

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD

Technical Committee Minutes
for meeting of
March 4, 2011

**TPB TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES
ATTENDANCE - March 4, 2011**

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

DDOT Mark Rawlings
DCOP Colleen Mitchal

MARYLAND

Charles County -----
Frederick Co. John Thomas
City of Frederick Tim Davis
Gaithersburg -----
Montgomery Co. Gary Erenrich
Prince George's Co. Vic Weissberg
Rockville -----
M-NCPPC
 Montgomery Co. -----
 Prince George's Co. Faramarz Mokhtari
MDOT Lyn Erickson
MTA -----
Takoma Park -----

VIRGINIA

Alexandria Pierre Holloman
Arlington Co. Jennifer Fioretti
City of Fairfax Alexis Verzosa
Fairfax Co. Robert Owolabi
Falls Church -----
Loudoun Co. George Phillips
Manassas -----
Prince William Co. Monica Backmon
NVTC -----
PRTC Anthony Foster
 Michael Weinberger
 Nick Alexandrow
VRE -----
VDOT Kanathur Srikanth
VDRPT David Awbrey
NVPDC -----
VDOA -----

WMATA

WMATA Mark Kellogg

FEDERAL/OTHER

FHWA-DC -----
FHWA-VA -----
FTA Melissa Barlow
NCPC -----
NPS -----
MWAQC -----

COG Staff

Ronald Kirby, DTP
Gerald Miller, DTP
Mark Pfoutz, DTP
Bob Griffiths, DTP
Mark Moran, DTP
Jane Posey, DTP
Andy Meese, DTP
Andrew Austin, DTP
Michael Farrell, DTP
Nick Ramfos, DTP
Elena Constantine, DTP
Eric Randall, DTP
Karin Foster, DTP
Dusan Vuksan, DTP
John Swanson, DTP
Sarah Crawford, DTP
Feng Xie, DTP
William Bacon, DTP
Joan Rohlf, DEP

Other Attendees

Randy Carroll, MDE
Art Smith
Eric Sutton
Bill Orleans

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD

March 4, 2011

Technical Committee Minutes

1. Welcome and Approval of Minutes from February 3, 2011 Technical Committee Meeting

Minutes were approved as written.

2. Update on Project Submissions for the Air Quality Conformity Assessment for the 2011 CLRP

Mr. Austin spoke to the materials posted for this item. He noted that the document describing the significant new and changed projects had been developed after the February meeting. The materials had been released at a public meeting held on February 10 to kick off the 30-day public comment period. He thanked representatives from the three DOTs and WMATA and other local representatives for attending that meeting. Mr. Austin stated that the TPB had been briefed on the project submissions at their meeting on February 16.

As of March 4, approximately ten comments had been received online, mostly supporting the I-95 HOV/HOT Lanes project. Mr. Austin added that one comment had been submitted on the I-66 widening project and one request had been made for an updated project description form for the US 1 widening project, which VDOT had provided. Mr. Kirby said that additional postcards had been received supporting the I-95 HOV/HOT Lanes project.

Mr. Austin distributed a revised CLRP description form for the I-95 HOV/HOT Lanes. Mr. Srikanth explained that this revised form contained an additional paragraph that documented VDOT's commitment to developing transit and TDM strategies for the I-95 HOV/HOT Lanes project. He said that the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation would be leading that effort, and that a work scope was already under development.

Ms. Posey distributed a letter from VDOT requesting that the Widening of I-66 General Purpose and HOV Lanes project be included along with the I-95 HOV/HOT Lanes and the Seminary Road Reversible Ramp projects as an amendment to the 2010 CLRP.

Mr. Owolabi commented that the description for the I-95 HOV/HOT Lanes project references a table on the transit service plan that is included in Attachment A, but that attachment was labeled "Attachment B". Mr. Austin agreed this was confusing and said it would be addressed prior to distribution to the TPB.

Mr. Austin concluded by saying that the public comment period would close on March 12 and the Board would be asked to approve the project submissions at their meeting on March 16.

