

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

### **1. Welcome and Approval of Minutes from the April 1, 2005 Technical Committee Meeting**

The minutes were approved with a minor change to Item 4.

### **2. Review of the Draft FY2006 Commuter Connections Work Program (CCWP)**

Mr. Kirby began by stating that staff has been working with the state funding agencies to finalize the FY 2006 Commuter Connections Work Program (CCWP).

Mr. Ramfos briefed the Committee on the status of the development of the FY 2006 Commuter Connections Work Program (CCWP) with a PowerPoint presentation. He gave some background on Commuter Connections, the benefits of Commuter Connections programs for jurisdictions, employer, and commuters; impacts of the current program, the coverage area of the program, participation rates for each of the current project areas; and then explained the proposed re-structure and budget of the program.

Mr. Ramfos reviewed the program areas that were changing and/or being consolidated in order to streamline the program. He also reviewed the proposed budget and stated that it was still under review and could change. He said that a draft document would be available and sent to both the Commuter Connections Subcommittee for their May 17<sup>th</sup> meeting and to the TPB for their May 18<sup>th</sup> meeting. The draft document would be presented to the Tech Committee in June for final approval.

Mr. Verzosa asked whether or not the capacity of the ridematching server would be examined. Mr. Ramfos responded that there were two new projects being proposed; one was a web-based TDM software system that would combine and upgrade many of the current databases being used for the program, and the other is a "Live Near Where You" work project that would be aimed at employers to encourage their employees to live closer to work. Mr. Verzosa asked how old the current software system was and what the upgrade costs would be. Mr. Ramfos responded that the system was almost 10 years old and that staff had estimated the upgrade costs to be about \$670K over an 18-month period.

Mr. Owolabi asked about the Employer Outreach program and whether each program was run separately. Mr. Ramfos stated that there were ten jurisdictions participating in the program and that each had its own set of goals, funding, and Scope of Work that is coordinated through COG. He also said that the target employers were those in the private sector that had 100 or more employees.

Ms. Byala asked what the FY 2006 CCWP restructured budget was in comparison to what the original program would have been. Mr. Ramfos stated that the proposed budget for FY 2006 was slightly lower than the budget would have been if the program had not been re-structured.

Ms. Byala asked what the final dollar amounts for each funding agency would be for FY 2006. Mr. Kirby said that the funding shares have been under review and that there are several avenues the state funding agencies were considering, including population and program participation rates. Mr. Ramfos added that the participation rates are updated every 3 years corresponding to the evaluation cycle for the program.

Mr. Srikanth said that the participation rates do not reflect funding shares, but shows useful data that is used to come up with impacts such as the 111,000 vehicle trips that are reduced each day with this program.

Mr. Hekimian asked how the Commuter Connections program affected Metro's marketing program. Mr. Ramfos stated that Commuter Connections has partnered with Metro on several marketing campaigns to cross promote Metrobus and Metrorail services. Commuter Connections' 20 Employer Outreach sales representatives also promote Metrochek and SmartBenefits program services.

Ms. Byala asked what would be presented to the TPB since there was not a document for the Committee to review today. Mr. Kirby said that the last piece of the work is the funding allocation shares for the funding agencies and that once that was available the work program document would be ready for the TPB to review. The draft would be in the mailout packet for the Committee to approve at its June meeting.

**3. Review of Letter to the Metropolitan Development Policy Committee (MDPC) Commenting on its Approval of Draft Round 7.0 Cooperative Land Use Forecasts for use in the Air Quality Conformity Analysis of the 2005 CLRP and FY2006-2011 TIP**

Mr. Kirby described the agenda item materials, which included summaries of the draft Round 7.0 Cooperative Forecasts approved by COG's Planning Directors Technical Advisory Committee (PDTAC) and Metropolitan Development Policy Committee (MDPC). Mr. Kirby also noted that the materials included a letter from the D.C. Office of Planning to the TPB which expressed concerns about the projected future imbalance in jobs and housing.

Mr. DesJardin stated that COG staff had begun the initial analysis of Round 7.0 as requested by the MDPC by examining projected growth in the next tier of jurisdictions – the TPB “modeled region”. He presented a PowerPoint show and described the results of the initial analysis. He stated that the TPB “modeled region” could need up to 487,000 households in addition to those already anticipated in 2030 in order to provide enough workers for the projected jobs in the region.

