

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD

Technical Committee Minutes

for meeting of

September 6, 2013

**TPB TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES
ATTENDANCE - September 6, 2013**

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

DDOT Mark Rawlings
DCOP Dan Emerine

MARYLAND

Charles County -----
Frederick Co. Ron Burns
City of Frederick -----
Gaithersburg -----
Montgomery Co. Gary Erenrich
Prince George's Co. Kevin Thornton
Rockville -----
M-NCPPC
 Montgomery Co. -----
 Prince George's Co. -----
MDOT Lyn Erickson
 Vaughn Lewis
 Matt Baker

MTA -----
Takoma Park -----

VIRGINIA

Alexandria Pierre Holloman
Arlington Co. Dan Malouff
City of Fairfax -----
Fairfax Co. Mike Lake
Falls Church -----
Loudoun Co. Robert Brown
Manassas -----
Prince William Co. Monica Backmon
NVTC Clair Gron
PRTC Nick Alexandrow
VRE Christine Hoeffner
VDOT Kanathur Srikanth
 Norman Whiteker

VDRPT Tim Roseboon
NVPDC -----
VDOA -----

WMATA

WMATA Michael Eichler

FEDERAL/OTHER

FHWA-DC -----
FHWA-VA -----
FTA Melissa Barlow
NCPC -----
NPS -----
MWAQC -----
MWAA -----

COG Staff

Ron Kirby, DTP
Gerald Miller, DTP
Nick Ramfos, DTP
John Swanson, DTP
Michael Farrell, DTP
Mark Pfoutz, DTP
Ron Milone, DTP
Andrew Meese, DTP
Karin Foster, DTP
Eric Randall, DTP
Rich Roisman, DTP
Marco Trigueros, DTP

Other Attendees

Michael Wewitt, WMATA
Rick Rybeck, Just Economics LCC
Cindy Petkac, USRC
Jeff Dehan, Prince George's Co.
Vic Siaurusaitis, Bakor Engineering
Lezlie Rupert, DDOT
Eulois Cleckley, DDOT
Bill Orleans

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD

October 4, 2013

Technical Committee Meeting

Technical Committee Minutes

1. **Welcome and Approval of Minutes from September 6 Technical Committee Meeting**

Minutes were approved as written.

2. **Briefing on the Highlights of the 2013 State of the Commute Survey for the Washington Region**

Mr. Ramfos briefed the Committee on the draft Technical Report that was produced for the 2013 Commuter Connections State of the Commute survey. He also stated that a presentation was given by Mr. Kirby at the June Committee meeting outlining some of the preliminary highlights of the survey results.

Mr. Ramfos stated that the survey sample of 6,335 respondents was slightly less than the 2010 level of 6,600, but that the 2013 sample provides the same level of confidence as did the 2010 survey for all regional analysis. It's at a 95% regional confidence level with a plus or minus 1.2%. The confidence level for analysis at the individual jurisdiction level decreased slightly from 95%; plus or minus 4.02% to 95%; plus or minus 4.1%. The survey was conducted between January 5th and April 10th. It included a cell phone component which had 1,034 completed interviews and a landline component with 5,301 completed surveys. Survey data was also weighted to ensure the survey results were representative of each of the 11 jurisdictions in the metropolitan non-attainment region. A pre-weight adjustment was made to equalize selection probabilities related to multiple telephone access for landline and cell phone and then results were aligned by published employment information contained in the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Local Area Unemployment Statistics. The employment information for each of the 11 jurisdictions was used to calculate expansion factors which were then applied to survey results. Survey results were then aligned by ethnicity and weighting factors were calculated based on US Census ethnicity distributions. Mr. Ramfos stated that survey respondents were all workers in the non-attainment region.

Next, Mr. Ramfos stated that many of the survey results are shown by geographic sub-area of Inner Core: District of Columbia, City of Alexandria, Arlington County; Middle Ring: Fairfax, Montgomery and Prince George's counties; and Outer Ring: Calvert, Charles, Frederick, Loudoun, and Prince William counties.