3. Update on Draft Scope of Work for the Air Quality Conformity Assessment for the 2011 CLRP

Ms. Posey discussed the 2011 CLRP scope of work that was included in the mailout. She listed the changes in the scope since last month. These included: Round 8.0a, instead of 8.0 cooperative forecasts; adherence to 8-hour RFP budgets for ozone season pollutants instead of 1-hour budgets; and wording changes for “significant change” definition. She pointed out the schedule and noted that the conformity analysis should be completed in October, and that the TPB would be asked to approve the analysis and adopt the 2011 CLRP in November.

Ms. Posey distributed a comment letter from MWAQC to TPB. She noted that MWAQC supports the approach for this year’s conformity determination.

Mr. Owolabi asked if a bus route change was considered “significant”. Ms. Posey replied that it was not.

4. Review of Draft FY 2012 Commuter Connections Work Program (CCWP)

Mr. Ramfos referred to the handout that was in the agenda packet and reviewed the information that was presented to the TPB on the draft FY 2012 CCWP at the February 16, 2011 meeting. He stated that the document had been released for public comment on February 10th at the CAC meeting. The final draft document would be presented to the TPB for approval on March 16th.

5. Review of Final Draft FY 2012 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

Mr. Miller explained that the final draft of the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) for FY2012 (July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2012) had not been materially changed from the version presented to the TPB on February 16. He said that the TPB will be asked to adopt the program on March 16 and it will be submitted to FHWA and FTA for their approval by July 1. He reviewed the budget totals in Table 1. He said that the new budget levels have been assumed to be the same as in FY 2011, but these may need to be reduced or revised depending on the final USDOT federal FY 2011 appropriation level, which currently is before Congress for action.

Mr. Kirby reviewed the process of identifying certain projects and funding in the current FY 2011 program that would not be completed by June 30 for carryover to FY 2012. He

then reviewed two memos on the proposed FY 2011 project amendments and carryover of FY 2011 funding to the FY 2012 UPWP. He said the carryover items would be incorporated into the final version of the FY 2012 document after TPB approval at the March meeting.

Mr. Kirby then reviewed the first two carryover projects. He explained that \$20,000 would be carried over to FY 2012 from the \$80,000 allocated for the JARC and New Freedom assessment, which is needed due to the delay in starting the consultant contract in FY 2011. The assessment is scheduled to be complete in September 2011. He said that in Models Development, \$250,000 would be carried over. This amount is available due to the deferment of a consultant-assisted effort to support and facilitate the development of the tour-based or activity-based travel demand model. He said that based upon recently completed studies to assess the experience and documentation of other MPOs in using these new models that were sponsored by the Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (AMPO) and the National Cooperative Highway Research Program, there is little evidence that the new models are better than the conventional ones and implementing these new models could cost up to \$3 million. He said that initiating this effort in FY 2012 will permit the TPB to benefit from the information collected by these national studies.

Mr. Griffiths said that in Travel Surveys and Analysis, \$430,000 will be carried over to collect household travel survey data from 2,400 households in six specified geographic subareas in the fall of 2011 rather than in the spring. He explained that during the spring the surveys would be planned and an RFP issued for their collection. There may be some cost savings if the same survey contractor is utilized for the Spring 2012 surveys of the next six subareas.

Mr. Kirby said that a new project was proposed as an amendment to each of the technical assistance programs for the three DOTs. He explained that the TPB was briefed at the February 16 meeting on an implementation plan and schedule that presented actions to be taken by the Signatories and the WMATA Board to address WMATA's governance problems that was announced in January by the Virginia and Maryland Governors and District of Columbia Mayor. He said that a Governance Work Group (GWG) was established by the DOTs to implement some of these actions, with appropriate input from appointing authorities, local jurisdictions and stakeholders. The GWG is required to report back to the Governors and Mayor by July 10, 2011.

Mr. Kirby said that the DOT staff for GWG contacted him to request research support for four of the seven initial tasks outlined in Action Item #2 of the two-year implementation plan. He then reviewed a proposed work task on page A-8 of the first memo. He explained that DTP staff will review and document research findings from the relevant literature and from the practices of peer agencies regarding four topics. He said that

proposed tasks in each of the three technical assistance programs would read the same and have a budget of 20,000 for a total project budget of \$60,000. He said that the product would document the research findings with a draft in May and final in June.

