

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MINUTES

July 6, 2007

1. **Welcome and Approval of Minutes from the June 1, 2007 Technical Committee Meeting**

Minutes were approved as written.

Prior to beginning Item 2, Mr. Kirby distributed an excerpt from and spoke momentarily about the just-released Transportation Research Board Special Report 288, entitled "Metropolitan Travel Forecasting: Current Practice and Future Direction". This report was to be discussed at the Travel Forecasting Subcommittee on July 20. Mr. Kirby noted that the report covered both the results of a national survey and the views of the members of the panel convened for the report. Because of differences between the survey results and the panel members' views, Mr. Kirby recommended looking at the full report (including a database with information from around the country), not just the Executive Summary. The report was available on the TRB Web site.

2. **Briefing on TPB Comments on a Proposed TPB Regional Taxicab Regulators' Task Force**

Mr. Kirby referred to a handout item with the proposed Task Force mission statement. The proposed formation of the Task Force had been discussed at the June Technical Committee meeting; the Committee members had brought up questions on the appropriateness of housing this Task Force under TPB, and Committee members were to follow up by exploring this issue with involved colleagues in their jurisdictions. The proposal was presented as an information item at the June TPB meeting, at which the TPB raised no issues. Today the Committee had no further comments, and agreed that the proposal should be moved forward to the TPB for approval.

3. **Briefing on Responses to TPB Comments on the Freight Railroad Realignment Feasibility Study**

Mr. Dowd and Mr. Zaidain of the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) spoke, referring to a presentation. The presentation identified the main issues raised in their May briefing to TPB, identified stakeholders with whom the study had been discussed, and listed some options for next steps. Main issues were divided into the set of security issues and the set of regional rail transportation issues, the latter being particularly relevant to the purview of the TPB. Mr. Dowd and Mr. Zaidain proposed that TPB interact with the I-95 Corridor Coalition regarding its Mid-Atlantic Rail Operations Study (MAROPS) as a means to explore next steps.

Mr. Kirby reviewed the discussion that took place at the May 16 TPB meeting. NCPC staff had been asked to return with follow-up activities to the study. Though security was a concern, the TPB and its agencies had limited purview in the topic, but did have purview regarding freight and passenger movement capacity challenges, part of a larger set of capacity challenges along the Northeast Corridor.

In response to a question from Ms. Samarasinghe, Mr. Zaidain noted that the most dangerous hazardous materials, described as toxic inhalation hazards (TIHs), may be being voluntarily rerouted by the freight railroad away from the rail line closest to the U.S. Capitol.

Mr. Srikanth asked if staff had considered formation of a task force. Mr. Dowd noted that the NCPD study provided good baseline information for subsequent activities, and that the TPB may be a good venue for such activities, with the recent completion of the regional freight study and the proposed formation of a new freight subcommittee. Mr. Meese commented that the proposed freight subcommittee was intended to focus on freight movement stakeholders, and must address a wide range of their needs (especially truck issues), whereas the rail realignment issue involved more than just freight stakeholders (i.e., also passenger rail and land use planning interests). He recommended keeping the two groups separate but coordinated. Mr. Kirby noted the recommendation of involving the I-95 Corridor Coalition as this was an East Coast Issue, not just a metropolitan issue.

In response to a question from Mr. Srikanth, Ms. Massie stated that PTRC and VRE had been involved in discussions, and that capacity issues on the Long Bridge over the Potomac River were of particular concern. Mr. Srikanth recommended hearing more from MARC and VRE on any capacity concerns they have.

Mr. Srikanth recommended that specific follow-on recommendations be provided to the Board. Mr. Kirby noted that recommendations could include as mentioned collaborating with the I-95 Corridor Coalition or with the Baltimore region. Mr. Harrington noted the Technical Committee's strong interest in passenger capacity issues. Mr. Kirby agreed, and noted that security issues may be better addressed by the COG security-related committee structure rather than under TPB. Mr. Dowd did note that the TPB might benefit from a better understanding of what the Transportation Security Administration was doing regarding increasing security for the existing rail line.

