

National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board

777 North Capitol Street, N.E., Suite 300, Washington, D.C. 20002-4290 (202) 962-3310 Fax: (202) 962-3202 TDD: (202) 962-3213

Meeting Notes

FREIGHT SUBCOMMITTEE

DATE: March 11, 2010

TIME: 1:00 P.M. to 3:00 P.M.

PLACE: Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, Room 1

CHAIR: Victor Weissberg, Department of Public Works and Transportation
Prince George's County

ATTENDANCE:

Randall Carroll, Maryland Department of Environment
Eulois Cleckley, District of Columbia Department of Transportation
Sharon Daboin, CSX
Ed Daniel, Montgomery County Police Department
Stephen Flippin, CSX
Brian Galhouse, TranDyn
Mark Griffith, Onyx
Erik Johnson, Virginia Department of Transportation
Nicole Katsikides, Maryland Department of Transportation
Valerie Pardo, Virginia Department of Transportation
Jon Scherman, Cambridge Systematics
Herb Smith, Norfolk Southern Corporation
Coral Torres, Federal Highway Administration
Victor Weissberg, Prince George's County

COG STAFF ATTENDANCE:

Michael Farrell, COG
Karin Foster, COG
Marisa Lang, COG
Andrew Meese, COG
Wenjing Pu, COG

Victor Weissberg, Freight Subcommittee Chairman—Mr. Weissberg welcomed attendees and asked for introductions. He asked if attendees had any comments on the summary of the previous meeting in January. No comment was made and the summary was approved. The first speaker, Wenjing Pu, was introduced.

Wenjing Pu, Update on the Congestion Management Process (CMP)—The CMP is a federal requirement of metropolitan transportation planning. A Metropolitan Planning Organization such as the Transportation Planning Board (TPB) must: (1) Identify congestion, develop and select appropriate strategies to reduce congestion; and (2) Single occupant vehicle (SOV) projects cannot receive federal funds unless they show that the CMP has been considered. There are three major CMP activities to fulfill these requirements: (1) The CMP component of the Constrained Long Range Plan document (updated every four years); (2) CMP Documents Forms for the CLRP and TIP; and (3) the CMP Technical Report. A Draft of the 2010 CMP Technical Report will be available in April/May 2010 with the final Draft expected by June 2010.

Mr. Pu summarized three ways congestion is monitored in the National Capital Region. TPB conducts freeway aerial photography surveys every three years. This includes 300 centerline miles of freeways. TPB also conducts arterial floating car travel time studies. This includes 400 miles of arterials surveyed every three years. And most recently, TPB analyzes I-95 Corridor Coalition (INRIX, Inc) traffic monitoring data. This includes 200 centerline miles of freeways and 190 centerline miles of arterials in TPB member jurisdictions. INRIX is an example of geographic positioning system (GPS) probe data, and includes continuous monitoring 24 hours a day 7 day a week.

Mr. Pu defined travel time index prior to showing several time-series congestion flow maps. Travel time index equals actual travel time/free-flow travel time. The travel time index expresses the average amount of extra time it takes to travel relative to free-flow travel. A travel time index of 1.3 indicates a 10 minute free-flow trip would take an extra three minutes during the peak travel time periods. Mr. Pu shared a series of travel time index maps to demonstrate change over time. He also shared month-to-month travel time indices that reflect the large impact of the December 19, 2009 snowstorm and time of day and day of week travel time index. Mr. Pu also introduced the concept of a planning time index. Planning time index equals 95th percentile travel time/free-flow travel time. It is the ratio of the total time needed to ensure on-time arrival 95% of the time. And Buffer Time Index represents (95% travel time-average travel time)/average travel time. The Buffer Time Index represents the cushion that travelers must add to their average travel time when planning trips to ensure on-time arrival.

Mr. Pu is continuing work on the CMP Technical Report toward a targeted June finalization date.

Karin Foster, Freight Plan Workshop—Ms. Foster's discussion began with a context for the Freight Plan. Freight issues are increasingly on the federal radar. The federal MPO certification process underway (April 2010) includes a review of MPO freight efforts for the first time. Transportation planning legislation, the Safe Accountable Flexible and Efficient Transportation Equity Act—A Legacy for Users also makes references to include freight in the transportation planning process. Many also anticipate more freight influence in the successor transportation legislation.

Ms. Foster provided a quick overview of the document layout and its 9 chapters:

1. Introduction
2. Planning Context

3. Freight Program
4. Current Freight Conditions
5. Forecast Freight Conditions
6. Land Use and Environment
7. Safety and Security
8. Freight Project Database
9. Best Practices

For the discussion on Freight Subcommittee Objectives, Ms. Foster noted that the Subcommittee has yet to formally establish its objectives. With samples from other MPOs, Ms. Foster brainstormed with members possible TPB Freight Subcommittee Objectives.

