

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD

Technical Committee Minutes

For meeting of
January 8, 2010

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Technical Committee Minutes

1. **Welcome and Approval of Minutes from the December 4, 2009 Technical Committee Meeting**

Minutes were approved as written with addition of Randy Austin to the list of attendees.

2. **Update on the Approval of TPB Letter of Support for the Norfolk Southern Crescent Corridor Intermodal Freight Project**

At the December 16 meeting, the TPB deferred approval of the letter of support for the Norfolk Southern Crescent Corridor project. The deferral was in response to a request from MDOT for additional information on the potential impacts of the project on freight movements in Maryland. The Technical Committee received an update to this deferral. Norfolk Southern representative Mr. Smith explained how Maryland would benefit from total vehicle-miles-travelled reduction. MDOT representative Ms. Erikson explained that MDOT has received Norfolk Southern's study but the railroad has not yet answered all of MDOT's questions.

3. **Briefing on a Draft Results for the "CLRP Aspirations" Scenario**

Mr. Eichler presented a PowerPoint on an update of the CLRP Aspirations Scenario, presenting preliminary analysis results. Mr. Erenrich inquired as to whether parking costs were incorporated into the cost assessment. Mr. Eichler replied that no new parking was assumed, with the BRT network connecting to existing park-and-ride lots, transit station/stop areas or mixed-use activity centers.

Mr. Foster inquired as to whether an assessment of the revenue estimations had included a summary by state. Mr. Eichler replied that such an assessment has not been performed.

Mr. Phillips inquired about the metric of "transit supportive density." Mr. Eichler replied that "dwelling units per square mile" is the unit of density used in this assessment. Mr. Owolabi asked how the projected toll rates would compare with those being set for the InterCounty Connector. Mr. Kirby responded that toll rates will vary widely, since there are undoubtedly bottlenecks in the toll network.

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Mr. Biesiadny suggested that the parking issue should be investigated further. He also noted that the target speeds on the toll lanes of 35 to 45 MPH are lower than the speeds assessed for toll facilities in Virginia. Mr. Eichler replied that he was unsure how the engineer who performed the toll rate setting routine determined the speed range. Mr. Biesiadny stated that higher target speeds would result in higher transit use. Mr. Kirby noted that the speed issue is one of the number one concerns, as increased target speeds would increase toll rates. Mr. Biesiadny noted that the modeled speeds are lower than what federal law requires for HOV to HOT lane conversions. Mr. Kirby noted that the VMT increase is driven by the new lane miles in the network, and they also account for the large reduction in regional delay. Chairman Verzosa suggested that one speed range might not be appropriate for every corridor.

Mr. Srikanth asked about potential toll revenues. Mr. Eichler replied that, while he did perform a quick assessment of annual toll revenues, he did not have the opportunity to get an idea for the distribution of the toll rates across the region.

Mr. Srikanth then suggested that the cost of the toll network might represent an overly high opportunity cost. He inquired about ways that revenue would be raised to pay for the construction of the toll network, noting that it would be unlikely that the toll revenue would be adequate to cover the capital costs. Mr. Kirby noted that the capital and operating costs assessment were based on the Capital Beltway HOT-lanes project which was purported to be self-financing. He noted that several corridors would likely be revenue generators, while others would not be, and that a cross-financing system could be put in place to ensure the full value of a regional network.

Mr. Srikanth noted that the proposed BRT speeds on arterials can't simply be assumed. He stated that new lane miles would need to be added to the regional arterial to operate express bus services without disrupting current and projected traffic volumes. Mr. Erenrich expressed some disappointment in the apparent disparity between the large capital cost of the scenario with increases in VMT and the relatively low shift to transit. Mr. Kirby replied that the study will continue with a benefit/cost assessment, where fully realized benefits would be weighed against a full cost accounting. He also noted that the VMT-per-capital in the scenario is lower than that of today. The addition of 650 new lane miles to the regional network, while priced, are encouraging more travel, he noted, and the pricing of more existing lanes would likely reverse the VMT growth. Mr. Miller noted that the reduction in the hours of delay would provide a huge benefit to all.

