

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MINUTES

1. Welcome and Approval of Minutes from the February 4, 2005 Technical Committee Meeting

Minutes were approved as written.

2. Briefing on Project Submissions and Comments Received to Date for the 2005 Constrained Long Range Plan (CLRP) and FY2006-2011 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Mr. Kirby briefed the Committee on the project submissions for the CLRP and TIP that were due February 4 and stated that no comments on the submissions have been received to date. The TPB is scheduled to adopt the submissions for the air quality conformity analysis at the March meeting, however; the TPB may not have adequate information on the submissions in March, requiring that the adoption be delayed until April.

Mr. Kirby provided an overview of the TPB priority areas from the TPB Vision identified in the solicitation document for the CLRP and TIP. The three priority areas include: implement traffic signal optimization; further improve interagency coordination for incident management, and identify how projects or proposals support the regional core and regional activity centers. A report will be made to the TPB on the relationship between the three priority areas and the 2005 CLRP project submissions. The first two areas are being addressed by the various traffic signal optimization programs in the region and the second by the on-going efforts regarding CapCom.

A memorandum on the third priority area, “identify how projects or proposals support the regional core and regional activity centers”, was distributed and described by Mr. Kirby and Ms. Klancher. The memorandum included maps showing the regional activity centers, the proposed significant changes for the 2005 CLRP and the major 2004 CLRP project improvements. Ms. Klancher stated that more analysis is needed, such as an accessibility analysis, to understand more about the relationship between the 2005 CLRP projects and the regional core and activity centers.

Mr. Srikanth and Mr. Spalding stressed that the maps should show all the projects in the plan, including smaller projects, not just focus on the new submissions. Mr. Srikanth gave the example of a relatively small project on US 1 that is supporting the regional core and activity centers and underscored the importance of an accessibility analysis.

Mr. Kirby suggested that the report to the TPB should highlight the smaller projects that provide good connections. TPB staff would need help from the jurisdictions to identify which projects should be highlighted. Mr. Spalding asked if that input would be needed by this month or next, and Mr. Kirby replied it was needed this month, in the next week. Chairman Mokhtari asked if the Committee would be able to review the highlighted projects first. Mr. Kirby said no, not with the given timeframe, but this first cut doesn't need to be perfect.

Mr. Sanders commented that the Bi-County Transitway is planned to be built by 2012 but does not have funding identified for it, whereas the ICC and the Corridor Cities Transitway projects do. Mr. Spalding explained Maryland's long range planning process and phasing, and that the Bi-County Transitway is not ready for the TIP because it is not as far along as the ICC. Mr. Spalding thanked Mr. Sanders for his involvement in the planning for transit projects.

Chairman Mokhtari asked about the presentation to the TPB and the activity centers. Mr. Kirby replied that whatever was presented to the TPB would not be a hurdle for projects in the plan.

Mr. Srikanth suggested it would be helpful to understand how the proposed 2005 CLRP performs as a system based on the modeling results.

Ms. Byala suggested that the TPB be presented the maps rather than highlighting certain projects submitted by the jurisdictions to avoid missing important projects from jurisdictions that are too busy to provide input in the next week.

Chairman Mokhtari suggested that just a status report be given to the TPB to allow more time to work on this. Mr. Srikanth agreed that it would be best to wait until more work can be completed to give the report to the TPB.

3. Briefing on Comments Received to Date on the Scope of Work for the Air Quality Conformity Assessment for the 2005 CLRP and FY2006-2011 TIP

Mr. Clifford spoke to a memorandum included in the mailout and dated February 8, 2005, entitled "Draft Scope of Work for the Air Quality Conformity Assessment of the 2005 Constrained Long Range Plan (CLRP) and the FY 2006-2011 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Mr. Clifford noted that the mailout package included a letter from WMATA to MWCOG, dated February 14, 2005, which requested the Metrorail capacity constraint in TPB's travel model be revised to begin in 2010, instead of 2005, because of capacity enhancements expected with the arrival of new rail cars that have been ordered. Mr. Clifford noted that the public comment period was open until March 12, 2005. There was no discussion on this item from the Committee.