Freight subcommittee member suggestions include:

- To provide a voice for freight (Victor Weissberg)
- To recognize and support the freight role in economic development (Erik Johnson)
- To assist in the coordination of land use and transportation (Nicole Katsikides)
- To recognize how freight can reduce air quality impacts (Stephen Flippin/Randy Carroll)
- To recognize freight's integrated role in the multimodal system (Coral Torres)

Ms. Foster next defined Best Practices. Best Practices are defined as processes or activities anticipated being effective in achieving overall Freight Program objectives. Best Practices are ones that Freight Subcommittee members should find substantially beyond debate-agreement. TPB staff has come up with three that Ms. Foster shared with the group.

1. Jurisdictions should have one or more staff persons responsible for freight planning in the jurisdiction.
 - a. The jurisdictional staff person(s) assigned to freight should be sufficiently knowledgeable on freight issues to effectively work with their jurisdiction's freight stakeholders.
 - b. Each jurisdiction should identify a freight liaison to coordinate planning with the Transportation Planning Board (TPB) and Freight Subcommittee.
2. Jurisdictional transportation plans should specifically address freight movement issues.
 - a. Each jurisdiction should prepare a freight profile to advise further integration of freight into local plans.
 - b. Jurisdictional plans should address development-related freight issues, such as off-road loading facilities, in accordance with published national standards.
 - c. Jurisdictional plans should consider truck movement within the jurisdiction, including consideration of issues such as truck routing, on-street commercial loading zones and delivery space, and truck parking.
 - d. Incorporate truck transportation and commercial loading zones in zoning for new construction projects.
 - e. Jurisdictions should coordinate jurisdictional-level zoning efforts with state and federal departments of transportation who make decisions on transportations projects.

3. Regional freight planning activities should be sustained to assist state and local freight integration efforts.
 - a. Coordinate a regional Focus on Freight Forum to draw attention and public awareness to freight issues.
 - b. Prepare a brochure to summarize the Freight Program objectives and to serve as a freight educational handout.
 - c. Continue to analyze regional freight flows in the National Capital Region.

Resulting from discussion with Freight Subcommittee members, the following ideas were proposed for additional Best Practices:

- Assign a point person to freight as well as require that freight be addressed at all levels in the planning process. (Michael Farrell/Jon Scherman)
- Incorporate passenger rail issues in freight rail discussions. (Nicole Katsikides)
- Ongoing data collection and accumulation. (Eulois Cleckley)

Next Ms. Foster introduced the DRAFT National Capital Region Freight Project Database. The Database is made up of highway and rail projects. All projects originate from existing plans or studies, such as the *Constrained Long Range Plan*, *MD State Freight Plan*, *Draft MD State Rail Plan*, *CSX National Gateway*, *Norfolk Southern Crescent Corridor*, and the *I-95 Mid-Atlantic Rail Operations Study*.

Ms. Foster suggested the group highlight a list of Freight Subcommittee Top 10 projects from the list. A similar list is prepared for the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan for the National Capital Region. By preparing such a list, the Freight Subcommittee draws attentions to these projects, and when funding becomes available, projects with recognized support will have a stronger chance to succeed.

Several issues were discussed regarding the Database and the Top 10 projects.

Project List Submission Period: It was determined that the Database should be distributed for a period of time to give jurisdictions and stakeholders an opportunity to add additional projects.

Top 10 Project Truck/Rail Split: The group was undecided about the appropriate split of projects for our region. Suggestions were 5 truck/5 rail, 7 truck/3 rail, or 8 truck/2 rail.

Criteria to Determine Top 10: The group suggestion was to examine the federal criteria for Priority Funding Areas, and mirror our criteria from the federal criteria. Based on an agreed upon criteria, the Subcommittee would prioritize projects and come up with a Top 10 list.

The timeline for the Freight Plan was projected as presentation to the Technical Committee in June 2010 and likely presentation to the TPB in June or July. We plan to include the full list of projects in the document presented to the Technical Committee and to the TPB.

Subsequently in the fall time frame, the Subcommittee would go through the process to develop its first annual Top Ten list of priority freight projects, timed to provide input to development of the fiscal year 2012-2017 Transportation Improvement Program.

Roundtable Updates—Ms. Foster asked Freight Subcommittee members to provide updates on their current and ongoing tasks if they would like:

Stephen Flippin, CSX: CSX was awarded \$98 million in TIGER funds; this will fund 38 clearance projects in Ohio, West Virginia, and Pennsylvania. Mr. Flippin also mentioned ongoing community meetings regarding the Virginia Avenue Tunnel project.

Eulois Cleckley, DDOT: Mr. Cleckley spoke about finalization of the District's truck route map.

Brian Galhouse, TranDyn: Started with new consulting firm TransDyn.

Erik Johnson, VDOT: The Multimodal State Freight Study was almost done, it is being vetted by the Secretary of Transportation and the Governor. VDOT will increasingly push their several state MPOs to boost their role in freight.

Herb Smith, Norfolk Southern: NS was awarded \$105 million in TIGER funds. This will go toward one new intermodal terminal in Alabama and another in Tennessee.

Nicole Katsikides, MDOT: MDOT is working on *State Freight Plan* implementation. State continues to work on *State Rail Plan*, and will later take it to the MPOs. Ms. Katsikides also mentioned a FHWA coordinated peer-to-peer exchange that took place between MDOT and other DOTs.

Next Meeting May 6, 2010