

Status Report :

*Determination of the State of the
Practice in Travel Forecasting*

Presented to the
TPB Technical Committee

October 7, 2005
Ron Milone, COG/TPB

Study Background

- Conducted by: Transportation Research Board of the N.A.
- Project Start: Late Fall 2004
- Project Duration: 18 Months
- Project Sponsors: USDOT, FHWA and FTA
- Project Budget: \$340K (\$50K recently added)
- Project Scope:
 1. To gather information to determine the state of the practice
 2. To address further modeling questions
 - What are models being used for?
 - What are similarities and differences of models?
 - What are the technical shortcomings?

Why is the Project Being Done?

- It's time to take stock of where the profession is
- Travel modeling is not well defined
- Some localized guidelines exist but no universal standards
- Federal guidance has diminished steadily
- Software privatization and competition has prompted variation in the practice

10/7/05

Presentation to TPB Tech. Committee

3

Project Oversight Committee

- Committee Chairman:
 - Martin Wachs, UC Berkeley
- Academic Members:
 - George Dresser, TTI
 - Ronald Eash, Northwestern U.
 - Robert Johnston, UC Davis
 - Eric Miller, U. of Toronto
- Consultants Members:
 - Richard Pratt
 - Thomas Deen
- State/Regional Agency Members
 - Laura Cove, NC DOT
 - Michael Morris, NCTCOG
 - Charles Purvis, MTC
 - Guy Rousseau, ARC
 - Richard Walker, Portland Metro
 - Mary Lynn Tischer, VDOT

10/7/05

Presentation to TPB Tech. Committee

4

Project Status

- **To Date:**
 - Survey consultant selected: BMI/SG
 - MPO Survey Designed – Spring 2005
 - Survey Pretested by 5 MPOs – June 2005
 - Survey implemented – June-August, 2005
 - Draft results shared with MPOs – Sept. 9, 2005
- **Next Steps:**
 - Get non-respondent MPOs to answer (recommendation)
 - Clean survey file
 - Conduct detailed interviews with few MPOs to investigate in-depth modeling issues
 - Final Report/ Recommendations

10/7/05

Presentation to TPB Tech. Committee

5

Observations on the MPO Survey

- **Web-Based**
- **Impressive response rate & geographic coverage**
 - 57% of MPOs responded (219 out of 381)
 - Large MPOs: 86% response rate
 - Small/Medium MPOs: 54% response rate
 - **Major Factors of High Response:**
 - Endorsed by NARC, AMPO, and AASHTO
 - Persistent Follow-up by Consultants & TRB

10/7/05

Presentation to TPB Tech. Committee

6

Survey Findings

- Four-step model remains as the predominant forecasting method
 - variations exist in individual modeling steps
 - some MPO's do not use/do not need models
- Strong Interest in Tour-based/Activity-based modeling
 - Few actual model implementations
- Who's Running the Models?
 - Large MPOs: MPO Staff
 - Small / Medium MPO's: Various People
 - MPO Staff/ State DOT/ Consultants/ Combinations

10/7/05

Presentation to TPB Tech. Committee

7

What's Driving Development Work?

- Localized Issues and conditions
 - New Starts projects
 - Air Quality status
 - Highway Pricing Projects
 - Other project planning needs
- Modeling is NOT 'One-Size-Fits-All'

10/7/05

Presentation to TPB Tech. Committee

8

Next Steps

- Non-respondents may be asked to reconsider
- Details of MPO interviews now being worked out
 - Who be surveyed?
 - How will survey be implemented?
- Final Report – Spring 2006
 - Implications of findings and recommendations will impact the profession

10/7/05

Presentation to TPB Tech. Committee

9