

ITEM 10 – Information

June 21, 2023

FY 2024 UPWP Projects Update

Background:

July 1 marks the start of a new fiscal year and TPB staff will be engaged in many new projects. Staff will provide an update on some of the FY 2024 UPWP activities.



MEMORANDUM

TO: TPB Technical Committee
FROM: Lyn Erickson, Plan Development and Coordination Program Director
SUBJECT: Status Report on FY 2024 UPWP Projects
DATE: June 15, 2023

The Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 Unified Planning Work Program was approved by the TPB on March 15, 2023, and the work will begin on July 1, 2023. The memorandum provides an overview of activities and studies that will take place in the coming year, focusing on three key themes: climate change; equity and access; and data collection and analysis.

FOCUS AREA - CLIMATE CHANGE

CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION PLANNING – IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT

During FY 2024, TPB staff will have a role in supporting work on two newly established federal programs that are designed to support climate change mitigation planning and implementation efforts: the Carbon Reduction Program (CRP), established by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), and the Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) program, established by the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA).

The CRP will provide five years of funding (FY 22- FY 26) for projects that reduce on-road transportation greenhouse gas emissions. Our region will receive a total of approximately \$12 million in suballocations for FY 22 and FY 23. During FY 24, TPB staff will have a coordination role with state DOT staff on projects selected for CRP funding, which must be identified in the TIP, and the Carbon Reduction Strategies that the states are required to develop as part of the CRP by November 15, 2023.

As part of the CPR program, COG, in partnership with the District of Columbia, will develop a Priority Climate Action Plan (PCAP), which is due in March 2024. The role of TPB staff on the region's PCAP is not yet defined; however, TPB staff expect to have at least a supporting role in the development of the plan. The PCAP is required for eligible entities that wish to apply for competitive implementation grants in the next stage of CPRG funding.

Additionally, during FY 24, as a follow-up to the greenhouse gas reduction goals and strategies that the TPB adopted in June 2022, TPB staff expect to enlist consultant support to examine implementation considerations for strategies that the TPB adopted for further exploration in coordination at the local and state levels.

TRANSPORTATION RESILIENCE STUDY PHASE II

The transportation resilience planning program is underway, starting with the Phase II Transportation Resilience Study. Together with member jurisdictions and agencies, TPB is developing a regional Transportation Resilience Improvement Plan (TRIP) as part of the second phase of its transportation resiliency study. This type of comprehensive plan for state or regional transportation resilience, the TRIP, is a major element of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-Saving Transportation program (PROTECT). Developing a TRIP can lower the non-federal construction match for projects funding by the PROTECT program from 20% to 13% and integrating that TRIP into the LRTP can reduce the match to 10%. The TPB's Phase II Resilience study – which will include a vulnerability assessment of risks posed by natural hazards on generalized transportation assets (phase 1) and regional-specific assets (phase 2) – will be guided by a regional working group who will primarily provide input and feedback on key milestones during the development of the TRIP through a series of meetings. The TRIP will also include a list of resilience projects to address the vulnerabilities previously identified, driven by member agencies responsible for the various regional transportation assets. This project will also convene a Resiliency Forum – which will include a broader swath of regional participants, seeking to include at least one representative from all member jurisdictions. The goal for the Forum will be to build knowledge of climate risks among the jurisdictions and collaborate with them to develop resilience solutions. The final component of the study will be an interactive map of major regional resilience hazards which will include climate hazard layers, transportation asset layers, and Equity Emphasis Areas.

REGIONAL ELECTRIC VEHICLE (EV) INFRASTRUCTURE DEPLOYMENT

During FY 24, TPB staff will support the Regional Electric Vehicle Deployment (REVD) Working Group, which was established by COG to serve as a forum for members to collaborate and coordinate on actions related to deploying EVs and EV infrastructure. One of the major work activities that the REVD Working Group will oversee during FY 24 is the development of a Regional Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Implementation Strategy. The strategy will be developed by the TPB's on-call consultant, ICF, and funded in part through the UPWP Technical Assistance Program. TPB staff will be part of the project team providing technical oversight and contract management.