Mr. Erenrich said he was concerned about what staff would do and that a lot of research on this has already been done. He said that this might duplicate some of the work in the GAO report on WMATA governance expected in July. He commented that the \$60,000 could be used for other assistance.

Mr. Kirby reviewed the four topics that staff would examine through relevant literature and practices at peer agencies. He said that staff would not duplicate what has been done and is aware of the on-going work on the GAO report.

Ms. Erickson said that MDOT supports this project and that DTP staff would provide very timely research assistance to the GWG.

Mr. Srikanth said that the GWG is supported by the Virginia Governor. It will consult with the local jurisdictions and others and that it needs this research staff support. He said that there is a very limited time for this support and the point not to duplicate other work is well taken.

Mr. Kirby said that staff is open to comments and suggestions from all and that there will be a product prepared for the GWG that will be available for public review.

Mr. Weissberg expressed concern about any efforts to support local government representation on the WMATA Board.

Mr. Erenrich said that he was still concerned that resources were being spent on this and that we should wait for the GAO report.

Mr. Kirby said he appreciated the comments, but this proposed project was in response to the DOTs requests. This work is just the first element of a larger two-year effort and the DWG needs immediate help.

Ms. Erickson said that the DOTs will send letters to TPB with this request and describe the other actions of the GWG. She said that Mr. Scott of MDOT would attend the March 16 TPB meeting to answer questions.

Ms. Erickson then reviewed the Maryland technical assistance program changes which reduce budgets for five planning studies, and carryover \$420,000 for six projects. She pointed out that the FY 2012 budget for the TLC program was increased to \$160,000. Ms. Constantine pointed out that the FY 2011 program of projects had been reorganized and consolidated for FY 2012.

Mr. Srikanth reviewed the changes in the Virginia program which include changes in four project budgets, and carryover \$269,600 for four projects. He described how the FY 2011 program of projects had been reorganized and consolidated for FY 2012.

Ms. Backmon inquired what the budget in FY 2012 would be for the NVTAs TransAction 2040 Plan. Mr. Srikanth said that \$44,000 was carried over from FY 2011 and that more could be considered if necessary.

The Committee recommended that the final version of the FY 2012 UPWP and the FY 2011 amendments and carryover funding be presented for the Board's approval at its March 16 meeting.

6. Briefing on Regional Highlighted Freight Projects

Ms. Foster briefed the Committee on the Freight Subcommittee's finalized list of Highlighted Freight Projects. She provided an addendum to the memorandum distributed to provide the Committee with detail on the comments made by the Freight Subcommittee at its meeting the previous day. She then reviewed the "Project Criteria" and a summary table listing the ten projects. The memorandum included a "Project Description" sheet with details for each project. Ms. Foster highlighted a few projects. She discussed the CSX long-term National Gateway project, the CSX short-term Virginia Avenue Tunnel project, the Washington D.C. long-term Weigh Station project, and the Washington D.C. short-term Commercial Curbside Loading Zone Program. She noted that updates will be made to the memo reflecting the Freight Subcommittee and Technical Committee's comments ahead of the Transportation Planning Board's meeting on March 16, 2011.

Freight Subcommittee Chairman, Mr. Weissberg commented that this is the first time the Freight Subcommittee has come up with a list of important freight projects. He also remarked that the National Capital Region is the 8th largest freight region in the U.S.

Ms. Foster announced that the TPB Freight Forum would be held on April 27, 2011 and provided handouts for the Committee members. She added that the agenda will be engaging with many high-profile industry speakers.

Mr. Kirby commended Mr. Weissberg for his role as chairman. He also noted that the Freight Subcommittee raised the issue of identifying long-term versus short-term projects partly because of the rail corridor projects like National Gateway. The Virginia Avenue Tunnel cannot be effective for double-stack train service if other points along the route are not cleared. However, the impacts of the Virginia Avenue Tunnel will also benefit passenger rail.

Ms. Foster noted that Norfolk Southern has already completed its “Heartland Corridor” in the midwest in Chicago and Columbus. The Port of Norfolk is also the only port on the east coast currently prepared to receive the larger “Panamax” ships expected to come through the Panama Canal.