Mr. Kirby noted that the forecasts show a relative decline in workers commuting from the immediate tier of counties in the edges of the current “modeled region”, and that the Forecasts imply that large amounts of incommuting would need to occur from jurisdictions well beyond the Washington region. Mr. Griffiths stated that the incommuting assumption for the external stations would need to increase from the currently-assumed rate of 3 percent per year to approximately 8 percent. Mr. Srikanth recommended that the TPB receive the same briefing on the implications of Round 7. Mr. DesJardin stated that COG staff was meeting with the staffs of the counties in these

areas well beyond the Washington region to discuss the likely pressure for residential growth in them.

#### **4. Status Report on the Air Quality Conformity Assessment for the 2005 CLRP and FY2006-2011 TIP**

Mr. Clifford began by summarizing progress on the major work tasks on the project; this primarily involved activities relating to travel demand, emissions factors and emissions development. Mr. Clifford informed the Committee that TPB staff was working to complete coding for highway, HOV, and transit networks. A meeting has been scheduled with VDOT staff on May 12 to finalize input assumptions for the Virginia Beltway HOT lanes. He noted that TPB staff is awaiting delivery of electronic files of the Round 7 Cooperative Forecasts, approved for testing in the conformity assessments. Should there be any revisions to the forecasts, the timing of receipt of the data files could affect the overall conformity schedule.

In terms of development of the emissions factors, per EPA's Mobile 6.2 guidance, work was underway to reflect revised speed profiles for local roads in rural areas of the region. He also said that I/M program updates had been announced by the air management agencies, but had not yet been received by staff and a follow-up request had been made.

In terms of emissions calculations work, Mr. Clifford began by distributing a May 5, 2005, memorandum from him and Mr. Sivasailam entitled "Variation in Average Annual Weekday vs. Average Annual Traffic, and Seasonal Traffic: Recommendations for Travel Demand Model and Air Quality Post-Processor". He highlighted the memo, which was based upon recent traffic data. It provided seasonal traffic adjustments, for not only ozone season and winter CO season traffic, but also for Spring and Fall seasons, since PM 2.5 will be reported as year-long totals.

Mr. Clifford then turned to the subject of fine particulate matter (PM 2.5) and distributed another handout entitled, "EPA Regulatory Announcement: Final Rule to Add PM2.5 Precursors to the Transportation Conformity Rule", dated May 2005. He stated that EPA's long-awaited regulations on PM 2.5 precursors had been issued this week, and he highlighted the contents and implications of the rule for the Washington area. Specifically, in the interim period before a PM 2.5 State Implementation Plan (SIP) is submitted to EPA, the rule identifies NO<sub>x</sub> as a precursor requiring a regional analysis (unless a finding is made at some point that NO<sub>x</sub> is not a significant contributor). Conversely, regional emissions analysis for VOC, SO<sub>x</sub>, and ammonia is not required (unless a finding is made at some point that any of these precursors is a significant contributor in the Washington area). He said that by next month's meeting staff should be able to draft and present a scope of work for a conformity assessment of TPB plans and programs with respect to PM 2.5.

Mr. Clifford then distributed a third and final handout, consisting of a page from COG/DEP's website, followed by excerpts from EPA's Federal Register notices, on actions relating to the region's severe area SIPs. The actions include approval of DC's and VA's ozone SIPs and disapproval of MD's SIP, with a protective finding for the mobile emissions budget so it can continue to be used in conformity determinations, i.e. that the actions would not affect transportation projects.

The Committee then discussed the topic including the following: Has the handout regarding seasonal variation of traffic volume been presented to the Travel Forecasting Subcommittee (TFS)? No, TPB staff will present this to TFS, and to MWAQC's Technical Advisory Committee at their respective meetings on May 20, 2005; EPA guidance does not include information on exceptions to findings of significant contributors for the precursors. Will COG staff need to wait for EPA findings before proceeding? Staff does not expect another guidance document from EPA during this conformity cycle. We'll need to proceed with available guidance.

#### **5. Update on Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) Decoder - Pilot Testing**

Mr. Sivasailam and Mr. Freeman distributed and presented a handout entitled "Evaluation of VINPOWER – Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) Decoding Software", dated May 6, 2005. The Committee then discussed the topic including the following: Why didn't staff evaluate the "engine type" attribute? VINPOWER decodes a "Mobile6 vehicle type" attribute that could be used for developing vehicle fleet characteristics for Mobile 6 inputs, and therefore does not need engine type; What are the Margins of error for comparing the decodes with vehicle registration data? Graphs do not show margin or error calculations. What is the purpose of doing this comparison? The VIN decoding software would automate the process and minimize manual adjustments to data for producing estimates. Before purchasing the software a test is needed to verify the validity of the decode results, hence the comparison. This is a good time to consider purchasing VINPOWER with upcoming SIP development. The air agencies are supportive of the VIN decoding method because estimating fleet characteristics has been difficult without a way to automate the process; Were the age distributions and the vehicle type distributions derived from the same registration records? Yes.