Mr. Shrestha inquired about the discrepancy between what is in Maryland state plans for express toll lanes and what was assessed in the scenario, noting that there is no state plan for managed lanes in the Washington region beyond the ICC. He also noted

the potential difficulty of adding new lanes to the Capital Beltway in Maryland, suggesting that such an addition in the scenario is unrealistic.

Mr. Kirby suggested that the lanes would be required to provide high levels of service on the regional BRT network. If managed lanes are not available as quasi-dedicated right-of-way for bus service, how else can those service levels be achieved?

Mr. Griffiths asked about the modeling of external trips (productions and attractions.) Ms. Bansal stated that the numbers of external trips was held constant, despite more jobs and households being moved into the region. Mr. Griffiths noted that better results might come if those new households and jobs were moved from just beyond the jurisdictional borders, reducing those external trips.

Mr. Srikanth asked whether the results could be better clarified before the next meeting of the Scenario Study Task Force. Mr. Eichler stated that he would look into showing differences between the CLRP's projections for 2010 and 2030 and the scenario output for 2030.

4. Briefing on Draft Results for the "What Would It Take" Green House Gas Reduction Scenario

Ms. Bansal presented a PowerPoint on the draft results of the "What Would it Take?" scenario, including an overview of the scenario purpose, baseline forecast, sources of GHG emissions, strategies analyzed, and results of groupings of strategies. Committee members asked several clarification questions, including whether the 10% ethanol fuel mandate in the region was captured in the analysis. She stated that alternative fuel assumptions were all taken from national level studies, and the effect of unique state-level mandates may be diluted.

Committee members said that the presentation did not make it clear that strategies were grouped to the fullest extent possible to avoid double-counting. As a result, it was also not clear that the strategies analyzed to date do not meet the regional GHG reduction goals and more strategies should therefore be analyzed. Ms. Bansal agreed to make these clarification changes to the presentation for TPB. She clarified that the higher federal role group could not be combined with the shorter term strategies grouping without further research into potential double-counting. The former assumed a 6% reduction in VMT, which may require the shorter-term strategies to be adopted in order to mitigate major mobility losses.

Committee members also commented on the need for fueling infrastructure to support many of alternative fuel analyses. Ms. Bansal explained that this would be the role of the state/local governments and that these levels of government have tools to make

significant GHG reductions, as was shown in the presentation. The Committee also commented that a table of specific strategies analyzed would be helpful. She agreed to provide this information for the Scenario Study Task Force and TPB meetings.

5. Review of Outline and Preliminary Budget for FY 2011 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

Mr. Miller distributed a memorandum with a preliminary budget, funding changes from FY 2010, and an outline for the UPWP for FY 2011 (July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2011). He reviewed the overall budget estimates and said that at this point there is considerable uncertainty due to the lack of Congressional action to re-authorized SAFETEA-LU. He explained that it is assumed that the FY 2011 funding allocations to be provided by DOTs will be the same as the current FY 2010 levels. In addition, the budget estimate assumes \$1,128,100 of unobligated funds from FY 2009 will be available, which is \$666,100 less than the unspent funds from FY 2008.

He explained that the basic work program budget is \$9,764,800 without carryover funds, and that this is \$666,100 less than the corresponding current FY 2010 budget level of \$10,430,900 as amended December 16. He said that the table shows the changes from FY 2010 and identifies seven work activities with reduced budgets totaling \$666,100. He pointed out that the technical assistance program budget is unchanged from the current FY 2010 budget level because these program budgets are based upon percentages of the estimated FY 2011 funding allocations which are unchanged from FY 2010.

Mr. Miller summarized the proposed funding changes from FY 2010 levels for four of the work tasks in Plan Support and the Regional Studies work activity. Mr. Meese summarized the funding change for the Management, Operations and ITS Planning activity. Mr. Griffiths explained the proposed funding change for the Cordon Counts activity. Staff responded to several questions to clarify the reasons for the funding reductions.

