

National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board

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Meeting Notes

MANAGEMENT, OPERATIONS, AND INTELLIGENT TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS (MOITS) POLICY TASK FORCE AND MOITS TECHNICAL SUBCOMMITTEE

DATE: Tuesday, September 9, 2008

TIME: 12:30 PM

PLACE: COG, First Floor, Meeting Room 1

CHAIRS: Hon. David Snyder, City of Falls Church, Chair, Policy Task Force
Amy Tang McElwain, Virginia Department of Transportation, Chair,
Technical Subcommittee

Attendance:

Tad Borkowski, Fairfax County DOT
Pete Buckley, Montgomery County Ride On
Kirk Dand, Arlington DOT
Michael Harris, Virginia DRPT
Damon Harvey, DDOT
Egua Igbinosun, MD SHA
Sean Kennedy, WMATA
Yanlin Li, DDOT
Amy Tang McElwain, VDOT
Greg McFarland, NVTC
Mark Miller, WMATA
Frank Mirack, FHWA
Michael Pack, UMD-CATT Lab
Martin Parker, Open Roads
Hadi Quaiyum, Prince George's County DPWT
John Ward, IBI
Jeris White, Noblis
Robert M. Winick, Motion Maps LLC

COG Staff Attendance:

Michael Eichler
Karin Foster
Andrew Meese
Ryan Whytlaw
Jim Yin

MOITS Policy Task Force and Technical Subcommittee

Notes from the September 9, 2008 Joint Meeting

Page 2 of 6

Actions:

1. Welcome and Review of Notes from the July 8, 2008 Meeting

Participants introduced themselves. Notes from the July MOITS meeting were approved.

2. Program Updates

• Metropolitan Area Transportation Operations Coordination (MATOC) Program –

It was reported that the MATOC Steering Committee had met several times in the past few months and took actions in preparation for the launch the proof of concept (POC) activity for MATOC, anticipated for December 2008. A number of activities were leading to this effort. One was to form and start subcommittees and focus activities, including a Regional Information System Subcommittee, a Regional Operations Subcommittee, and an Outreach/Information Sharing effort or subcommittee.

The MATOC Regional Operations Subcommittee would focus on developing operating procedures that defined agency and MATOC responsibilities for sharing information with each other and the public and coordinating response actions in the aftermath of events, accidents, etc. And an associated activity was looking at hiring a facilitator person, who was not otherwise in one of the member agencies who could take on role of facilitation communication for MATOC.

Another effort was to advise continued development of the Regional Integrated Transportation Information System (RITIS). The MATOC Regional Information Systems Subcommittee was formed to serve this purpose. The subcommittee had met once and planned to meet September 30.

The information sharing effort was beginning to be discussed, on potential outreach activities for MATOC to the media and other agencies. What messages are needed, how messages should the messages be structured, and how MATOC could best support these needs were items of focus.

Specialized consultants on board were addressing all three areas.

In response to a question from Mr. Igbinosun, Mr. Meese said that the new facilitator would be a part of the consultant team, not necessarily yet a current employee of the companies on the team, but to become a Telvent employee. Mr. Meese also noted the use of the term "MATOC facilitator" rather than "MATOC operator", to better reflect the intended duties of the person. The main focus of this job was to look at the variety of transportation condition data sources and facilitate regional communications and coordination based on that information. Though it was starting as a temporary position, it may become permanent.

MOITS Policy Task Force and Technical Subcommittee

Notes from the September 9, 2008 Joint Meeting

Page 3 of 6

- **Regional Integrated Transportation Information System (RITIS)** – Michael Pack, University of Maryland

Mr. Pack reported that the RITIS team had now successfully pulled data from DC's CapTOP system. Time has been spent on to enhance the entire RITIS system data feed and website to make sure to optimize or speed the bandwidth to handle large numbers of users. The RITIS team also continued general preparations for deployment.

In response to a question on taking in information from private sector third parties such as SpeedInfo, and any associated restrictions on using third party data, Mr. Pack stated that RITIS was now pulling in such data after negotiations and agreements with provider companies. Each data provider had its own set of restrictions of varying degrees, and the CATT Lab had reached different usage agreements with each of the third parties. These agreements sometimes restrict RITIS sharing data with outside agencies.

In response to a question of what of this private sector data was pushed out to the agencies, Mr. Pack noted that the MD SHA would have its new CHART system available to get RITIS data, while DC CapTOP could receive the data right now.

Mr. Pack noted that the Information Subcommittee of MATOC meeting went very well, with representatives from all DOTs.

- **Regional Emergency Support Function (RESF) – 1 Committee** – Ryan Whytlaw, COG Public Safety Staff

Mr. Whytlaw reported that the RESF-1 Committee met in July. The RESF-1 Committee had discussed the status of transportation-sector projects proposed for 2008 Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) funding. Among the projects submitted for consideration were a Regional Evacuation Traffic Monitoring Management Tool project, as well as continued development of RITIS. All projects submitted for UASI funding were reviewed by the Chief Administrative Officers (CAOs) Committee and the Senior Policy Group (SPG) (state-level Homeland Security group). An announcement on what projects were to be funded was expected soon.

The group further discussed the evacuation traffic monitoring tool, including how newly-installed detectors in this program would be integrated into existing detector systems, and whether information would be available to share with RITIS.

One of the questions that had come up during the CAOs/SPG discussions was that of how the ongoing funding needs of RITIS over the long term were going to be addressed. In response to a question from Mr. Igbinosun, Mr. Pack stated that the MATOC Steering Committee was discussing the long-term funding issue.

