

National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board

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Meeting Notes

MANAGEMENT, OPERATIONS, AND INTELLIGENT TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS (MOITS) TECHNICAL SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING

DATE: Tuesday, January 7, 2014
TIME: 12:30 PM
PLACE: COG, First Floor, Meeting Rooms 4/5
CHAIR: Jean Yves Point-du-Jour, Maryland State Highway Administration

Attendance:

Tad Borkowski – Fairfax County Department of Transportation
Burak Cesme – AECOM
Enrique Gonzalez – Sam Schwartz Engineering
Elliot Harkavy – COG Public Safety
Warren Henry – Jacobs Engineering/MDSHA
Andrew Meese – COG/TPB
Erin Morrow – COG/TPB
Jean Yves Point-du-Jour – MDSHA
Tom Scherer – Arlington County DES
Daivamani Sivasailam – COG/TPB
Marco Trigueros – COG/TPB

By phone:

Taran Hutchinson – MATOC
Amy Tang McElwain – VDOT
William Truong - MATOC

1. Welcome, Introductions, and Review of Notes from the September 10, 2013 MOITS Meeting

Participants introduced themselves. The notes from the previous meeting were approved.

2. Update on Traffic Signal Subcommittee Activities

The Subcommittee was briefed on Traffic Signals Subcommittee discussions and activities, including surveys on power back-ups and signal timing/optimization; information on practices in other cities; and recent briefings and events. The Transportation Planning Board is scheduled to be briefed on the topic of traffic signal timing at its February 19 meeting. The power back-up survey has been completed and will be presented to the Traffic Signals Subcommittee at its next meeting.

MOITS Technical Subcommittee

Notes from the January 7, 2014 Meeting

Page 2 of 5

The power back-up survey will be conducted on an annual basis after June 30. The discussion on practices in other cities was initiated by comments from the Washington Board of Trade regarding improvements recently completed to Los Angeles's traffic signal network.

3. Update on the Metropolitan Area Transportation Operations Coordination (MATOC) Program

Mr. Hutchinson summarized the process of moving to their new facility and their upcoming projects now that they have settled in: backup voice communications as operators move away from Nextel, improved transit information, construction coordination, and special event coordination. The severe weather meetings have been going well. The SOP is still in draft form; meetings are held on a monthly basis and conference calls are triggered by certain events.

Mr. Meese suggested that MOITS analyze MATOC data regarding reliability and incidents to help guide the MPO process. A workshop on RITIS and the VPP Suite will be organized this year for MOITS members to learn about the data available through these tools.

4. Update on COG/TPB Congestion Management Activities

The committee was briefed on a number of recent and upcoming activities related to the Congestion Management Process (CMP), including analysis of congested conditions on non-freeway arterial highways, the upcoming aerial survey of freeways, and recent developments in the I-95 Corridor Coalition/University of Maryland Vehicle Probe Project (VPP) data analysis suite. Staff discussed the upcoming update of the CMP Technical Report, including an upcoming request for technical information review by member agencies.

Ms. Morrow outlined the background and content of the CMP Technical Report which will be updated this year. The last one was published in November 2012 and the target completion date for the current effort is June 30, 2014. Chapter 3 will discuss the consideration and implementation of congestion management strategies. A request was made to implementing agencies to review and update the travel demand and operational strategies. These strategies can be in any phase of implementation as long as the agency is open to having it published in a public report. Ms. Morrow will send out an e-mail and provide a timeline of three to four weeks to reply.

Mr. Sivasailam described the functionality of the VPP Suite. The Dashboard allows users to select a day and time period and explore the region's worst bottlenecks. The tool presents the location, length of the queuing, duration of congestion, and travel time index but will only work as a snapshot in time – not the average over time. Without the VPP Suite, the calculations and displays need to be performed independently using raw INRIX data, but gives staff greater flexibility to process and manipulate the data. Peers along the I-95 corridor have been satisfied with utilizing the VPP Suite instead of performing the independent data manipulations.

MOITS Technical Subcommittee

Notes from the January 7, 2014 Meeting

Page 3 of 5

The Congestion Scan tool allows users to select a specific road and observe the levels of congestion and incidents during a specific day or the average over a time period. Results can be displayed as a heat map

The Historic Probe Data Analyzer allows users to explore data over a long date range to produce measures like travel time index (TTI), buffer time index (BTI), and planning time index (PTI). There was discussion on the threshold that defines the PTI – both the 80th and 95th percentile have been used historically. The TTI has been a more accepted and easily understood measure in the region as it provides a straightforward comparison to free flow conditions whereas PTI is affected by external conditions. The Analyzer has been broken up into three different tools (as of the last update): trend map, performance charts and performance summary

The Massive Raw Data Downloader allows users to download INIX data for independent manipulation. It is available only to signatories of the I-95 Corridor Coalition – of which MWCOG is a member.

