

National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board

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Item #15

MEMORANDUM

Date: November 16, 2011

To: Transportation Planning Board

From: Ron Kirby
Director, Department of Transportation Planning

Subject: Performance-Based Planning and Programming at the federal level, and its Potential Application to the TPB Regional Transportation Priorities Plan

A. Background on the TPB Regional Transportation Priorities Plan

The concept of a priorities plan has its roots in more than a decade of TPB planning, including the establishment of regional goals through the *TPB Vision and Region Forward*, analysis of transportation and land-use scenarios using the adopted CLRP as a baseline, and various studies of the region's transportation funding challenges. In 2010, the TPB extensively discussed how these activities might be better integrated. On May 26, 2010 the TPB hosted an event called the Conversation on Setting Regional Transportation Priorities, which addressed the possibilities for more explicitly establishing regional priorities. The impetus for that event was a request by the TPB's Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) for the TPB to develop a "Regional Priorities Plan" that would serve as a "financially unconstrained" regional vision for transportation operations and investment. The Conversation generated broad interest among TPB stakeholders in developing a priorities plan. As a result, on July 21, 2010, the TPB voted to form a task force to determine the scope and process for developing such a plan.

The TPB Regional Priorities Plan Scoping Task Force included approximately 20 stakeholders in the TPB process – members of the TPB, CAC, Access for All Committee, and the Technical Committee. Between October 2010 and April 2011 the TPB Priorities Plan Scoping Task Force met four times and discussed planning processes and activities in the region, reasons for enhancing the current process, and options for change. At its first meeting, the task force also learned about the priorities planning activities of other Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) around the country. The task force reached general consensus that the priorities plan should describe goals and performance measures, assess challenges, and develop priorities - both funded and unfunded - for addressing those challenges. On July 20, 2011, the TPB approved a work scope for developing such a plan, as summarized in the diagram on the next page. The scope specified that public participation will be sought at every stage of the two-year process, including the development of performance measures, strategies, and benefit-cost analysis.

Proposed Tasks

Task 1

Regional Goals
(TPB Vision and Region Forward)
(e.g. Improve Safety of All Modes)



Performance Measures quantify progress toward regional goals
(e.g. Traffic Fatalities in the Washington Region; bicycle and pedestrian fatalities are now over 30 percent of the total, a percentage which has been growing)



Task 2

Regional Challenges identify actions the region needs to take in order to meet regional goals
(e.g. Reduce bike and pedestrian fatalities, as well as motorized fatalities)



Regional Strategies are designed to address regional challenges
(e.g. Support the implementation of effective safety measures for bicyclists and pedestrians)



Task 3

Regional Priorities are those strategies offering the greatest potential to address regional challenges as demonstrated through Benefit/Cost Analysis
(e.g. Promote public awareness of pedestrian and bicycle safety at the regional level)



Specific Programs and Projects
implement regional priorities through inclusion in the CLRP
(e.g. Street Smart Campaign)

B. Federal Government Focus on Performance Measurement

At the federal level, the Transportation Equity Act-21 (TEA-21) bill of 1999 focused greater attention on performance measurement. Additional emphasis was placed on performance measurement in the Safe Accountability Flexible Efficient Transportation Equity Act— A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) bill of 2005. A greater reliance on performance measurement is anticipated with the next federal transportation bill.

1) Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century” (MAP-21)

On Friday, November 4, 2011, a bipartisan group of four Senators released a proposed two-year surface transportation funding plan named “Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century” (MAP-21). The Senate Environmental and Public Works Committee held a voting or “markup” session on November 9, 2011 and unanimously approved MAP-21. An increased focus on performance measurement is evident in this bill’s language:

- *National Goals-Performance management will... provide a means to the most efficient investment of Federal transportation funds by refocusing on national transportation goals, increasing accountability and transparency [and] improving project decision-making through performance-based planning and programming.*
- *The metropolitan transportation planning process shall provide for the establishment and use of a performance based approach to transportation decision making to support the national goals*
- *When preparing the metropolitan plan, the metropolitan planning organization may develop multiple scenarios for consideration*

2) Recent Federal Performance Measurement Conferences

The federal government has sponsored a number of recent conferences and workshops on performance measurement. These conferences have gathered transportation stakeholders from the federal and state governments, metropolitan planning organizations, transit agencies, and academia to discuss how to identify and implement performance measurement:

- October 22, 2009, *Executive Roundtable on Developing a Performance-Based Planning and Programming Framework*, Washington D.C.
- September 13-15, 2010, *National Forum on Performance-Based Planning and Programming*, Dallas
- September 20, 2011, *National Workshop on Performance-Based Planning and Programming*, Chicago
- December 5-7, 2011 (upcoming), *Data Needs for Decision Making in States and MPOs*, Irvine

Federal agencies have already conducted several performance measurement studies targeted towards specific program areas. Examples include performance measurement and environmentally sustainable transportation (EPA 231-K-10-004), transit (TCRP Report-88), congestion management (NCHRP-618), and freight movement (NCHRP-10).

