

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD

Technical Committee Minutes

1. Welcome and Approval of Minutes from the November 6, 2009 Technical Committee Meeting

Minutes were approved as written.

2. Briefing on an Amendment to the FY 2010 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) to Revise the Budget and Certain Work Tasks

Mr. Kirby distributed a PowerPoint presentation on the amendment to the FY 2010 UPWP to revise the budget to reflect funding increases and modify certain work tasks for the last half of the fiscal year. He said that this presentation had been updated since it was presented to the Committee in November and that he will use it to brief the TPB on December 16 when it will be asked to approve the amendment. He briefed the Committee from the twelve slide presentation and asked for suggestions for the TPB presentation.

Chairman Erenrich suggested that slide 3 on the changes to the budget could be improved with a graph showing historical budget levels to convey how the proposed increase is in line with past levels. Mr. Kirby said that the annual budget level has several components which is complicated to show, but he would try to develop something to get across this point.

Chairman Erenrich asked whether the jurisdictions will be able to obtain the new time of day highway speed data in the clearinghouse that are described on slide 10.

Mr. Griffiths said that only summarized data will be available for some interstates and a few major arterials because it will be provided under an I-95 Coalition contact with a private firm. Mr. Meese commented that the data will have restrictions and that obtaining additional new data for other roads will be expensive. He said that the data is very interesting and will be quite useful for the congestion management process.

Mr. Weissberg commented on the proposed changes in Regional Studies as shown on slide 8 and said he would like to see an analysis of a "region

undivided” scenario. Mr. Kirby said that the “CLRP Aspirations” Scenario includes input from the East West Divide scenario that was analyzed in the past.

Mr. Biesiadny suggested that slide 3 would be clearer if it was just a simple table. He also asked if some additional funds could be used to accelerate the implementation of the new 2.3 version of the regional travel demand model which many jurisdictions need as soon as possible.

Mr. Milone explained that much of the delay is due to the large number of new zones and the need to get the travel networks coded correctly for them. He said that more funding would not really make this process go more quickly.

Mr. Kirby said that the Committee would be briefed on the status of the travel model and networks at the January meeting. Mr. Kirby distributed a copy of letter from the TPB to the COG executive director that transmitted the TPB comments at its November 18 meeting on the COG Greater Washington 2050 report. He reviewed the major points in the letter.

3. Briefing on a Draft TPB Letter of Support for the Norfolk Southern Crescent Corridor Intermodal Freight Project

Ms. Foster reviewed how the Norfolk Southern Crescent Corridor Intermodal Freight Project was brought to the attention of the TPB subcommittees. Norfolk Southern staff first made a presentation to the Freight Subcommittee on September 10, 2009. Next, TPB received a letter from Norfolk Southern (dated October 2, 2009) seeking support for the Crescent Corridor Intermodal Freight Project. Norfolk Southern staff briefed the Technical Committee on the Crescent Corridor Intermodal Freight Project at its November 6, 2009 meeting. Mr. Smith provided some additional comment on the benefits of the Project before Technical Committee members made comments on a draft letter of support. Mr. Smith spoke to Norfolk Southern’s vision of intermodalism. He noted that seven Governors support the project and several congress members.

Mr. Biesiadny commented on the second paragraph of the Draft letter. He suggested a change in the phrase “domestic container or trailer-to-rail

diversions” to “and” instead of “or.” He also recommended more emphasis on the “local impact” in the last bullet.

Ms. Hoeffner noted potential future expansion of VRE service on the mainline to Manassas and Gainesville-Haymarket. He said that VRE completed an alternative analysis for extension on the B-line in May 2009 and VRE’s next phase of environmental analysis and preliminary engineering will take place in 2010.

Mr. Biesiadny added that the Norfolk Southern letter of support should be similar to the CSX Transportation letter of support.

4. Briefing on an Update of the Coordinated Human Service Transportation Plan for the National Capital Region

Ms. Newman presented the Update to the Coordinated Human Service Transportation Plan. The Plan was updated by the Human Service Transportation Coordination Task Force to reflect the lessons learned through three solicitations. The update focused on unmet transportation needs, strategies for improving service and coordination, and recommended projects.

Chairman Erenrich asked about the mandatory pre-application conference dates. He suggested including the specific dates for the solicitation in the presentation to the board. Mr. John Thomas noted that Frederick County was not represented on Figure 5 in Section 4 of the Plan, which illustrates the general purpose paratransit systems by jurisdiction.

Mr. Owolabi inquired about demographic information on the individuals served by these projects and their locations. Ms. Newman responded that that level of detail is not collected from the grantees. Ms. Erickson noted that the schedule for approving the projects does not reflect the TIP approval schedule. Ms. Klancher responded that the federal money is included in the TIP. Mr. Biesiadny noted that the Ombudsman project is similar to the transportation clearinghouse that was recently funded, and suggested establishing a connection between the two projects.

5. Briefing on Priority Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects Recommended for the FY 2011-2016 TIP

Mr. Farrell spoke to a PowerPoint on the top priority unfunded bicycle and pedestrian projects in the Washington region, as adopted by the bicycle and pedestrian subcommittee at its November meeting.

Ms. Erikson asked if a column could be added to the table showing the lead agency for each project. A lead agency listing would be useful for finding the project in the TIP.

Chairman Erenrich suggested that the funding status column could be abbreviated to make room for a lead agency column. He also wanted to know if the TPB would adopt this list of projects and send it out to the members. Mr. Kirby replied that the TPB would not adopt the list; it will be an information item. Chairman Erenrich asked if there had been a public review process for getting projects on this list. Mr. Farrell replied that agency staff had been asked to take the list to their advisory boards.