#### **6. Review of Draft Preliminary FY 2006-2011 Transportation Improvement Program TIP**

Mr. Pfoutz distributed the preliminary draft FY 2006-2011 Transportation Improvement Program and asked the Committee to review the submissions and submit comments to Mr. Austin by no later than May 27.

Mr. Pfoutz also distributed the draft Financial Plan Steering Group member list and asked committee members to verify the person listed or to update the list by contacting either himself or Mr. Miller with the proper person.

#### **7. Status Report on the TPB Regional Mobility and Accessibility Study**

Mr. Griffiths distributed a handout that summarized several recently completed Regional Mobility and Accessibility Study work activities. He reported that calculation of land use measures of effectiveness and the travel modeling for the "Transit-Oriented Development" and the "Higher Household Growth in Region" scenarios had been completed and presented to the Joint Technical Work Group. He then presented some of the preliminary findings from this work.

Mr. Griffiths stated that next steps in this study were to: (1) specify the network coding for the “More Household Growth in Inner Areas and Clusters”, the “More Job Growth in Outer Areas”, and the “Region Undivided” scenarios; (2) further specify the network coding and land use assumptions for an enhanced HOV/HOT/Express Toll Lane transportation scenario; and (3) calculate all the “measures of effectiveness” for the scenarios in this study.

Mr. Griffiths concluded his presentation by stating instead of a Joint Technical Working Group meeting this month, the Transportation Scenarios subgroup would be meeting on May 13<sup>th</sup> to specify the transportation network assumptions for the “More Household Growth in Inner Areas and Clusters” scenario.

**8. Briefing on Regional Travel Trends**

Deferred until the July meeting.

**9. Other Business**

**11. Adjourn**

**TPB TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES  
ATTENDANCE - May 6, 2005**

**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

DDOT                      Rick Rybeck

**MARYLAND**

Frederick Co.            Denis Superczynski  
Gaithersburg            -----  
Montgomery Co.        David Moss  
Prince George's Co.    Aaron Overman  
Rockville                -----  
M-NCPPC  
  Montgomery Co.      Alexander Hekimian  
  Prince George's Co. -----  
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MDOT                    Ron Spalding  
                              Glen Smith  
                              Lyn Erickson  
                              BJ Berhanu

**VIRGINIA**

Alexandria              Maria White  
Arlington Co.          Nicole Lewis  
City of Fairfax         Alexis Verzosa  
Fairfax Co.             Robert Owolabi  
                              Mike Lake  
Falls Church          -----  
Loudoun Co.            Arthur Smith  
Manassas                -----  
Prince William Co.    Rick Canizales  
NVTC                    -----  
PRTC                    Karen Waterman  
VRE                      -----  
VDOT                    Kanathur Srikanth  
VDRPT                  Sharmila Samarasinghe  
NVPDC                  -----  
VDOA                    -----

**WMATA**

WMATA                  Lora Byala

**FEDERAL/OTHER**

FHWA-DC                -----  
FHWA-VA                Unwana Bellinger

FTA                      Deborah Burns

NCPC                    Michael Weil

NPS                      -----

MWAQC                -----

**COG Staff and Others**

Ronald Kirby, COG/DTP  
Mike Clifford, COG/DTP  
Robert Griffiths, COG/DTP  
Mark Pfoutz, COG/DTP  
Jim Hogan, COG/DTP  
Andrew Meese, COG/DTP  
Eulalie Lucas, COG/DTP  
Andrew Austin, COG/DTP  
Michael Freeman, COG/DTP  
Daivamani Sivasailam, COG/DTP  
Nicholas Ramfos, COG/DTP  
Joan Rohlf, COG/DEP  
Sunil Kumar, COG/DEP  
Jane Posey, COG/DTP  
Hailemariam Abai, COG/DTP  
Jim Yin, COG/DTP  
Anant Choudhary, COG/DTP  
Jill Locantore, COG/DTP  
Jinchul Park, COG/DTP  
Don McAuslan, COG/DTP  
G. Toni Giardini, COG/DTP  
Paul DesJardin, COG/HSPPS  
Greg Goodwin, COG/HSPPS  
Harry Sanders, Action Committee for Transit  
Randall Carroll, MDE  
Howard Chang, Tri-County Council