The infrastructure implementation strategy is being designed to support state and local governments as they prioritize locations for publicly accessible EV infrastructure deployment. The strategy will provide electric vehicle projections for three forecast scenarios by county and recommend priority sites for EV infrastructure. The information provided in the strategy will inform states and local jurisdictions as they apply for funding from federal programs such as future funding opportunities from the BIL's Charging and Fueling Infrastructure (CFI) Discretionary Grant Program. TPB staff will continue to support state and local EV planning efforts, including state National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) planning requirements, with forums and technical assistance as practicable.

BUS DECARBONIZATION (TRANSITION TO ZEVs)

TPB staff will work with the region's transit agencies and jurisdictions to support the ZEV transition, evaluating how we can complement and add value to the work being done. Potential concepts include looking at infrastructure needs for e-bus charging at stops and stations, studying regional hydrogen (H2) infrastructure, or assisting with regional efforts in support of workforce development, maintenance support, joint procurements, and fire and safety training.

FOCUS AREA – EQUITY AND ACCESS

EQUITY EMPHASIS AREAS (EEAs)

Staff will conduct in-depth research and analysis of socioeconomic, demographic, and transportation/mobility characteristics of disadvantaged populations to identify their unmet mobility and accessibility needs. The purpose of this study will be to provide TPB member agencies, local governments, and transit agencies with findings and considerations as they identify future projects, programs, and policies as part of their transportation planning activities. This analysis will include a comparison of the new Justice40 disadvantaged communities, identified by the FHWA, within the TPB's planning area with the EEAs that the TPB has designated for purposes of its Environmental Justice (EJ) analysis. TPB staff recognize that the criteria used by USDOT to define its Justice40 disadvantaged communities differ from those used by the TPB to identify EEAs (which follows federal EJ analysis guidance), which can result in geographic differences.

ACCESS TO BUS SERVICES

Building on TPB and COG's previous work on the region's High-Capacity Transit Station (HCT) locations, this study will examine local bus and nonmotorized access to those stations. In particular, bus services connecting to other HCTs, to regional Activity Centers outside HCTs, and HCTs in COG's EEAs will be assessed as to the quality of local bus service provided.

In addition, current and planned HCT accessibility will be assessed to determine the potential need for improved bus access and improved pedestrian and non-motorized access.

FOCUS AREA – DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

INTERCITY BUS AND RAIL PASSENGER TRAVEL

Federal planning regulations require MPO consideration of intercity travel in regional planning. This work will revisit the TPB's 2016 Count of Intercity Bus Traffic study and update it by gathering usage information on intercity buses, commuter buses, rail transit, and commuter rail in the region.

COORDINATED TRANSIT ON-BOARD DATA COLLECTION

Staff plans to begin a multi-year process to facilitate coordination among the region's public transportation providers to collect transit on-board passenger trip information to ensure that the data collected will provide information needed by these transit agencies and by COG/TPB staff, who use the data to estimate, calibrate, and validate regional travel demand forecasting models.

ENHANCED CONGESTION ANALYSIS

Related to travel surveys, big data products that can provide information on travel to inform long-range regional planning as well as activities like the federally required Congestion Management Process (CMP) technical report, continue to be evaluated by TPB staff. Purchase of data from one or more data providers will be considered to meet varying requirements for data coverage and extent, period covered, and affordability.

TRAVEL MONITORING AND TRENDS ANALYSIS

One of the long-time core activities of TPB staff's data and research program is to monitor regional travel and analyze and report on travel trends to inform regional transportation planning. The tools of the trade used for this activity continue to evolve. Staff plans to enhance its travel monitoring program by acquiring a large dataset of passively collected trip information from a "big data" vendor. These data can help provide additional insights into the nature and characteristics of travel trends in the region. Staff will also continue to develop enhanced visualizations and data products and implement new data collection methods focused on obtaining regional travel information on a more frequent and ongoing basis.