The Bottleneck Ranking identifies the worst bottlenecks in a defined area (the area can cross state lines as of the last update). In contrast to the Congestion Scan tool, the Bottleneck Ranking allows users to select a time period that spans more than one day.

The User Delay Cost tool calculates the cost of delay based on volume, duration of delay, and cost per passenger/commercial vehicle.

The VPP Suite is being proposed as the primary tool to develop arterial highway congestion information and prepare exhibits for the CMP technical report. The switch would allow COG/TPB staff to use time more efficiently to prepare more data and exhibits in exchange for less ability to customize the data manipulations. There are some differences in the data, but they are substantially the same. The group had no objections to this proposal. Aerial photography will continue to be used to determine density of the freeways in the region.

5. Brief Updates

a. Federal Rule Section 1201 – the Real-Time System Management Information Program

No new information on this topic, though it is a priority for VDOT. Ms. McElwain noted that she would follow up with Scott Cowherd to see if there has been any more progress.

b. Transit Data – Real-Time Information, Databases, Data Exchange

This topic should be discussed this year as transit data information sharing is not at the level of highway information in RITIS. Arlington County's Commuter Services has an ongoing project that focuses on this topic area. It may be beneficial to transfer the ownership and maintenance

MOITS Technical Subcommittee

Notes from the January 7, 2014 Meeting

Page 4 of 5

responsibilities to another agency once completed – more information will be presented as the project progresses.

c. Regional ITS Architecture

Each state and the District has its own statewide architecture, and they have to be combined to form a regional architecture. Highway coordination has been good, but transit coordination needs to be developed more – WMATA needs to be involved in the discussion. VDOT does not have a well-developed ITS architecture for transit.

6. Regional Emergency Support Function #1 (RESF-1) Emergency Transportation Committee Update

Mr. Harkavy summarized recent RESF-1 activities. A grant (exercise and training oversight panel -- ETOP) has been identified to fund an exercise to review the regional evacuation plans and ensure that they work well together – RITIS will be used to illustrate the tool's capabilities. Police and fire personnel are advancing the Homeland Security Voice and Data Strategic Plan – to be discussed at the January 16th meeting. WMATA has updated the committee on Silver Line preparedness given that first responders in new jurisdictions need training. If participants have ideas for projects to be funded by UASI grants, they should contact Mr. Sivasailam before the January 16th meeting. Mr. Meese suggested that past projects be brought up again for reconsideration. Mr. Harkavy noted that the issue of backup communications should be discussed at the RESF-1 meeting, and it is important for transportation agencies to join the conversation to ensure that their requirements are met. Voice backup communications will be discussed, primarily. Mike Wood and Darian Manly were suggested as communications contacts for VDOT and MDOT, respectively.

7. MOITS-Related Tasks in the Draft FY2015 COG/TPB Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

COG/TPB metropolitan transportation planning activities are described in an annual Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). The draft FY2015 UPWP (to cover the period July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2015) is currently under development. COG/TPB staff reviewed continuing and updated activities anticipated in MOITS-related areas for FY2015, with an emphasis on requirements related to the new MAP-21 federal transportation legislation.

Mr. Meese highlighted the program elements relevant to the subcommittee. The assumption is made that the budget will remain at the same level as the previous fiscal year with an amendment being made once the actual budget is released sometime in the fall to account for any differences. In many of the program elements, the new requirements of MAP-21 are mentioned – though exact regulations have not yet been distributed. The elements relevant to the committee include the Congestion management Process, MOITS planning, transportation emergency preparedness planning, safety planning, freight planning, MATOC, and congestion monitoring and analysis. The

MOITS Technical Subcommittee

Notes from the January 7, 2014 Meeting

Page 5 of 5

table presented at the end of the presentation identifies the relevant committees and their respective responsibilities.

8. Around the Table – Thoughts on 2014 Meeting Topics

This item was to be brought back for the next meeting to give members time to think of potential topics.

9. Other Business

Mr. Point du Jour noted that the Maryland Highway Safety Conference will be held on February 24, 2014.

10. Adjourn – Next Scheduled Meeting:

Tuesday, February 11, 2014, 12:30 PM to 2:30 PM, COG Meeting Room 1 [later changed to a conference call]