Mr. Ramfos then reviewed some of the key highlights from the report which included the fact that the share of commute trips by telework continues to rise, but the share of trips made by transit fell slightly between 2010 and 2013. The drop was primarily with

bus and Metrorail. The percentage of teleworkers continued to grow between 2010 and 2013 and there is potential for additional growth. The growth primarily occurred with federal government agencies. The private sector telework percentage dropped from 2010 levels and this is more than likely being due to the recession. Commute advertising appears to influence commuters' consideration of travel options and almost 25% of respondents who saw or heard advertising said they are more likely to consider ridesharing or public transportation. He also stated that awareness of Commuter Connections continues to be high. Additionally, nearly four in ten of commuters stated that they would be interested in using instant carpool matching or "dynamic ridesharing" as a driver or passenger. Mr. Ramfos also stated that the availability of worksite commute benefits seems to have dropped slightly from 2010 levels and again this is more than likely due to the recession and employers pulling back benefits. Lastly, Mr. Ramfos stated that detailed information on the data weighting and expansion could be found in the Appendix portion of the draft survey report along with the full questionnaire.

Mr. Ramfos stated that the highlights from the survey would be presented to the TPB this month and that the Commuter Connections Subcommittee would be reviewing the draft Technical Report again this month and a comment period will be established with the goal of finalizing the report in November. TPB staff would then begin to work on preparing a general public document that would be printed by the summer of 2014.

Mr. Erenrich asked about the accuracy of the data by jurisdiction and whether or not the data within each jurisdiction such as Montgomery County could be broken down further by sub-sections in the county. Mr. Ramfos stated that the confidence level is at 95% at plus or minus 4 percent at the jurisdictional level and that results would be shown jurisdiction wide and not at sub-levels.

Mr. Srikanth asked about Telework data going back to 2001 when the survey was first administered. Mr. Ramfos stated that some of the results from the telework data are highlighted going back to the 2001 survey but perhaps not all questions are highlighted, just the key results. All data from the survey is accessible going back to 2001 and can be pulled and reported, if needed. Data from the 1998 survey is in a static format.

3. Briefing on the Long Bridge Study

Ms. Rupert, Environmental and Major Studies Program Manager, District Department of Transportation (DDOT), spoke to a PowerPoint titled "Long Bridge Study." DDOT received an American Recovery and Reinvestment Act grant from the Federal Railroad Administration to analyze the Long Bridge. The Long Bridge Study analyzes the structural integrity of the bridge, multi-modal connectivity, opportunities for operational improvements, and the long-term multi-modal capacity improvements (to include the future opportunities for high-speed and intercity passenger rail, commuter rail, transit, bicycle and pedestrian access, automobile, and freight). The two-track

railroad bridge crossing the Potomac River is owned by CSX. CSX, Amtrak, and Virginia Railway Express operate on the bridge. Ms. Rupert presented six alternatives: 1) No build; 2) Railroad track expansion and bicycle/pedestrian access; 3) Railroad track expansion, streetcar, and bicycle/pedestrian access; 4) Railroad track expansion and shared lanes for streetcar and vehicular traffic and bicycle/pedestrian access; 5) Railroad track expansion and shared lanes for streetcar and vehicular, and bicycle/pedestrian access; and 6) Four-track rail tunnel. She noted the schedule for future work under the study, to include demand and operations analysis in the summer/fall 2013, concept engineering in the fall of 2013, and the report finalized in the fall/winter 2013. Additional public meetings will also be held in the fall.

Mr. Holloman asked if a benefit-cost-analysis had been completed for each alternative. Mr. Siaurusaitis, a consultant working on the project noted that cost analysis has not been done.

Ms. Foster asked about the function of the swivel part of the bridge under the Study alternatives. Mr. Siaurusaitis noted that the alternatives would not allow for the bridge to swivel and that it is rarely used today.

Ms. Foster asked if all alternatives focus on expanding the existing bridge. Ms. Rupert replied yes, except the No Build and the Tunnel alternatives. She noted that the existing bridge is a critical link and any construction would have to occur without shutting down the two existing tracks.

Mr. Kirby noted that identifying upfront the purpose and need, the existing usage, the freight and commuter rail chokepoint would help drive the presentation. He suggested highlighting what is pressing and why the “no build” is not a good option.

Mr. Kirby asked if flights in and out of Reagan National Airport would be impacted. Ms. Rupert noted that because of the airport there is a 95-100 foot construction ceiling.

Mr. Eichler asked about the structural integrity of the bridge. Ms. Rupert noted that her team has done a visual inspection of the bridge from water but has not received permission from CSX to view the bridge itself. Mr. Eichler also suggested limiting the number of cross section visuals on the Alternatives slides.

Ms. Barlow asked about environmental concerns. Ms. Rupert and Mr. Siaurusaitis noted the National Park Service owns land at the footprints of each alternative and are participating stakeholders.

