

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MINUTES

1. Welcome and Approval of Minutes from March 5 Technical Committee Meeting

Minutes were approved as written.

2. Update on Project Submissions and Comments Received to Date for the 2004 Constrained Long Range Plan (CLRP) and FY2005-2010 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Mr. Kirby reviewed the updated information from the March 17 TPB meeting on the project submissions and comments received to date for the air quality conformity analysis of the 2004 CLRP and the FY 2005-2010 TIP. He asked the Committee to complete a final review of this information. He said that more than 2,000 comments had been received to date and that they are posted by date on the TPB web site. Copies of a memorandum from the March 17 TPB meeting on the initial responses to comments received through March 12 were also distributed to the Committee.

Mr. Kirby distributed a draft agenda for a special TPB work session for TPB members and alternates to be held on April 14. He explained that the session would provide a review the general planning responsibilities and activities of the TPB and then focus on the action to be taken at the April 21 meeting regarding the project submissions for inclusion in air quality conformity analysis. He asked the Committee for suggestions for the agenda.

Mr. Maslanka suggested that the federal requirements for the MPO planning actions be presented. Mr. Srikanth said that the session could be very useful to explain the MPO process and how it interacts with major project planning activities. Ms. Dietz suggested the session put the local project planning process in context with the regional planning process and the federal requirements. Ms. Burns suggested that the transit financial issues that are in the "Time to Act" brochure be presented.

The Committee recommended that the TPB at its April 21 meeting approve the project submissions for inclusion in the air quality conformity analysis of the 2004 CLRP and the FY 2005-2010 TIP.

3. Update on the Scope of Work for the Air Quality Conformity Assessment, 2004 CLRP and FY2005-2010 TIP

Mr. Clifford provided an overview of the updated draft "Air Quality Conformity Assessment: Scope of Work" dated 03/23/04, which was included in the committee's mail-out package. He closed by noting that the schedule assumed the timely delivery of two land activity forecasts (reflecting the two ICC alignments) and the release of the Version 2.1D travel demand model.

Mr. Desjardin said that he expected the base round 6.4 Cooperative Forecasts (without the ICC assumptions) to be available within the next two weeks.

Mr. Kirby noted that the Round 6.4 land use forecasts, which will not include the ICC, will be used for initial travel demand model runs. The Planning Directors will then be asked to update the 6.4 land use to reflect land use impacts of the two proposed ICC alignments. These revised land use forecasts would then be used as inputs to new travel demand model forecasts. A similar approach was taken for the analysis of the New York Avenue Metro Station.

The Committee then discussed the topic, including the following: Would the land use revision described by Mr. Kirby be a post-processing of travel model results? (No, new travel demand runs would be performed with the new land use forecasts as inputs.); How will transit fares be calculated for out-years? (By applying historical inflation rates (CPI) to current fares.); Has the 6.4 land use base been approved? (Yes, the base control totals by jurisdiction were approved in March.); When do land use forecast revisions need to be completed to accommodate MWCOC's modeling schedule? (If project submissions are approved by the TPB on April 21, we will need the land use files and other inputs by May 1. Emission results should be available in July, if all goes well. However, seven alternatives will be analyzed this year instead of four; in the past, we generally planned on two weeks as being required for producing each alternative.)

4. Report on Travel Forecasting Subcommittee Meeting

Mr. Hogan reported that the TPB Travel Forecasting Subcommittee met on March 19 to receive a presentation of the first draft of the Version 2.1D travel demand model, discuss the process for disseminating information on the structure and use of the TPB travel demand models (described in more detail under Item 5), receive a presentation comparing the 2000 Census Transportation Planning Package with local employment estimates (described in more detail under Item 6), and hear an update on the ongoing Household Travel Survey.

The new Version 2.1D model represents an incremental enhancement of the currently adopted Version 2.1C model, which is the model of record in updating the 2003 CLRP. Among the enhancements are the following:

- improved sensitivity to highway pricing / toll modeling;
- updated capacity / speed look-up parameters;
- a revised freeway volume delay function;
- increased equilibrium traffic assignment iterations from 10 to 20;
- reduction in the number and / or magnitude of K factors; and
- increased feedback iterations throughout the model chain to ensure consistency of speeds.

Mr. Hogan indicated that additional changes were being addressed in anticipation of a second draft of the Version 2.1D model being presented at the next meeting of the TPB Travel Forecasting Subcommittee on May 21st. These are the following:

- linking bus speeds to highway congestion in developing future year transit networks;

- addressing adjustments in the input Cooperative Forecast data to better reflect base year 2000 conditions.

Mr. Hogan noted that it may be possible to further reduce or dampen the K factors remaining in the Version 2.1D model if the adjustments are made to the Cooperative Forecast as part of Round 6.4.