The group agreed that, if specific recommendations were added, the presentation was good to be moved forward for the July 18 TPB meeting.

4. Briefing on the Draft TPB Participation Plan

Ms. Crawford provided a PowerPoint presentation that reviewed the TPB Draft Participation Plan (Plan). She said the Plan was developed based on SAFETEA-LU requirements, the Evaluation of the TPB Public Involvement Activities, lessons learned from staff outreach efforts and the input of various TPB committees and subcommittees. She briefly described the purpose of the Plan as being a policy document with broad goals and objectives for participation in the TPB process; TPB staff will develop an annual participation program that contains specific programming activities. She discussed the major new component of the Plan, a focus on tailoring outreach activities to three constituencies: those *involved* in the TPB transportation planning process, those *informed* about transportation issues, but not involved in the TPB process, and those *interested* in transportation, but who have little prior knowledge. She then reviewed the timeline for the completion of the Plan, noting the goal of having the Final TPB Participation Plan adopted by the TPB in November 2007.

Ms. Harvey suggested adding a glossary of terms to the website that describe the technical jargon commonly used at TPB and Subcommittee meetings. She also said it

would be helpful if icons could be developed for some of the more common terms and used in publications for public dissemination.

Committee members discussed the appropriate role for the TPB in providing information to the public, with Mr. Biesiadny saying that the focus should be on specific projects and issues that directly affect the lives of citizens. Mr. Harrington and Mr. Fleming questioned an approach focusing on individual projects, and Mr. Harrington said the emphasis should be on regional issues and planning activities. Ms. Ashby suggested linking regional transportation planning issues to individual projects, citing as an example the links to project-implementing agencies in the new CLRP Google Earth visualization tool. Mr. Kirby noted that it is also useful to make the linkage in the other direction, referring people to the regional level when questions arise about why an individual project is needed and helping to frame the project in a regional context.

Mr. Srikanth asked if staff planned to expand upon the implementation section on page 16 of the Plan. He also recommended that the Plan capture all activities TPB staff are engaged in with respect to participation, for example, expanding the visualization description to reflect all such activities.

Mr. Kirby emphasized that the SAFETEA-LU legislation encourages MPOs to be more proactive in soliciting participation than in past years, and therefore the TPB Draft Participation Plan reflects this ideal and moves beyond the requirements in many respects.

5. Briefing on a Draft Report on TPB Scenario Study Outreach Activities and Feedback Summary

Mr. D. Smith gave a Power Point presentation that dealt with TPB staff outreach efforts surrounding the Regional Mobility and Accessibility Scenario (RMA) Study. He provided overview of the RMA Study Outreach activities, and discussed the feedback voiced by outreach audiences. He said that while most participants agreed on the land use factors causing regional congestion, and there was some consensus on a strategy of trying to alleviate congestion by concentrating growth in activity centers served by transit, audiences identified many challenges and concerns about implementation of this strategy. He said audiences commonly expressed concern that government would not provide adequate infrastructure, especially road and transit capacity, to accommodate a strategy of concentrated growth, with many saying that localized side effects would outweigh the potential benefits of such a regional strategy.

Mr. D. Smith concluded his presentation by listing opportunities for TPB action, among which are communicating a cohesive message about regional challenges related to growth, advocating for more funding for transportation improvements, providing more tools for localities to “do density right”, and improving the process through which transportation projects are prioritized in the region. He said the next step would be to consider this public feedback to determine future Scenario Study activities.

Mr. Biesiadny sought to clarify the purpose of the presentation and report, and asked what action was being requested from the TPB. Mr. Kirby responded that the report is meant to summarize scenario study outreach activities and present the general themes and issues raised by audiences, including the challenges present at the local level. Mr. Biesiadny said that overall message was not clear in the presentation, and that it should be shortened for the TPB.