4. Briefing on Regional Highlighted Freight Projects

Mr. Cleckley, District Department of Transportation (DDOT), as Chairman of the TPB Freight Transportation Subcommittee, spoke to a PowerPoint titled “2013 Freight

Transportation Highlighted Projects.” The aim of the 2013 Freight Project List is to highlight important freight transportation investments in the region, some of which may not be in MPO plans. The first iteration of the TPB Freight Project List was in 2011 and in August 2013 the TPB Freight Subcommittee approved its updated 2013 Freight Project List. Mr. Cleckley discussed the unique nature of freight projects and noted that states and the District regularly contribute millions to freight projects that are not captured by the MPO planning process, such as money to freight railroads and port infrastructure. He presented some regional freight data and noted that trucks carry the majority of all goods.

Mr. Cleckley highlighted a few projects from the 2013 Freight Project List including: 1) CSX Virginia Avenue Tunnel; 2) Norfolk Southern Crescent Corridor; 3) DDOT Real-Time Motor Carrier Information System; 4) MDOT Truck Parking Improvements; and 5) VDOT Dulles Loop-Route 606 capacity project.

Mr. Erenrich noted the need for more cooperation from freight rail working with commuter rail, such as cooperation between CSX and MARC for the Brunswick line through Montgomery County.

Mr. Holloman asked about the DDOT real-time information project. Mr. Cleckley responded that DDOT was awarded a FHWA grant to explore dynamic parking pricing sensors and technologies that would provide real-time information.

5. Briefing on the Comments Received on the Draft TPB Regional Transportation Priorities Plan (RTPP)

Mr. Kirby reviewed the process for developing the RTPP draft, including the TPB’s web-based survey of 660 randomly selected residents of the region. He said an official public comment period on the draft was held between July 24 and August 23. He briefly described the comments received. He noted that his memo responded to three key themes that were repeated in the comments: 1) the RTPP should call for tolling of existing road capacity; 2) the document should clarify the relationship between strategies and projects/programs; and 3) the document should more explicitly clarify the relationship between the CLRP and the RTPP.

Mr. Erenrich said that a number of activities are currently underway that involve priority setting at the state and local levels. For example, he noted that MDOT this summer released its annual Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP) which would be the subject of the Secretary’s Annual Tour this fall. He said the TPB should publicize the dates for the Tour.

Mr. Eichler asked how the strategies were determined. He asked why the RTPP did not include any major transit expansions, except for bus rapid transit on toll roads. He

noted that major transit expansions are being included in WMATA's Regional Transit Expansion Plan (RTSP). He noted that the RTSP has not been integrated into the RTPP.

Mr. Kirby said the RTPP strategies were selected to be "within reach." He said these strategies were intended to be things that might be considered for advancement into the CLRP. He said the RTPP has been designed to be in the spirit of WMATA's Momentum Plan, not the RTSP.

Mr. Eichler said that a number of jurisdictions have plans – e.g., Montgomery County's BRT Plan or the D.C. Streetcar Plan – which they consider to be within reach.

Mr. Kirby said the RTPP was deliberately vague about specific projects.

Ms. Hoeffner said she agreed with Mr. Eichler. She said the RTPP draft does not convey the fact that its intention was so very limited. She further said that it would be possible to describe strategies in ways that would provide more specificity and convey "direction" (e.g., regarding mode) without identifying actual projects.

Ms. Backmon said she was confused regarding the RTPP's connection to the CLRP. She noted that Prince William is pursuing a number of new projects that it would not want to exclude from the RTPP. She also asked how new Virginia funding would be reflected in the RTPP.

Mr. Kirby said that the RTPP is focused on regional strategies, not specific projects.

Mr. Emerine said he thought the current RTPP draft's section on long-term strategies represents a missed opportunity to talk about transit expansion. He noted that Momentum 2040 does include significant capacity expansions, which should be considered true regional priorities. He further said that the absence of benefit/cost analysis in the plan needs to be addressed or at least explained. Finally, he asked why MAP-21's limitations on tolling existing capacity should necessarily constrain the plan. He suggested that the TPB could say that MAP-21, which is a two-year bill, is not an effective long-term policy for the region.

Mr. Kirby answered that the RTPP should not include strategies that would not be realistic. For the immediate future, he said, there is no prospect of including projects in the CLRP that would put tolls on existing capacity.

Mr. Malouff said that across the region we are seeing the implementation of a strategy to build and provide high-quality bus services on arterials. He said this regional priority should be explicitly included in the RTPP.

Mr. Kirby said this trend was reflected in the RTPP's "bus priority" strategy.