4. Review of Amendments to the FY2005 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

Mr. Miller distributed pages showing amendments to the current FY 2005 UPWP for the Technical Assistance Programs in Virginia and WMATA. He explained the changes for a VDOT project which results in carrying-over \$65,000 to the FY 2006 UPWP. He reviewed the changes to the WMATA program resulting in \$47,000 being carried-over to FY 2006. Ms. Byala explained the reasons for not completing the parking usage at Metrorail stations study. She also described the deletion of a project and the use of the funds for the first phase of a new study to improve regional paratransit services for people with disabilities. The second phase will be completed under the FY 2006 program. She said that the study would be conducted by TPB staff and build on existing information such as that developed by the WMATA Regional Paratransit Task Force last

year. The Committee recommended that TPB approve the proposed amendments to the FY 2005 UPWP.

5. Review of Draft FY2006 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

A draft of the FY 2006 UPWP was distributed. Mr. Miller explained that since the February meeting, final information on the FHWA PL funding levels from DDOT and MDOT had been received. The net effect of these new levels is a reduction of about \$180,000 from the budget for the February version. He reviewed a table showing the changes in work activities for the FY 2006 and FY 2005 programs. He noted that the Financial Planning activity budget was increased \$50,000 for consultant support to conduct the financial analysis needed for the next 3-year update of the CLRP in 2006. He explained that the budget for Regional Studies was reduced to reflect this change and the lower budget totals from the DOTs. He noted that the DDOT and MDOT technical assistance program budgets were also reduced slightly. He said that staff is working with agency staff to specify the activities for the technical assistance program in the District of Columbia. He pointed out that the Virginia program contained a new project called the enhanced commuter corridor count program which will obtain additional data on modal use in either the I-66 or I-95/395 corridors. He also reviewed the new projects in the WMATA program.

Mr. Kirby explained that the lower budget levels that the states provided to the TPB are due to the delays of the federal reauthorization of the USDOT transportation legislation. Congress has authorized only current federal fiscal year funds through May 31. Thus, only 2/3's of the total has been allocated to the states. Once Congress acts, it is expected that additional MPO planning funding will be available. When the states receive this information, the TPB will amend the UPWP to incorporate any additional funds. The Committee recommended that TPB approve the proposed FY 2006 UPWP.

Mr. Kirby then said that he recently participated at an AASHTO meeting of key transportation stakeholders regarding the reauthorization of the federal program. He provided a comprehensive overview of the current activities in Congress, explained the key issues in the House and Senate proposals, and commented on the prospects and next legislative steps that need to occur before the expiration of the current extension of the law on May 31. Mr. Harvey suggested that Mr. Kirby present this information on the reauthorization to the TPB. Chair Mokhtari, Mr. Smith and Ms. Byala supported the suggestion that the TPB be briefed on this topic. Mr. Hekimian inquired about the tolling provisions in the new House bill. Mr. Kirby explained that the previous House bill contained tolling restrictions such as prohibiting toll revenues to be used for transit that would affect projects under currently consideration in the region. However, the new bill does not contain such provisions. He said that the TPB supports the previous Senate bill that did not contain such restrictions on tolling.

Mr. Kirby said that he would request that the Steering Committee include a briefing on reauthorization on the March 16 TPB agenda.

6. Report on the Results of the Regional Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Education Campaign and Proposed Request for Local Funding Commitments

Mr. Farrell briefed the Committee on the results of the first and second years of the “Street Smart” pedestrian and bicycle safety education campaign and on a process to request local jurisdictions for regular annual funding commitments for this regional campaign.

Mr. Versoza suggested that Mr. Farrell get the numbers of tickets written for pedestrian-related offenses from the police. Mr. Farrell responded that Montgomery and Prince George’s Counties have done three pedestrian-related enforcement events, with about fifty citations at each. Mr. Harvey suggested that Mr. Farrell provide a jurisdictional breakdown of pedestrian and bicycle fatalities. Mr. Farrell replied that that could be done and that other possible breakdowns are urban versus rural fatalities, or inner versus outer jurisdictions. Inner counties such as Prince George’s, Montgomery, and Fairfax have many more pedestrian fatalities than outer counties such as Loudoun and Frederick.