MOITS Policy Task Force and Technical Subcommittee

Notes from the September 9, 2008 Joint Meeting

Page 4 of 6

3. Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Change for MOITS

Mr. Meese reported that the USDOT funding sources for UPWP activities had undergone a cut after federal budget rescissions. For the MOITS program, this resulted in a budget reduction of about 6% from \$400,000 to about \$377,000. There would be no major changes anticipated for programmed MOITS activities, but there would be less flexibility in accommodating any new or unexpected tasks during the course of the year. Since some funding in the MOITS task had previously been officially carried over from FY2008 to FY2009, even with this funding cut, the MOITS budget would still be larger in FY2009 (\$377,000) than the (original) FY2008 budget (\$350,000).

4. Coordination with the TPB Regional Bus Subcommittee

Mr. Meese reported that there had been a number of informal discussions recently on the topics of regional coordination of buses, bus operations, and the interaction of technology and traffic operations with bus operations. One way proposed to begin was with more active coordination between the MOITS Technical Subcommittee and the Regional Bus Subcommittee. One topic of particular interest between these two groups was transit signal priority (TSP). There may be presentations at future meetings, or proposals for new committees or working groups. Mr. Meese introduced Mr. Eichler, the TPB staff person for the Regional Bus Subcommittee.

Mr. Eichler reported there were several activities trying to promote buses in the region. In the COG/TPB CLRP effort, there was a scenario study to evaluate how the transit system impacted the transportation/land use pattern. In the meantime, a regional priority projects list developed by the region's bus operators was being assembled. Not only were incidents and customer service addressed, but also bottlenecks on arterials and freeway ramps. One of the topics was to discuss how to provide bus priority in the future, such as dedicated rights-of-way for buses or queue jump lanes.

Mr. Winick suggested the region could consider using bus AVL probe data to get arterial traffic congestion information. Mr. Meese noted comments at a previous meeting from Mr. Vicente of WMATA, talking about the improved availability of WMATA data. It was of interest to see if these data could be used to evaluate the bus performance and even traffic conditions.

Mr. Kennedy added that currently there were five different technologies on WMATA buses that needed to be considered. And he echoed Mr. Eichler that WMATA was starting to talk with the region on ways to improve bus performance including TSP and queue jump lanes.

5. Update and Discussion on MOITS Strategic Plan and Regional ITS Architecture

Mr. Meese discussed the status of the MOITS Strategic Plan. The July 8 MOITS working session identified nine strategic areas for focus in the MOITS Strategic Plan, within several categories (Service Areas) of the National ITS Architecture. These were:

MOITS Policy Task Force and Technical Subcommittee

Notes from the September 9, 2008 Joint Meeting

Page 5 of 6

Archive Data Management

- ITS Virtual Data Warehouse

Public Transportation

- Multi-modal Coordination
- Transit Signal Priority

Traveler Information

- Interactive Traveler Information
- Transportation Operations Data Sharing

Traffic Management

- HOV Lane Management
- Regional Traffic Management
- Regional Parking Management

Maintenance and Construction Management

- Maintenance and Construction Activity Coordination

To support development of the plan in these areas, TPB staff would conduct in the October – November time frame a targeted inventory survey to identify ongoing or proposed agency project in the region in these focus areas. Following incorporation of information received in the inventory, the final report was targeted to be completed by December 31, 2008. A first preliminary draft of the plan had been sent out for the comments prior to today's meeting.

The draft plan had 4 chapters. Chapter 1, the executive summary, was still to be written. Chapter 2 was the overall context, including the definition and background of MOITS, national state of practice, review of state and local related documents and efforts, the strategic plan development process, and interjurisdictional collaboration and systems integration. Chapter 3, the heart of the MOITS Strategic Plan explored the 9 focus areas in detail. This chapter, as well as Chapter 4 on conclusions and recommendations, should be finalized over the next few months including input from the inventory.

An anticipated major outcome of the strategic planning process was the identification of project or program ideas, of a regional, interjurisdictional nature, to be available for future regional policy and funding discussions. Mr. Meese explained each of the focus strategic areas and provided strawman proposed project/program idea as shown below.

ITS Virtual Data Warehouse

- Support/enhancement of RITIS for the central role in regional data warehousing

Multi-modal Coordination

- Strengthen MATOC
- Collaborative improvements to TMCs
- Collaborative improvements to traffic/transit standard operating procedures (SOPs)
- Convene multi-disciplinary corridor teams

MOITS Policy Task Force and Technical Subcommittee

Notes from the September 9, 2008 Joint Meeting

Page 6 of 6

Transit Signal Priority

- Strategic improvements to signal equipment where needed (agency-specific basis)
- Installation of priority equipment on buses

Interactive Traveler Information

- Establishment of a District of Columbia 511 complementary to the Maryland and Virginia 511s
- Collaborative effort to improve integration of DC, Maryland, and Virginia 511s

Transportation Operations Data Sharing

- Support and enhancement of RITIS for real-time operations data sharing
- Within-agency work to enable interagency data sharing
- Transition of RITIS from prototype to “production” activity supported financially and institutionally

HOV Lane Management

- Continued support and enhancement of technical systems to enable full, efficient use of HOV lanes by transit buses

Regional Traffic Management

- Ongoing regional program for traffic signal optimization
- Collaborative development of multi-agency traffic and transportation management plans

Regional Parking Management

- Prototype project on inter-agency sharing of real-time parking information

Maintenance and Construction Activity Coordination

- Regional system to share information on maintenance and construction activity, and facilitate coordination of these activities

The group agreed to further review the draft plan and provide comments by September 23. A revised draft, as well as materials associated with the proposed inventory, were to be provided by October 7, a week prior to the October 14 meeting.