

From: Srikanth, Kanathur N. [Kanathur.Srikanth@VDOT.Virginia.gov]  
Sent: Tuesday, October 20, 2009 12:25 PM  
To: Stuart Freudberg  
Cc: Sorenson, Jo Anne; Ron Kirby; Mike Clifford; Howard Simons; Mark.Rawlings@dc.gov; Ponticello, James; Voigt, Christopher G.; Joan Rohlf; Jeffrey King  
Subject: VDOT's Comments on Draft 2009-2012 Regional Climate Action Plan

Greetings:

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the CEEPC's Draft 2009-2012 Regional Climate Action Plan document. I understand from the CEEPC's September 23, 2009 meeting that an ad hoc group of CEEPC members will be working on developing a work program to implement the 2009-2012 Regional Climate Action Plan. Our comments are provided to assist both the CEEPC's ad hoc group in developing the work program and the CEEPC in its effort to finalize the 2009-2012 Climate Action Plan document. VDOT's representatives at the ad hoc group's meeting/conference call and the CEEPC meeting will be happy to answer any question on these comments.

General comments on a work program to implement the 2009-2012 Climate Action Plan:

1. The 2009-2012 Action Plan has many elements including a Transportation and Land Use element. I believe that the Transportation Planning Board is best suited to develop any work program related to efforts to be taken to assist the region implement its 2009-2012 Climate Action Plan. As such it would be best for the ad hoc group to work with the TPB in developing those parts of the CEEPC's work program related to Transportation and Land Use.
2. The TPB has already started working towards examining various transportation related actions to address climate change and green house gases. The TPB has also developed and adopted a work program for the current fiscal year. As such it would be best for the ad hoc group to work with the TPB to integrate the TPB's work program for addressing regional Greenhouse gas goals with the larger work program the ad hoc group is developing for the CEEPC.
3. The TPB is very likely to continue its Climate Change/Greenhouse gas related work program activities next year as well. Should the TPB be able to identify work program elements for the next year associated with its Greenhouse gas initiative the ad hoc group could include these elements in the 2009-2012 work program being developed for CEEPC.

General Comments on the Draft 2009-2012 Climate Action Plan (Part III: Transportation and Land Use):

Section III of the Action Plan pertains to the Transportation and Land Use sector. Many elements under this section relate to local governments and/or transit agencies. From a state government perspective I note that many of the strategies in this section area currently being implemented and have

been for many years. I have noted some of the specific programs identified in the Draft work plan that I am aware are being implemented. Also note that the TPB is analyzing any additional benefits that may be available by expanding these programs. Preliminary results indicate some small benefits. Finally I believe focusing on actions that would have a systemic impact on reducing greenhouse gases and on actions that are cost-effective would best serve regional efforts to attain its greenhouse gas reduction targets.

1. III.A.1 Promote clean fuel vehicles: This is currently being done by the Commonwealth by means of providing an exemption to the vehicle occupancy requirements to use the HOV lanes in Northern Virginia (NoVA). This exemption is a legislative matter at the state level and subject to FHWA regulations and policies.

2. III.B.1 TPB adopts VMT reduction goals: Recent travel demand modeling performed by the TPB indicates a reduction in the growth of per capita VMT in the region. While there are many factors to this, the many actions and programs that affect the mode choices people make that are in place and/or assumed to be in place is a factor in this reduced growth in VMT. As such I believe that this action ought to be "TPB adopts goals to reduce growth in VMT" as opposed to absolute VMT.

3. III.B.3 Transit Agencies Promote Transit use: I believe the transit agencies are doing this aided by many initiatives at the state, local and regional levels. The various program elements of the Commuter Connections program and local jurisdictions' Travel Demand Management program (including Employer Outreach) are some examples of the assistance transit agencies are getting at this time.

4. III.B.5 Expand Commuter Options: This is being done. The Commonwealth, in addition to supporting the regional Commuter Connections program, funds other Travel Demand Management programs at local jurisdiction level. VDOT and VDRPT are also looking to develop some NoVA district wide expansion of alternative commute programs.

5. III.C.1 Adopt best practices for traffic engineering: This is already underway in NoVA (and other parts of the region as well). For example VDOT has a yearly ongoing program that continually examines and optimizes the signal timing at the traffic signals it operates. Additionally VDOT also has an ongoing program to replace the regular bulbs used in its traffic signals with LED bulbs. VDOT also has extensive traffic surveillance and motorist's assistance program on its freeways to quickly clear incidents that lead to congestion.

6. III.C.5 TPB adopts goals to reduce freight emissions: The Commonwealth has supported development of rail freight movement as a means to assist reducing truck freight traffic and VMT. Most recently the Commonwealth has programmed funds to add rail capacity along the tracks owned by CSX and Northern Southern companies. The Commonwealth is supporting the efforts of these two railroad firms to secure federal funds for projects that will add rail line capacity. The Commonwealth has also undertaken studies to examine the viability of ferry operations along the Potomac River.

7. III.E.1 TPB Develops metropolitan planning process for greenhouse gases: VDOT believes that the TPB has already created such a process through its Scenario Study Task Force. The Task Force is currently examining and analyzing various transportation actions that would help reduce greenhouse gases from the transportation sector. The Task Force has also overseen development of

greenhouse gas inventories for the region. VDOT has fully supported and participated in this effort and plans to continue its support and participation.

Thanks and as always please call/email me with your questions/comments.

Sincerely,

Kanti Srikanth

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From: Stuart Freudberg [mailto:sfreudberg@mwcog.org]

Sent: Monday, October 05, 2009 4:56 PM

To: Stuart Freudberg

Subject: Feedback Requested on Draft 2009-2012 Regional Climate Action Plan (Please respond by 10/20/09)

To the COG Climate, Energy and Environment Policy Committee:

As our last meeting the committee had an initial conversation on the draft 2009-2012 Regional Climate Action Plan.

Your comments are encouraged on the document. The ad hoc committee will be meeting soon to consider all feedback received.

Please respond by October 20th.

If you have any questions or require further information, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Stuart

Next meeting of the full committee:

Wednesday November 18, 2009, from 9:30 am – 11:30 am at COG.

Note earlier start and end time for this meeting only.

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