Ms. Byala suggested that it would be good to know why pedestrians and bicyclists account for 25% of all fatalities in the Washington region, versus 11% nationally. Where does the Washington region rank compared to other large metropolitan areas? Mr. Farrell replied that one group had recently ranked the Washington region 13th nationally among major metropolitan areas for pedestrian deaths, adjusted for exposure. He explained that the Washington region could have more pedestrian deaths than the national average because it is more urban and has a lot more walking than most areas.

Mr. Spalding noted that Baltimore City had a high rate of pedestrian fatalities. Mr. Harvey suggested that we change the basis of comparison to urbanized areas. Mr. Farrell replied that 24% of fatalities is a large part of the safety problem, regardless of how the region compares to other regions.

Enforcement was discussed by the Committee. Mr. Farrell commented that the safety campaign would be much more effective if it can be conducted with increased police activity. This activity often increases the interest in the campaign by the media.

Mr. Biesiadny thought the case for the program needed to be made stronger. Mr. Hekimian agreed, and asked to see information not just on numbers of fatalities, but why they are occurring. Mr. Farrell commented that one party or the other is at fault in nearly all crashes, so behavior is nearly always implicated. Mr. Hekimian said that there was no data in the presentation to support that statement, and suggested we should look at factors like alcohol.

Mr. Farrell replied that more information would be provided on causes of crashes.

Mr. Kirby suggested that a campaign such as this needed to be sustained over the long haul to show results.

The Committee asked staff to revise the briefing for next month to include additional information on the causes of pedestrian and bicycle accidents and the benefits of the campaign.

7. Update on Staff Proposals for the FY2006 Commuter Connections Work Program (CCWP)

Mr. Kirby discussed the FY 2006 Commuter Connections program streamlined proposal that was prepared by staff and sent to the three state funding agencies on February 9th. He stated that one of the issues involved with the CCWP is funding shares between the three state funding agencies, and in some instances the three state funding agencies are not in agreement with each other when it comes to mass marketing messages and program eligibility requirements.

The new Commuter Connections program proposal is structured similarly to the UPWP in that it has core elements for the Commuter Operations Center and Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH). These are elements that cannot be divided geographically. There are also core element components for Employer Outreach, the Telework Resource Center and Mass Marketing; however, these programs also have discretionary components which gives flexibility to the state funding agencies. There are also program components that are purely discretionary, for instance, the InfoExpress kiosks. State funding agencies can opt in or out of the discretionary programs. For instance, the states can individually elect to have COG coordinate Employer Outreach or Telework outreach activities or use another mechanism to accomplish the work.

Next, Mr. Kirby explained that funding shares of the program have never been adjusted since they were initially set and there is no mechanism in place to adjust them. For instance, the Commuter Operations Center has a one-third funding share for each State and the share was initially set when Commuter Connections started off as the Commuter Club over 30 years ago. Mr. Kirby stated that population and employment has changed since that time and that one of the staff proposal recommendations was to use population to estimate funding shares for the CCWP. This way, the funding shares between the three states can be adjusted accordingly.

In terms of overall budgets, the proposed core program is about \$2.7 million and the proposed discretionary program is about \$1.6 million. Mr. Kirby stated that a formal request was received by the District of Columbia requesting that their funding share be zeroed out. Staff is currently working on revising the proposal to reflect the request and should have it completed in the next week or so. Mr. Kirby mentioned that the first item to be cut would be any discretionary programs for the District of Columbia such as the InfoExpress kiosks, Employer Outreach, and Telework. However, it would much more difficult to cut core program elements such as the Commuter Operations Center and GRH. Even though District residents have lower participation rates in ridematching and GRH services, employees working in the District have the highest participation rates; 27% of GRH registrants live in the District while 61% of employees working in the District are registered for GRH. This makes sense because the transit and HOV facilities converge in the District. Because of the low amount of residents enrolled in the GRH program it may not be worth excluding them from participating.

Next, Mr. Kirby stated that by eliminating funding from the District there would be a regional increase in emissions as well as VT and VMT. Staff is in the process of

calculating the increases and will include them in the updated staff proposal. Overall, the lack of District funding will result in a less effective regional TDM program.

Mr. Biesiandy stated that the zero-based District budget proposal would be a tough sell in Northern Virginia and that there would more than likely be a push to exclude the District residents from participating in any of the programs.