Mr. Biesiadny inquired about the lack of a budget estimate for Continuous Airport System Planning. Mr. Canan said that this funding is from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and that he will provide the FY 2010 levels in the next draft.

Mr. Miller said that the first draft of the full document will be presented to the TPB at its February 17 meeting, and noted that the technical assistance programs for the DOTs and WMATA remain to be specified. He explained that some portions of the current work activities will be identified for carryover into FY 2011 in March. The TPB will be

asked to adopt the program on March 17 and then it will be submitted to FHWA and FTA for their approval by July 1.

6. Status Report on Project Grant Applications for the New Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Livability Programs

Mr. Kirby reviewed the two discretionary FTA grant programs recently announced – the Urban Circular and Livability Bus program. He also reviewed a memorandum to the Committee inviting grant submissions by TPB member jurisdictions. Member jurisdictions were asked to complete a submission form found in the memo and identify bus stop locations that meet the criteria outlined (areas with high concentrations of low-income, people with disabilities, older adults and limited vehicle availability) and identify the cost of the improvements and the source of the required 20 percent match.

Mr. Weissburg asked about the Federal requirements that may be associated with taking the FTA funding. Ms. Klancher spoke to the criteria in the memo and gave a short overview of the Federal requirements. Mr. Shrestha raised concerns about bus stop improvements that are on State routes and have right of way issues. Mr. Foster asked how each jurisdictions submissions will be shown in the grant application and Ms. Klancher answered that each submission will be shown as a line item. Chairman Verzosa asked how the grant will work for jurisdictions outside the WMATA compact. Mr. Kirby said in the case of Prince William, they are in the service area and that WMATA has agreed to administer the program for jurisdictions inside and outside of the compact.

Mr. Erenrich asked what benefit is this grant program to existing bus improvement programs given the strings that come with Federal dollars. Ms. Klancher replied that the benefit is the 80% that will come to the local jurisdictions in additional funding so that more can be done to improve bus stops: and that the strings are real but overall using the Federal dollars will probably provide greater benefit than not. Mr. Biesiadny asked about what the completion dates had to be for submissions. Ms. Klancher replied that the funding if awarded does not have to be spent in Federal FY 09 but the sooner the completion date the more competitive the application will be.

Mr. Weissberg asked about the certification process required by the FTA. Mr. Biesiadny stated that Fairfax has a bus stop improvement program and that most of the stops easy to improve have been done. He stated that the Federal requirement, such as right of way issues, will make taking Federal money to fix up the more challenging bus stops even more difficult. Mr. Kirby said that he understands that some jurisdictions will be interested in participation and we will find out how many by January 13 which is the deadline for submissions. Ms. Klancher referenced where to find the submission form and criteria in the memo.

7. Status Report on Activities of the Motor Vehicle Emissions Simulation Model (MOVES) Task Force

Mr. Sivasailam and Ms. Lucas jointly presented this item. They distributed and provided highlights from the following 5 information items: (1) a staff memo to the Committee presenting results of sensitivity tests performed on the draft MOVES 2009 model, (2) an EPA announcement of the MOVES 2010 model, (3) EPA's "Questions & Answers" report on the MOVES model, (4) a staff memo on the development of local inputs for the draft MOVES 2009 model, and (5) an EPA press release concerning proposed new standards for Ozone.

Mr. Biesiadny commented on an increase in emissions for Fairfax County. Ms. Lucas responded that the MOVES model generally showed higher emissions than had been previously estimated with the Mobile 6.2 model.

8. Status report on the Version 2.3 Travel Demand Model

Delayed until February.

9. Briefing on the Establishment of the Virginia Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (VAMPO) Capital Region

Mr. Austin received the draft TPB resolution supporting the concept of establishing a Virginia Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (VAMPO) with TPB as a member. He noted that the TPB would be asked to approve the resolution in February.

10. Other Business

None.

11. Adjourn