Mr. Owolabi asked for more detail about how locations for outreach events were determined. Mr. D. Smith and Mr. Kirby responded that in addition to going where invited, staff had actively tried to cover the region and worked with alumni of the TPB Community Leadership Institutes to identify groups that would be interested in the presentation.

Mr. Srikanth asked to clarify the next steps described, including discussion of the next phase of the Scenario Study. Mr. Kirby said that the report is meant to provide the TPB with additional background information, as a supplement to the CAC recommendations so that they can decide on how to move forward with the study and related activities such as the TLC Program. Mr. Srikanth suggested that the presentation explain at the beginning a little bit more of that context to help frame the Board's discussion of the item.

6. Status Report on the Transportation/Land-Use Connections (TLC) Pilot Program

Ms. Crawford provided an update on the TLC Program through a PowerPoint presentation that reviewed the status of the Technical Assistance projects and Regional Clearinghouse. She said the Regional Clearinghouse website was launched in June and encouraged Technical Committee members to review the site to ensure the information contained in the regional database was accurate. She also asked members to submit other examples of projects and programs in their communities that link transportation and land-use. The website is www.mwcog.org/tlc.

Ms. Crawford reviewed the five location-specific Technical Assistance projects and the region-wide presentation on density issues. She said the five location-specific projects were in various stages of completion and would be finalized by the end of July. She said staff is currently reviewing the draft presentation on density, which will be provided to Takoma Park and College Park first, and then available to other jurisdictions. She presented some lessons-learned on the pilot round of the TLC program, noting that the small amount of funding available for the projects and the short timeframe for completion actually proved to help frame key issues. She said the intra-agency coordination that resulted from many of the projects would serve future efforts. She said a second round of funding will be planned in FY2008, and mentioned that five Virginia projects were selected to participate in the VDOT Multimodal Grant Program.

Ms. Samarasinghe asked for more information about the public presentation project, and asked if the products from all the TLC projects will be available on the TLC website. Mr. D. Smith said that several applications requested a public presentation on density for elected officials and community members and that the TPB decided to add a sixth region-wide project to meet this need. He confirmed that the final products would be posted to the Web.

Much of the discussion focused on the process for evaluating the success of the program. Mr. Beam asked if TPB staff planned to evaluate the pilot program before moving into future rounds. Mr. Kirby responded that staff will develop an evaluation sheet, which will be circulated to the participating jurisdictions and consultants to gauge from them what was successful about the program and what should be changed in future rounds. Ms. Ashby asked to clarify if the lessons learned presented in the PowerPoint were from the jurisdictions or based on staff observations. She also asked if staff plans to report back to the TPB information gathered through the evaluation. Ms. Crawford said they were staff observations, but that many of the jurisdictions expressed

these sentiments in conversations with staff. Mr. Kirby said staff will come back in September with a report on the evaluations.

Mr. Harrington asked if the projects that produced a scope of work were actually of any value. Mr. Canizales said that the process Prince William County went through with the consultants helped them focus on key issues and that the consultants identified funding sources to which the County could apply for funding for the study.

Ms. Samarasinghe asked what the funding level would be for future rounds. Mr. Kirby replied that currently funding for the program in FY2008 is the same as that in FY2007, but results from the evaluation could cause the TPB to shift future funding levels.

Mr. Owolabi asked if jurisdictions who received technical assistance during the pilot round would be precluded from participating in future round of the program. Mr. Kirby said that seemed fair, but that it depends on a number of factors, including among other, from what jurisdictions the TPB received applications and how much funding is dedicated to the program.

7. Briefing on Dismissed Complaint Against TPB in the Inter County Connector (ICC) Lawsuit

Mr. Kirby referred to two handouts, one a PowerPoint presentation, the other a detailed memorandum with excerpts from ICC lawsuit materials. It had been reported to the TPB on June 20 that, on June 13, plaintiffs Environmental Defense and the Sierra Club voluntarily dismissed all seven (7) of the counts against COG and TPB (of the 39 counts in the original lawsuit against COG, TPB, the U.S. Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration). Other counts against other defendants in the lawsuit remained active.