Mr. Harvey stated that it is essential that the zero-based staff proposal be made available for review as soon as possible in order that DDOT can make a decision on the program funding. He also mentioned that the issue was brought up by Councilman Mendelson at a recent City Council meeting and that there were questions regarding the funding issue directed to Mr. Tangherlini.

Mr. Versosa said that another option to consider for funding shares would be daytime worker population. Mr. Spalding stated that the three states are the funders of the program and that final decisions would be made at the state level and that the issues are fairly complicated.

Mr. Kirby stated that the TPB would be briefed on the status of the CCWP. Chairman Mokhtari asked whether or not the briefing to the TPB would include the zero-based funding proposal request from the District. Mr. Kirby responded that it would.

8. Briefing on Regional Travel Trends – Carpooling

Mr. Griffiths distributed a handout that presented data on jurisdiction to jurisdiction carpooling commuting patterns from the 2000 Census. He noted that the Census data showed the percentage of persons carpooling to work in the metropolitan region (14%) to be twice as much as reported in Commuter Connections State of the Commute Surveys and recent *Washington Post* surveys on commuting travel by area residents (7%). He explained that this was primarily because of differences in sample size and methodology.

He noted in his presentation that while the Census obtains data on commuting modes from more than 300,000 workers, most sample surveys only obtain data from just a few thousand workers at best. Further, the Census obtains commuting data for all workers in the household, not just the one who answers the telephone. Finally, the way Census asks questions on carpooling is more comprehensive than in most sample surveys. He pointed out that Census asks a two-part question about carpooling. In this two-part question, workers who commute by auto, truck or van are first identified, and then these workers are asked how many people they usually rode to work with. He speculated that the Census methodology picked-up many more “informal” carpooling-with-family-members carpools than in typical sample surveys with only a one-part question on commuting mode.

Mr. Griffiths also noted that to understand the importance of carpooling in regional commuting patterns one had to look at the carpooling modal share in particular commuting interchanges rather than just the overall regional average. He pointed out that while the overall regional carpooling modal share averaged just 14%, the percentage of persons carpooling to work from Prince William County to the District of Columbia was almost 40%.

9. Briefing on the Report: Travel Characteristics and Accessibility Impacts of the 2004 CLRP on Minority, Low-Income, and Disabled Populations in the Washington Region

Ms. Locantore described the results of an analysis of the impacts of the 2004 CLRP on disadvantaged population groups. Staff used 2000 Census data, round 6.4a cooperative forecasts, and travel times from the Air Quality Conformity Analysis of the 2004 CRLP to measure benefits and burdens of the plan in terms of access to jobs by automobile and by transit. The distribution of these benefits and burdens was compared across the following population groups: African American, Hispanic/Latino, Asian, low-income, and disabled.

Ms. Locantore presented the results of the analysis via PowerPoint. The analysis indicates that accessibility to jobs by auto generally will not increase between 2005 and 2030, despite increasing employment. Access to jobs by transit generally will increase during the same time period. The number of jobs accessible by transit, however, will remain less than the number of jobs accessible by automobile. Changes in accessibility do not appear to disproportionately adversely impact minority, low-income, or disabled population groups. Ms. Locantore noted that a full report was distributed to the Committee.

Questions and comments from the Committee included the following: 1) What causes accessibility to jobs by auto to decrease in some parts of the region? 2) Was the purpose of the analysis to comply with federal Environmental Justice requirements? 3) Did staff research the types of jobs held by low-income workers? 4) Can this type of analysis be included in the Regional Mobility and Accessibility Study (RMAS)?

Ms. Locantore provided the following responses: 1) Decreases in accessibility to jobs by auto reflect the increases in congestion; 2) Environmental Justice requirements were a major motivation for the study; and 3) Staff did not research the types of jobs held by low-income workers, but the analysis did consider accessibility to retail jobs, which tend to include more entry-level positions than other job categories. In response to question 4), staff noted that that accessibility is one of the measures of effectiveness for the RMAS and will be examined.

Committee members complemented Ms. Lacantore on the quality of the presentation.

10. Other Business

There was no additional business.

11. Adjourn