There was extensive discussion at the TFS meeting on March 19 regarding the availability of data to better check the Version 2.1D model with respect to time-of-day travel estimation. Mr. Hogan asked Mr. Freeman of the COG/TPB staff to distribute a memorandum prepared for members of the Committee requesting observed traffic volume data from local jurisdictions. Mr. Freeman indicated that staff makes use of Highway Performance Monitoring System (HPMS) data collected by the state transportation agencies, but would like to make better use of any local data as well. After some discussion, it was agreed that jurisdictions should provide a description of any data, including how the data were collected, before transmitting them to TPB staff. Mr. Moss asked that the letter requesting the data be sent out in an e-mail. Mr. Srikanth and Mr. Haley indicated that the state transportation agencies may have additional data beyond the normal HPMS information that COG/TPB staff have received.

5. Process for Disseminating Information on the Structure and use of TPB Travel Demand Models

Mr. Kirby spoke to the enclosure in the Committee mailing packet, which reviewed the current status of TPB models, general principles for release of new information, and a new proposal to add updates on status of TPB models to the web site at COG.

He emphasized that models and documentation will always be available on or before dates on which results are made available to the public for comment. Furthermore, there will always be an official, adopted model of record reflecting the last approval action by the TPB (currently Version 2.1 C model). Typically, there will be a draft improved model available for public review (currently Version 2.1 D model). Documentation of models appears on the COG web site. The models and data needed to execute them are available by written request. The same information is being provided to everyone at the same time. Major releases of draft models will be scheduled for the bi-monthly TPB Travel Forecasting Subcommittee meetings.

Mr. Kirby further stated that TPB staff is continuing to make enhancements to the Version 2.1D model for the next meeting of the TPB Travel Forecasting Subcommittee on May 21st. Effort is being made to incorporate a methodology for adjusting forecast year bus speeds to more explicitly reflect highway congestion. In addition, the identification of regional bus service improvements in the interim years, 2015 and 2025, is also being pursued. Mr. Maslanka commented that some roads have bus service for which no improvements are possible. Mr. Biesiadny inquired whether or not the issue of bus service improvements would be linked to discussions with the value pricing task force. Mr. Kirby responded that this issue will be addressed with that group, but the immediate need in the next two months is to explicitly incorporate a bus speed methodology into the travel forecasting process.

6. Comparison of 2000 Census Transportation Planning Package and Local Employment Estimates

Mr. Griffiths presented an analysis of 2000 Census Transportation Planning Package (CTPP) data that showed some significant differences in CTPP estimated employment by place of work compared to local jurisdiction place of work employment estimates for 2000. He noted that most of the significant differences appeared to be related to the fact that jurisdictions in the Baltimore metropolitan region and some other jurisdictions in Maryland used Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) employment figures as their base while most jurisdictions in the metropolitan Washington region used Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and Census data for their local employment estimates. He pointed out that the BEA-based employment figures for 2000 were much higher than both the BLS and CTPP-based employment estimates. He noted that this difference was largely because BEA used a definition for measuring employment that differed significantly from the ones used to develop the BLS and CTPP-based employment estimates. This was especially the case in the way BEA counts self-employed proprietors and military workers.

Mr. Griffiths recommended that a technical adjustment factor be applied to the BEA-based local employment estimates before they are used in running the regional travel demand model so that the employment figures used in the modeling process would be based on a consistent definition of employment. Similarly, Mr. Griffiths recommended that the Baltimore Metropolitan Council should also apply a technical adjustment factor to BLS-based local employment estimates they receive from COG for metropolitan Washington jurisdictions before running their regional travel demand model.

Mr. Chang commented that he thought the BLS-based and CTPP employment estimates understated actual employment for 2000 in southern Maryland for several reasons. First, the Census undercounted population there, second, BLS statistics understate at-place construction employment, third, multi-job holding by southern Maryland residents/workers is much higher than the regional average, and finally, employment counts from managers at some individual employment sites showed higher numbers than are in the BLS and Census numbers.

Mr. Griffiths responded that he was willing to work with Mr. Chang to get more consistent numbers for Southern Maryland jurisdictions by correcting for some of the discrepancies he noted.

Mr. Srikanth commented that this issue needed to be looked at in two parts. First, are adjustment factors needed and second, what should these adjustment factors be. He added that he thought Mr. Griffiths had made the case that adjustment factors were needed, but should come back at the next meeting with the recommended adjustment factors.

Chair Rybeck agreed with Mr. Srikanth and asked Mr. Griffiths to come back at the next meeting with the recommended adjustment factors so that a compatible definition of employment could be used in the travel demand modeling.

7. Briefing on Census Journey to Work Data

Mr. Griffiths spoke to a handout that analyzed Census Transportation Planning Package (CTPP) worker tabulations by place of work. He explained that these CTPP-Part 2 tabulations showed the commuting modes used by where workers worked as opposed to where these workers lived. He stated that the next release of the CTPP data, the Part 3 data, would provide a cross-tabulation of worker commuting modes by both place of work and place of residence.