Mr. Eichler said it would be useful if staff could summarize the comments received during the public comment period.

6. Update on the Final Report “What Do People think About Congestion Pricing A Deliberative Dialogue with Residents of Metropolitan Washington

Mr. Swanson briefed the Committee on the report. He said it was presented in draft form to the TPB in January and since that time it was revised based upon comments from the project’s funders at FHWA. He briefly described the process and findings of the study. He also described tolling provisions in last year’s transportation legislation, MAP-21.

Mr. Emerine asked if participants in the study’s forums understood that revenues from congestion pricing scenarios would be used to fund specific transportation improvements.

Mr. Swanson said that yes, specific types of transportation improvements were built into the scenarios.

Mr. Brown asked if recent examples of pricing were discussed in the forums.

Mr. Swanson said that examples such as the ICC were cited.

Mr. Brown asked if the study participants included Loudoun County.

Mr. Swanson said it did.

Mr. Erenrich suggested that the TPB might include a follow up to this study in future work programs. He said it would be interested to see if opinions change as people actually experience pricing projects such as Virginia’s HOT lanes.

Mr. Cleckley asked if the study identified boundaries in its “priced zones” scenario.

Mr. Swanson said that boundaries were not precisely defined. They were generally identified as “central business districts” in DC, Tysons and Silver Spring.

7. Briefing on a Survey on Traffic Signal Timing in the Washington Region

Mr. Meese presented, referring to a handout memorandum and a slide presentation. The TPB Technical Committee had been given a status report on this item at the June 7 meeting. Today's presentation included information ready to be presented to the TPB on September 18 in response to their February 20, 2013 request. [The TPB Steering

Committee later recommended deferring this item from the planned September 18 TPB meeting agenda to a future meeting due to time considerations.]

Mr. Meese anticipated presenting to the TPB the background on the regional traffic signal timing surveys; background on traffic signal timing concepts; survey results; and then turning to Traffic Signals Subcommittee Chair Li of VDOT to provide a case example of signals agency activities.

Compared to the most recent survey in 2009, what was new included increases in reliance on real-time signal adjustment over pre-timed optimization, as well as changes in the context as an air quality TERM. Survey results showed a rate of retimed/optimized signals in the region (within defined criteria) of 76%; 22% not retimed/optimized; and no report received for 2%. This is a similar but slightly reduced level of optimization compared to the 2009 survey.

The case example to be presented by Ms. Li at the TPB briefing was anticipated to provide good illustrations of the breadth of activities that traffic signals agencies undertake to ensure proper traffic signals management in the region, over and above optimization.

In response to questions from Mr. Erenrich, Mr. Meese stated that the recommended frequency of retiming of at least once every three years was an engineering rule-of-thumb, but not an official federal or state standard; and that for the past and current timing surveys, results had been presented to the Board at a regional rather than jurisdictional level.

Mr. Erenrich suggested adding to the presentation the topic of Transit Signal Priority since it is planned as part of the ongoing regional TIGER project.

8. Briefing on a Draft Regional Green Streets Policy for the Washington Region

Mr. Farrell spoke to four hand-outs and a PowerPoint presentation. He also spoke about the discussions leading to the creation of the draft Green Streets policy inventory, Green Streets Policy, and Policy Template. The policy inventory shows which TPB member jurisdictions have a Green Streets policy, and provides links to the policy. The majority of TPB member jurisdictions have a Green Streets policy or equivalent, with VDOT being a notable exception. VDOT has stormwater management regulations but not a Green Streets approach to stormwater.

The Green Streets policy is modeled closely on the regional Complete Streets policy, and it has a similar purpose, to encourage TPB member jurisdictions to develop their own Green Streets policies, along the lines of the attached Green Streets Guidance and Policy

Template. The Template is meant to be tailored to the needs of a particular agency or jurisdiction, not adopted verbatim.

Mr. Emerine asked if there was any discussion of the other objectives of Green Streets besides stormwater runoff, such as shading and reducing the urban heat island effect.

Mr. Farrell replied that such benefits were included in the definition of Green Streets which we are using.