At the July 18 TPB meeting, there was to be a follow-up presentation on the context of this dismissed complaint and the specifics of the dismissed counts. Both draft handouts proposed for that presentation summarized the lawsuit claims and the responses from the COG/TPB legal team; Mr. Kirby and the Committee reviewed and discussed the handouts.

In response to a question from Mr. Foster, Mr. Kirby stated that preparations for responding to the lawsuit resulted in extensive review of COG and TPB processes, but did not result in any plans to change those processes.

In response to a question from Mr. A. Smith, Mr. Kirby stated that since there was no legal finding on the merits of the now-dismissed complaints, these same complaints might be brought up again in the future. Mr. Fleming noted that these specific complaints would not be brought up again in this ICC lawsuit, but could be brought up in other lawsuits.

In response to a question from Mr. Biesiadny, Mr. Kirby noted there were no stated reasons that these complaints against COG and TPB were dismissed. Possible reasons included the persuasiveness of the COG and TPB responses to the complaints, or the desire of the plaintiffs to raise these complaints instead in future cases or legal actions.

8. Report on Current Conditions and Alternatives Under Consideration for the 14th Street Bridge Corridor Project EIS

Mr. Van Dop of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Eastern Federal Lands Division spoke and referred to a PowerPoint presentation. This same briefing had been given to the TPB at its June 20 meeting, and was now coming back to the Technical Committee for its information. Mr. Van Dop and the Committee reviewed and discussed the presentation. He invited all ideas and comments on the study, and any alternatives or issues to consider, and referred interested persons to the study's Web site at www.14thstreetbridgecorridoreis.com. He planned to return to the Committee in the early fall with an update.

In response to a question from Mr. Owolabi, Mr. Van Dop and Mr. Kirby noted that, counterintuitively, the inbound P.M. peak period traffic volume on the 14th Street Bridge exceeds inbound A.M. peak period traffic volume (by a few hundred vehicles), possibly reflecting the impacts of the regional "East-West Divide" and Woodrow Wilson Bridge construction. This is shown in the study's existing conditions information and is based upon COG/TPB data.

Mr. Kirby noted that this study should be coordinated with related studies and activities in the area regarding HOT lanes and freight rail relocation. The existing conditions information in this study will be helpful for this. Mr. Van Dop noted that additional information, such as an origin-and-destination study of users of the bridge, would be useful.

In response to a suggestion from Mr. Harrington, Mr. Van Dop agreed to place today's presentation on the study's Web site.

9. Briefing on Proposed Schedule for 2008 Financially Constrained Long Range Plan (CLRP) and FY 2009-2014 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Mr. Kirby distributed two items. The first was a set of letters relating to the compliance of Virginia's STIP with the provisions of SAFETEA-LU. The second was an updated (since the mailout) proposed schedule for the air quality conformity analysis of the 2008 CLRP and the FY2009-2014 TIP.

The set of letters contained Virginia's draft STIP development schedule. Mr. Kirby noted that the STIP schedule calls for federal approval in September, 2008. VDOT plans to coordinate all state MPO's in order to meet this schedule. Maryland and the District are also interested in a September federal approval for their STIPs.

In order to meet these STIP schedules of federal approval in September, the conformity schedule would have to begin earlier. Mr. Kirby discussed the proposed conformity schedule that would allow federal approval in July, noting that the Call for Projects would have to be approved by the TPB October, 2007, and project inputs would have to be approved by the TPB in February, 2008. Mr. Kirby informed the group that TPB staff could complete the conformity analysis in time for TPB approval in July if project submissions were in on time. He asked the group if it would be possible to meet a project submission deadline of January 4, 2008.