Mr. Griffiths noted that the significant decline in the number of federal workers working in the core jurisdictions of DC, Arlington and Alexandria between 1990 and 2000 helped explain the regional drop in the number transit and carpool commuters in this same time period. Because federal government workers working at employment sites in these jurisdictions are heavy users of transit and carpooling for commuting, it is not surprising to see a decline in transit commuters and carpoolers corresponding to the drop in the number federal workers in these jurisdictions. He also noted that the percentage of all workers commuting by transit to employment sites in these three core jurisdictions had remained about the same between 1990 and 2000.

Mr. Biesiadny commented on the need to be careful in presenting this information on the drop in transit commuting because not all trips on transit are for commuting purposes and transit ridership statistics showed total transit ridership in the region increasing.

Mr. Griffiths agreed with Mr. Biesiadny and noted that Census questionnaire only asked for the worker's "usual" commuting mode and thus missed a large number of "occasional" transit commuters. He added that several adjustment factors would need to be applied to the CTPP worker tabulations to convert them into home-based work trip tables before this data could be used in travel model validation.

8. Status Report on Mobile Emissions Research Activities

Mr. Sivasailam reviewed two memorandums on mobile emissions activities. The first memo which was handed out at the meeting dealt with refining inputs to the Mobile 6 model and consisted of a number of tasks. He explained how the three states prepare vehicle registration data from DMV records and the potential for refining the data by using a vehicle identification number (VIN) decoder. A VIN decoder is commercially available and was used successfully in New Jersey. Staff is interested in testing the software in this region and will be back with a proposal to pursue this option. The second task under the first item was to check on the status of the dynamic registration utility in Mobile 6. EPA has informed staff that at the present time they have no plans to develop a dynamic registration utility for Mobile 6 model. He mentioned that his conversations with the air agencies indicated that odometer data collected during the vehicle emissions inspection and maintenance program cannot be used in developing a more robust vehicle miles of travel data.

The second memo outlined a potential regional emissions trading program. He discussed three types of programs and the regulatory needs of them. Inter-sector trading and inter-pollutant trading are programs that have to be included in the state implementation plans (SIP) and approved by EPA. Examples of both types of programs are available and the second one has

been included in previous SIPs' in the region. The third one, inter-jurisdictional trading can happen without regulatory approval from the EPA. He reviewed an example of such a program and how it would be implemented. The issue of whether emissions benefits of projects to be included in the regional TIP can be traded was discussed. The Committee agreed that the issues raised need to be discussed further.

9. Update on Regional Mobility and Accessibility Study

Mr. Griffiths reported that the modeling of the CLRP+ transportation scenario with the Round 6.3 Cooperative Forecasts had begun and that the initial results of this modeling would be presented for review at the April 16th Joint Technical Work Group meeting. Mr. Griffiths continued that after technical review of the modeling of the alternative land use scenarios with the CLRP+ transportation scenario by the Joint Technical Working Group in May and June, it was planned to take a report on the analysis to the TPB in July.

Mr. Griffiths concluded his report by stating that the next meeting of the Joint Technical Working Group was scheduled for Friday, April 16th at 12:15PM.

10. Other Business

None.

11. Adjourn

**TPB TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES
ATTENDANCE - April 2, 2004**

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

DDOT Rick Rybeck

MARYLAND

Frederick Co. James Gugel
Gaithersburg -----
Montgomery Co. David Moss
Prince George's Co. -----
Rockville -----
M-NCPPC
Montgomery Co. Alexander Hekimian
Prince George's Co. Faramarz Mokhtari

MDOT Fatimah Hasan
 Mike Haley

VIRGINIA

Alexandria Jim Maslanka
Arlington Co. Harriet Dietz
City of Fairfax Alex Verzosa
Fairfax Co. Robert Owolabi
 Tom Biesiadny
Falls Church -----
Loudoun Co. Art Smith
Manassas -----
Prince William Co. Rick Canizales
NVTc
PRTC Karen Waterman
VRE -----
VDOT Kanathur Srikanth
 Grady Ketron
 Sharmila Samarasinghe

VDRPT
NVPDC
VDOA

WMATA

WMATA Kristin Haldeman

FEDERAL/OTHER

FHWA-DC
FTA Deborah Burns
NCPC Michael Weil

MWAQC

COG Staff and Others

Ronald Kirby, COG/DTP
Gerald Miller, COG/DTP
Mike Clifford, COG/DTP
Jim Hogan, COG/DTP
Robert Griffiths, COG/DTP
Mark Pfoutz, COG/DTP
Andrew Austin, COG/DTP
Daivamani Sivasailam, COG/DTP
G. T. Giardini, COG/DTP
Michael Freeman, COG/DTP
Joan Rohlf, COG/DEP
Sunil Kumar, COG/DEP
Paul DesJardin, COG/HSPPS
Greg Goodwin, COG/HSPPS
Howard Chang, Tri-County Council
Pat Mann, Alexandria Planning & Zoning
Jim Wamsley, FCSG