3) NCHRP 08-36

The National Capital Region has been selected by the ongoing NCHRP Project 08-36 as one of three pilot sites to study a Performance-Based Planning and Programming (PBPP) process. The main objective of this research is to “Move the conversation of national transportation performance measures and a performance-based planning and programming process from that of a conceptual framework to realistic examples relating national-level measures to the state and regional level.”

Two facilitated workshops will be held for each site, and the project will conclude with a final report that synthesizes the results of the pilot sites. The National Capital Region pilot will examine the selection and use of measures to inform decisions regarding bus priority corridors in Maryland, an exercise that will afford the region an opportunity to actively participate in the national discussion on performance measurement.

C. International Scan

In July and August 2009, the U.S. Department of Transportation (U.S. DOT)-Federal Highway Administration in cooperation with the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) and the National Cooperative Highway Research Program organized a two-week “International Scan” to explore how countries abroad link transportation performance and accountability. This came at a time when the U.S. Congress was considering more accountability for state and local transportation funds.

The International Scan group included American transportation representatives from the U.S. DOT, state DOTs, an MPO, AASHTO, and consultants. The group visited transportation agencies in Sweden, the United Kingdom, Australia, and New Zealand to learn how these countries link transportation performance and accountability. The team examined how these transportation agencies use goal setting and performance measures to manage, explain, deliver, and adjust their transportation budgets and internal activities.

The International Scan experience offered the team advice in several key areas. A summary of their experience and key lessons learned can be found in the [*International Technology Scanning Program: Linking Transportation Performance and Accountability*](#) report that was published in April 2010. Recurring recommendations from the transportation agencies abroad are highlighted on the next page:

1. Limit the number of performance measures (Since 1998, the British central government has reduced the number of government-imposed performance measures across all government departments from 600 to 30.)
2. Ensure that federal, state, and local officials engage in frequent dialogue and collaborative goal-setting
3. Perpetuate long-term improvement by understanding that the real value of performance management is the development of an improved decision-making and investment process, not the achievement of many arbitrary, short-term targets.

D. TPB Goal Areas and Performance Measures

The *TPB Vision* was adopted in 1998 following a three-year process that included public outreach and consensus building. The *Vision* comprises a policy statement, eight overarching policy goals, and objectives and strategies for reaching those goals. Since the *Vision* was approved in 1998, two international concerns – terrorism and climate change – have been pushed to the top of the global agenda. These challenges, which have obvious transportation implications, have influenced TPB activities in recent years.

The *Region Forward* document was approved in 2010 following a two-year development process. It includes goals, targets, and a compact agreement to guide future planning and help measure progress in the areas of housing, transportation, the environment, health and the economy. By the end of 2010, all of COG's member jurisdictions had signed the regional compact established in *Region Forward*. *Region Forward* includes transportation components, largely focused on promoting alternative modes, which are a subset of goals from the *TPB Vision*.

There are a multitude of different performance measures that can be developed and used to evaluate progress toward meeting regional transportation goals. In the course of developing materials for the consideration of the Regional Priorities Plan Scoping Task Force, TPB staff produced a composite list of regional goals drawn from the *TPB Vision* and *Region Forward*, and provided a number of examples of transportation performance measures that might be used to assess the performance of the regional transportation system against these regional goals. Many of the example performance measures that were provided had been used by the TPB over the years, while others were developed specifically to support the TPB's priorities planning effort.

Selecting the right performance measures may be one of the most challenging aspects of developing a regional priorities plan. It is important to limit the number of measures that are used in the transportation priorities planning process by only selecting those that are the most actionable and understandable, and by using effective public participation techniques to ascertain which measures would resonate most with citizens of the region.

E. Next Steps

On Thursday, November 10, 2011, the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) will be briefed on performance-based planning and programming at the federal level, and its potential application to the TPB Priorities Plan. The CAC will be asked for input regarding the public participation that is scheduled to take place in 2012 as part of the development of performance measures, challenges, and strategies.

In December 2011, the TPB and CAC will be briefed on an initial set of regional goals, performance measures, challenges, and strategies, and on proposed public outreach methods to obtain public feedback and comment. In January 2012, the TPB and the CAC will be briefed on a draft of the first interim report on the Regional Transportation Priorities Plan.

Proposed Schedule												
Tasks	FY2011		FY2012				FY2013				FY2014	
	Jan-Jun		Jul-Dec		Jan-Jun		Jul-Dec		Jan-Jun		Q1	
	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		
Task 1												
Reaffirm Regional Goals and Agree Upon Performance Measures	■		■									
Task 2												
Determine Regional Challenges and Strategies to Address Them -Near Term -Longer Term		■	■		■							
Task 3												
Develop Regional Priorities, both Funded and Unfunded -Near Term -Longer Term			■				■					
Interim Reports					▲		▲		▲			▲
Public Outreach and Comment					●		●		●		●	
Final Reports												■