7. Briefing on the Regional “Street Smart” Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Education Campaign

Mr. Farrell spoke to a PowerPoint on the Street Smart Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Campaign. The campaign theme and image, “giant safety problem”, attracted some critical comment.

Mr. Versoza expressed concern that this campaign might get negative attention. Mr. Farrell replied that more attention was good; it would help spread the message.

Ms. Mitchell noted that in a pedestrian-motor vehicle collision the pedestrian always comes off worse. This campaign does not appear to convey that vulnerability.

Mr. Kirby also expressed concerns regarding the clarity of the message.

Mr. Farrell replied that the campaign took an ironic, counter-intuitive approach.

Ms. Erikson said that we should not forget the consequences for the driver. The campaign runs twice a year; we will have a chance to change it. Mr. Farrell replied that it was too late to change the spring campaign wave significantly since orders had already been sent to the printer.

Mr. Erenrich suggested that the TPB should receive evidence regarding the effectiveness of this campaign approach.

Mr. Awbrey suggested that the visibility of the crosswalk in the image should be enhanced.

Mr. Versoza asked why this message had not been tested with a professionally run focus group. Mr. Farrell replied that a focus group had been omitted for budgetary reasons. The campaign was vetted with the aid of an advisory group consisting of representatives of the funding agencies.

Mr. Erenrich asked about the funding for the Street Smart program. Mr. Kirby replied that we had been asking the TPB member jurisdictions to contribute, voluntarily, at a level of five cents per capita. We had considered incorporating that contribution into the COG dues at a level of two cents per capita, but due to the members’ budgetary situation we had decided to hold off on that proposal until next year.

Mr. Erenrich said that it would be interesting to see more data on pedestrian accident rates. Mr. Farrell replied that he had more information on regional crash rates. 2010 data is available for District of Columbia. Ms. Erikson noted that FHWA gets its information from the DOTs. Mr. Foster asked whether individual jurisdictions could opt out of the Street Smart program.

Mr. Farrell replied that the radio ads necessarily cover the entire region. Montgomery County contributed to and heavily shaped the campaign, and much transit advertising is done in Montgomery County. However, the campaign also runs transit ads in Prince George's County, which does not contribute to the campaign. It cannot buy ads on particular routes, but it can buy ads on all the buses in a WMATA garage, which serve a given set of routes.

8. Briefing on Draft Work Scope and Schedule to Develop a Regional Priorities Plan

Mr. Kirby spoke about recent activities in developing the scope for the Regional Priorities Plan. He said the TPB Priorities Plan Scoping Task Force had met on February 16 and had broadly agreed to the draft scope that he distributed. He said the development of the priorities plan would be guided by performance measures. He briefly went through a presentation on performance measures from the February 16 task force meeting. He also described the budget for the development of this plan, which was included in the draft UPWP under Regional Studies. He said that at the task force's last meeting on April 20 it would finalize the scope. The scope and process developing the priorities plan would be presented to the TPB as an information item at its May meeting and would be scheduled for TPB approval in June, so that the development of the plan could begin in July at the beginning of the next fiscal year.

Ms. Mitchell asked if the performance measures in the presentation from the February 16 meeting were derived from Region Forward.

Mr. Kirby said that they reflected goals in both Region Forward and the TPB Vision, and had been applied to the system in the CLRP.

Ms. Mitchell said she had previously understood that performance measures would be used to evaluate specific projects.

Mr. Kirby said it was important to consider the regional perspective. He used MATOC as an example of a program with clear regional benefits.

Mr. Mokhtari said he would like to include: 1) goals related to TOD; 2) inputs from federally funded studies that had previously identified priorities; and 3) state and local lists of priorities.

Mr. Kirby said that several performance measures that were included in the February 16 presentation related to TOD. He also noted that stakeholders would be welcome to put forward their own priorities.

Mr. Weissberg said that east/west regional imbalances were important to measure. In support of Mr. Mokhtari's comments, he noted that focusing on TOD was a good way to meet a number of regional goals.

Mr. Kirby said the TPB's scenario analysis showed the benefits of addressing the issues that Mr. Weissberg described.

