expressed the thanks from all Committee members to Mr. Harrington for being Chairman of the Technical Committee over the past year and told the Committee that Mr. Rawlings from the District of Columbia would be the 2008 Chairman.

**12. Adjourn**

**TPB TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES  
ATTENDANCE - December 7, 2007**

**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

DDOT                      Mark Rawlings

**MARYLAND**

Charles County            Tony Chinere  
Frederick Co.              John Thomas  
City of Frederick         Tim Davis  
Gaithersburg              -----  
Montgomery Co.         David Moss  
Prince George's Co.      Vic Weissberg  
Rockville                  -----  
M-NCPPC  
  Montgomery Co.        -----  
  Prince George's Co.    -----  
MDOT                      Del Harvey  
                                  Lyn Erickson

**VIRGINIA**

Alexandria                 Jim Maslanka  
Arlington Co.             Rich Viola  
City of Fairfax            Alexis Verzosa  
Fairfax Co.                Tom Biesiadny  
                                  Robert Owolabi  
Falls Church              -----  
Loudoun Co.                Art Smith  
Manassas                  -----  
Prince William Co.      Monica Backmon  
NVTC                        -----  
PRTC                        Anthony Foster  
VRE                         Christine Hoeffner  
VDOT                        Kanathur Srikanth  
VDRPT                      -----  
NVPDC                      -----  
VDOA                        -----

**WMATA**

WMATA                     Tom Harrington  
                                  Wendy Jia

**FEDERAL/OTHER**

FHWA-DC                  -----  
FHWA-VA                  -----  
FTA                         Deborah Burns  
NCPC                        -----  
NPS                         -----  
MWAQC                    -----  
FEMA/DHS                 Shirley Williams

**COG Staff**

Ronald Kirby, DTP  
Michael Clifford, DTP  
Gerald Miller, DTP  
Daivamani Sivasailam, DTP  
Mark Pfoutz, DTP  
Jane Posey, DTP  
Andrew Austin, DTP  
Jim Hogan, DTP  
Monica Bansal, DTP  
Bob Griffiths, DTP  
Andrew Meese, DTP  
Karin Foster, DTP  
Darren Smith, DTP  
Sarah Crawford, DTP  
William Bacon, DTP  
Dusan Vuksan, DTP  
Wendy Klancher, DTP  
Mark Moran, DTP  
Paul DesJadin, HSPPS  
Joan rohlfs, DEP  
Sunil Kumar, DEP

**Other Participants**

Randy Carroll, MDE