Mr. Srikanth stated that VDOT plans to start following this STIP schedule this year. Because this schedule is tight, VDOT is skipping the FY08 STIP and going right to the

FY09 STIP. This schedule was developed to get federal funds at the beginning of the federal fiscal year.

Mr. Harrington asked when TIP information (funding, etc.) would need to be in for projects submitted in the fall. Mr. Kirby said the draft TIP would be due in May. Mr. Harrington noted that WMATA's budget is not approved until June and suggested that could be a problem.

Mr. Canizales asked if there is any wiggle room in the schedule. Mr. Kirby responded that there might be 1 month. Mr. Canizales pointed out that the on-line database is not ready to go.

Mr. Biesiadny noted that it might be difficult for Northern Virginia to meet the proposed schedule for inputs due to the need to develop and implement a process for dealing with possible new funding. Mr. Kirby asked if most projects were already in the TIP. Mr. Biesiadny replied that the first round of projects is in, but not the second set. Mr. Biesiadny noted that the local jurisdictions would have to have a discussion with VDOT regarding the matter.

Mr. A. Smith agreed with Mr. Biesiadny about the difficulty in meeting the accelerated deadline for project inputs.

Ms. Massie asked what would happen to this year's TIP? Mr. Kirby said there would be no change in the schedule. Ms. Massie noted that this would mean that the feds would have to approve two TIPs quickly in a row and asked if that would be a problem. Mr. Kirby said that he did not expect a problem, and that the feds are obliged to act on what is sent to them.

Ms. Massie asked if there could be TIP amendments. Mr. Kirby replied that as of July 1, due to SAFETEA LU requirements, no TIP amendments could be made. He mentioned that money could be moved around, and that small changes not requiring public comment may be made.

Ms. Massie asked if it would be possible to amend a STIP. Mr. Kirby replied that the feds have left that as a possibility, on a case-by-case basis, but it would probably be best to assume that no amendments will be allowed.

Mr. Moss asked if the issue could be discussed in September. He expressed concern that the local CIPs are not complete until January, so providing inputs earlier might be difficult. Mr. Kirby noted that the general concern would be for projects that affect conformity.

10. Briefing on the Draft Report on Regional Travel Trends Report

This Item was delayed to September.

11. Briefing on Commuter Connection's Transportation Emissions Reduction Measures (TERM) Data Collection Activities

This item was delayed to September.

12. Update on Air Quality Planning Activities

Mr. Clifford distributed the federal letter approving the air quality conformity analysis of the CLRP and TIP amendment to include an interchange at US15 / MD 340 and Jefferson Technology Park in Frederick, MD. He noted that it was necessary for the approval to be in place by June 30 because of SAFETEA LU requirements. The TPB changed the approval from a notice item to an action item in June, in order to meet the necessary deadline.

There were no comments.

13. Briefing on the CO₂ Mobile Source Emissions Estimates for the Washington Region

Mr. Kirby referred to a PowerPoint presentation, the same as used at a June 27, 2007 meeting of the COG Climate Change Steering Committee. The presentation described CO₂ emissions from mobile sources (cars, trucks, and buses) in the Metropolitan Washington Region. Since CO₂ emissions go up or down with the amount of fuel burned, measures to reduce fuel consumption help reduce these emissions. Under discussion nationally were two new fuel economy standards, the California Low Emission Vehicles II (CAL LEV II) standard, and new national Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standards. The handout showed estimated CO₂ reductions if either of these two standards was put in place. Current estimates were thought to be conservative regarding the number of hybrids in the vehicle fleet.

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

Mr. Kirby referred to a draft response letter as a handout. This letter had been revised from previous versions to include information recently received from WMATA. The draft letter included the suggestion that FAMPO jurisdictions propose transit projects related to their residents' commuting into the Washington region, to be considered in the overall Washington region discussions of transit, on a project-specific basis.