Mr. Weissberg suggested that priorities planning should build off of federal and local studies, such as studies on the Greenline and the Woodrow Wilson Bridge.
Mr. Kirby agreed.

Ms. Barlow suggested the timeline in the scope needed a legend for clarification.

Mr. Kirby explained the timeline.

Mr. Versoza asked if the process described in the scope was going to be the way the region prioritizes projects in the future.

Mr. Kirby said this exercise will provide a better sense of what priorities should be. He said that the selection of projects that go into the CLRP is largely a reflection of who has control of funding, and that fact would be unlikely to change. He added that future federal legislation might provide direct funding for MPOs.

Mr. Versoza asked if the priorities plan would change priorities in the CLRP.

Mr. Kirby said it could influence prioritization in the CLRP.

Mr. Erenrich said he believed the priorities plan would not necessarily indicate that local and state priorities should be changed. Rather the plan will provide a new level of regional consideration that should be taken into account in selecting priorities.

Mr. Srikanth said the priorities plan would not be prescriptive and would not be a litmus test. He said the priorities will not determine what goes into the CLRP. It will only be advisory.

Mr. Verzosa noted that there still has not been a clear definition of what is “regionally significant” and therefore should be included in the priorities plan.

Mr. Kirby said the question of what is “regional” will be largely a function of how much regional measures could be moved in the project or program when implemented.

Mr. Verzosa said that it needs to be clear what is “regional” and what is not.

Mr. Kellogg emphasized that we are building on quite a strong base. He noted that regional transit moves more than one million riders a day.

Mr. Erenrich said that not everything included in the priorities plan needs to be huge. As an example, he spoke about bus stop improvements, which would be small but would have a disproportionately large impact.

Mr. Owolabi asked if the CAC was in agreement with the approach taken in Mr. Kirby’s draft scope.

Mr. Kirby said that at the February 16 task force meeting, the members of the CAC who sit on the task force were largely in agreement with the approach taken.

9. Briefing on Schedule for the FY 2012 Transportation/Land Use Connection (TLC) Program

Ms. Crawford spoke to a memorandum and provided a brief overview of the TPB’s Transportation/Land-Use Connections (TLC) Program. She outlined the schedule for the FY 2012 project solicitation for the TLC technical assistance program: the project solicitation opened on March 1; abstracts are due March 31; and applications are due May 18. She said the abstract process is new for FY 2012, and was added to provide for an opportunity for applicants to receive feedback on potential project concepts. She said it is not mandatory. She said all application materials and information may be found on the TLC website: www.mwcog.org/tlc. She said a total of \$350,000 is available for technical assistance - \$220,000 from the UPWP for regional projects and \$130,000 from MDOT’s technical assistance account for projects in Maryland focusing on transit-oriented development.

Ms. Erickson clarified that MDOT will provide between \$130,000 - \$150,000, but that amount has not been finalized yet. She said it would be no less than \$130,000.

Ms. Crawford described the Regional Peer Exchange Network, another new component of the TLC Program for FY 2012. She said the network will provide stakeholders with the opportunity to share information about TLC concepts and will provide an environment to showcase completed TLC technical assistance projects. She said the kickoff event for

the network is the Regional Peer Exchange Forum, which will be held on September 16, 2011. She said the purpose of the event will be to generate interest in additional network exchange opportunities and to gather ideas of topics on which stakeholders would like to learn more.

Mr. Erenrich confirmed that the due date for applications is May 18, 2011.

Mr. Mokhtari confirmed that abstracts are due earlier.

Ms. Crawford said that the optional abstract is due March 31, 2011, and that applications are due May 18, 2011.

10. Update on the TPB Regional Priority Bus Project Grant under the Transportation Investments Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) Program

Mr. Randall reviewed a PowerPoint presentation with an update on the TIGER Bus Priority project. The first payment for work under the project has been made, to PRTC. Further meetings will be held on March 9 by project owners, to which other involved agencies were invited. Mr. Randall then reviewed the different activities of the TIGER project with a summary presentation. Following the presentation, Ms. Barlow of the FTA asked State DOTs to expedite STIP approval for the TIGER project elements that were awaiting the recently made air quality conformity determination.

11. Other Business

None.

12. Adjourn