9. Briefing on an Ex-Post Evaluation of TPB Transit Forecasts

Mr. Milone spoke to a handout that was distributed to the Committee. In the way of background, he stated that the TPB was briefed on the COG Cooperative Forecasting process last March. Part of the presentation included a jurisdictional comparison of forecasted 2010 land activity, prepared almost 20 years ago, and actual 2010 land activity. This type of analysis was useful for demonstrating the level of accuracy one might expect from the Cooperative Forecasts. Shortly after the March TPB meeting, WMATA contacted TPB staff and asked to obtain historical information relating to past transit forecasts. They expressed an interest in investigating how well past TPB transit forecasts have performed with respect to actual transit ridership. In response, TPB staff prepared a short technical analysis which compared a 2010 regional transit forecast figure, prepared almost 20 years ago, with an actual 2010 transit ridership figure.

Mr. Milone reviewed some of the constraints and limitations in the development of such a comparison. He pointed out that the travel demand model used 20 years ago forecasted only work-related transit trips instead of total transit trips. He also indicated the actual number of regional work-related transit trips were not obtained by a single survey, but rather was derived using available 2010 Metrorail faregate counts and information obtained from previous on-board transit surveys. Mr. Milone found that the 2010 transit forecasts prepared in 1994 (802,000) over-estimated the observed ridership figure (781,200) by about 3%. He pointed out that this margin of error was surprisingly small especially considering the known limitations in the inputs to the travel model that were used almost 20 years ago. For example, Mr. Milone noted that the travel model did not account for major transit system improvements such as the New York Avenue Metrorail Station and the DC Circulator Bus system.

Mr. Milone concluded his presentation with a review of the improvements made to the TPB's regional travel model since 1994. These included an expanded study area, a more detailed zone system, and a more robust mode choice modeling process. Most of the modeling refinements implemented in recent years will result in improved transit forecasting capabilities. He added that substantial staff resources are invested each year in the updating of modeling inputs. The most effective way to minimize

uncertainty in modeling outputs is to make sure that the inputs are as current and accurate as possible.

Mr. Srikanth thanked TPB staff for the presentation. He stated that local agencies use the travel model to obtain detailed information such as highway link volumes. It is important to be aware of how errors in the land activity inputs can affect these types of detailed outputs.

Mr. Erenrich commented that the model appears to have forecasted well at the regional level, but the model cannot be expected to perform as well at higher levels of resolution, such as at the corridor level of analysis. He suggested that the essential findings of the analysis were insightful and should be shared with a wider audience via the TPB Weekly Newsletter.

Mr. Eichler thanked TPB staff for responding to WMATA's request for staff to analyze the performance of past TPB's transit forecasts. He suggested that this type of analysis provides greater confidence that the TPB's process is reasonable for transit planning purposes.

Mr. Emerine commented that the analysis compels the Committee to think about important factors that will affect transit forecasts 20 years from today. He added that planners will need to be mindful what factors are, and are not, considered by the travel model. Mr. Milone suggested that scenario analysis might be considered as a means of better understanding factors that are not normally considered by the travel model.

10. Status Report on the Development of MAP-21 Performance Measures

Mr. Randall spoke to a memorandum on the performance provisions of MAP-21, the federal surface transportation bill enacted in 2012. He highlighted the schedule, which should include the issuance of an advanced notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) for transit safety and state of good repair this September, and in October issuance of draft NPRMs for metropolitan and state planning and for highway safety. The NPRMs will introduce potential performance measures, to be finalized by early 2015, against which MPOs, states, and transit agencies will have to set targets and report performance. He stated the expectation that TPB staff will be working the states, and local jurisdictions as required, to review and develop comments on the NPRMs. He highlighted three aspects that will be of interest: 1) any need to integrate data or collectively report regionally for the three states and/or multiple transit agencies; 2) the role and responsibilities of local governments in the event they operate or report data on parts of the National Highway System, and 3) how the federal performance measures will balance current or historical data against forecast or estimated data when predicating future performance.

Mr. Kirby asked Mr. Randall to expand on the performance provisions in regard to the 2014 CLRP. Mr. Randall clarified that currently the proposed performance provisions

will come into effect on April 1, 2015, and that most of calendar year 2014 will be spent in developing the provisions. Accordingly, these performance provisions will not be applicable to the development and approval of the 2014 CLRP.

Mr. Srikanth noted that 2014 CLRP, which will also include the four year update of the financial plan, will have documented performance as done in previous years. It is only any new measures proposed by the federal government that are different that would not be available.

Mr. Kirby noted that he had received a survey from FHWA requesting input on the current use of performance measures in planning and programming projects. He stated that TPB staff is waiting on the development of the MAP-21 performance provisions, even though the questions of the survey would suggest this is "trailing behind" the use of performance-based planning and programming elsewhere. Mr. Erenrich requested a copy of the survey for information.

11. Additional Business

None

12. Adjourn