Attached to the draft letter was an email from Mr. Bottigheimer of WMATA explaining WMATA's understanding of regional transit funding allocation, and the operational status of a TIFIA loan funding guarantee addressed in a January 2000 WMATA Board resolution that restricted use of the federal transit funding discussed in the FAMPO policies. Mr. Harrington reviewed and discussed this email.

Ms. Massie noted that the I-95 HOV lanes (where bus service can be counted in funding formulas as fixed-guideway service) do not yet extend into the FAMPO region. Ms. Massie also stated that, according to the FTA funding policy, a service has to have been in operation for at least five years before it is eligible for the funding under discussion. Ms. Ashby suggested deleting the statement "...if FRED begins operating transit service on the I-95 HOV lanes" from the letter, and to note that it "may be possible" rather than "will be possible" to qualify for reimbursement.

Mr. Biesiadny noted that it may not be correct to say that the TIFIA loan guarantee program will be discontinued in 2010, because a new program may follow. Mr. Srikanth suggested that the letter might say that the "current" program will end in 2010.

Ms. Ashby stated that the WMATA Board needed to be aware of this issue even though it was being addressed through the MPO. Mr. Harrington stated that the WMATA Board was not currently scheduled to be briefed on this issue, but agreed to ask WMATA compact jurisdictional representatives if they would suggest such a briefing.

In response to a question from Mr. Canizales, Mr. Kirby noted that the FAMPO board and staff have had access to the all draft letters and materials that the Committee had been reviewing, as they have been posted and publicly available on TPB's Web site, and that FAMPO had been following the discussions closely.

Mr. Biesiadny stated that the jurisdictions needed to further review this draft letter before further action, and it was agreed to revisit this topic at the September Technical Committee meeting.

15. Announcement of Final Report of Consultant Study for Enhancing Consideration of Freight in Regional Transportation Planning

Mr. Meese announced that the consultant had completed work on the study. Copies of the final report were available at this meeting. The report had also been posted on the COG/TPB Web site.

16. Other Business

None.

17. Adjourn

**TPB TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES
ATTENDANCE - July 6, 2007**

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

DDOT Mark Rawlings

FEDERAL/OTHER

MARYLAND

Charles County -----
 Frederick Co. -----
 Gaithersburg -----
 Montgomery Co. David Moss
 Prince George's Co. -----
 Rockville -----
 M-NCPPC
 Montgomery Co. -----
 Prince George's Co. Harold Foster

FHWA-DC -----
 FHWA-VA -----
 FTA -----
 NCPC Michael Weil
 NPS -----
 MWAQC -----

MDOT Del Harvey
 Ian Beam

COG Staff

Ronald Kirby, DTP
 Michael Clifford, DTP
 Nick Ramfos, DTP
 Daivamani Sivasailam, DTP
 Mark Pfoutz, DTP
 Jane Posey, DTP
 Sarah Crawford, DTP
 Bob Griffiths, DTP
 Darren Smith, DTP
 Andrew Meese, DTP
 Michael Farrell, DTP
 Michael Eichler, DTP

VIRGINIA

Alexandria Josh Bennett
 Arlington Co. Tamara Ashby
 City of Fairfax -----
 Fairfax Co. Tom Biesiadny
 Robert Owolabi
 Falls Church -----
 Loudoun Co. Art Smith
 Manassas -----
 Prince William Co. Rick Canizales
 NVTC -----
 PRTC Anthony Foster
 VRE -----
 VDOT Kanathur Srikanth
 Valerie Pardo
 VDRPT Sharmila Samarasinghe
 NVPDC -----
 VDOA -----

Other Participants

Betsy Massie, PRTC
 Bill Orleans, Prince Georges' ACT
 Monica Backmon, Prince William County DOT
 Jaak Pedak, Fairfax County DOT
 Mark Cheskey, KCI Technologies, Inc.
 Jack Van Dop, FHWA
 William Dowd, NCPC
 David Zaidain, NCPC

WMATA

WMATA Tom Harrington