Chairman Erenrich asked how identifying these projects as priorities might affect projects that are currently funded. Mr. Farrell replied that this list was intended to identify projects which should be funded if money becomes available. The overall cost of all these projects is a little over 1% of what is being spent on highway and bridge construction.

Ms. Erikson noted that funds other than highway funds are often used to build bicycle or pedestrian facilities.

Chairman Erenrich asked if these projects are designed and ready to be built – it would make them eligible for TIGER grant funding. Mr. Farrell replied that some were, and some were not. Although \$12 million have already been spent on these projects, some have had significant construction, while others have had no design work done.

Mr. Meese noted that the bicycle and pedestrian plan has a longer list of mostly unfunded projects, and is referenced in the Region Forward 2050 report. Mr. Farrell added that the project list is being updated. “Partially funded”

projects from that list would be a good proxy for projects that are ready to go, since partial funding is often for design.

Mr. Biesadny suggested that some of the slides in the presentation be re-ordered. Slide 5 should be slide 2, and the selection criteria slide should go before the list of projects. Mr. Kirby suggested cutting slide 6.

Mr. Owolabi asked if a cost-benefit analysis could be performed the projects in the list, to see if cost exceeds benefits. Mr. Kirby suggested that a qualitative analysis on the individual projects would be more useful. The summary slide should mention connectivity as a top benefit.

Ms. Blanchard suggested adding a column to the table describing the status of the right of way. Availability of right of way affects the speed of implementation, and eligibility for short term funding. Mr. Farrell replied that right of way status is often complicated, and might be difficult to reduce to a yes/no type of answer that would fit in the table. Mr. Meese suggested that since we require that a project be capable of being completed within six years, that there is generally right of way availability.

Mr. Smith had a correction to the Loudoun County project, which he would have e-mailed to Mr. Farrell.

Mr. Griffiths commented that the major benefit of these projects would be improving connectivity.

6. Update on the Analysis of the “CLRP Aspirations” Scenario

Mr. Eichler presented an update on the CLRP Aspirations Scenario to the committee, mostly reviewing the history of the scenario’s development. He presented some additional information, including summaries of the extent of the land use shifts and summary statistics of the transit and priced highway networks.

Mr. Holloman inquired as to the person capacity of the proposed transit system, asking whether it would be equivalent to that of a heavy-rail system. Mr. Eichler replied that the new BRT system is not capacity constrained in the model and therefore has the same capacity as a heavy rail system.

Chairman Erenrich noted three things. First, he suggested that all descriptions of the span of service of the system should describe an 18-hour day. Secondly, he expressed interest in seeing the impacts on regional mobility: specifically, the change number of jobs and households available within 45 minutes by transit. Finally, he requested that the number of bus garages and service facilities be calculated and included in the costs of the transit network, noting that the region has little excess capacity for bus storage and maintenance.

Mr. Weissberg asked whether the scenario included WMATA's Priority Corridor Network (PCN). Mr. Eichler replied that the PCN is being evaluated under a different study currently being finalized. He stated that integration of the scenario with the PCN improvements could be done at a later date, but such work might be time-prohibitive, since the PCN evaluation and the scenario study use different base networks. Mr. Miller added that the scenario study assumed some of the PCN network as runningway for the scenario BRT.

Mr. Owolabi asked whether there would be any effort to subdivide large transportation analysis zones (TAZs) for a finer grained analysis. Mr. Eichler replied the zones could not be split, but that efforts were being made to ensure that changes in land use patterns would be picked up by the model.

Mr. Verzosa asked about the HOV lane conversions listed on one of the slides. Mr. Eichler replied that all HOV lanes in the region would be converted to price lanes.

Mr. Malouff stated that over the past months, Arlington had worked with DTP staff to raise the density targets in many Arlington zones, and those increases were not reflected on one of the slides. Ms. Bansal responded that their requests were added to the final land use shifts, but that the map had not been updated to reflect the change. He also asked about the slide portraying the TPB TIGER grant application transit routes, noting that some of the routes on the slide had not made it into the final version of the grant application. Mr. Eichler replied that this slide as well needed to be updated.

7. Briefing on Draft Analysis Results of the "What Would It Take" Scenario

Ms. Bansal and Mr. Sivasailam presented TPB staff work to date on greenhouse gas emissions reduction strategy analysis and the What Would it

Take Scenario. Ms. Bansal presented the analytical framework of the scenario, which begins with COG climate change goals and studies various transportation strategies to determine what it would take to meet those goals. She presented staff work on setting the emissions baseline, identifying the many strategies to be analyzed, and a brief overview of how strategies would be analyzed. Mr. Sivasailam presented preliminary technical results for individual strategy analysis, including an overview of all measures and a more detailed discussion of a few sample measures. Ms. Bansal concluded by going over the outline for the final results and the expected products to be presented in January for the scenario.

Committee members asked specific questions regarding parts of the analysis, including an analysis of alternative fuel use under a high gas price scenario. Staff clarified that this analysis also assumed a high VMT reduction resulting from high prices. Staff also made the point that all of the measures presented were not necessarily additive, since grouping some particular strategies would result in double-counting. The Committee also stated the desire to have reductions stated in terms of fuel savings. There was also discussion regarding a bar chart showing all of the measures analyzed to date and their reduction potential, which the Committee stated was problematic and should be removed from the presentation.

8. Briefing on the Establishment of the Virginia Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (VAMPO)

Mr. Austin distributed a proposed draft TPB resolution that would ask the TPB to endorse the concept of formation of a Virginia Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (VAMPO). He stated that the resolution recognized the existence and role of the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA) and indicated that the TPB would be represented by Northern Virginia TPB members. The resolution could be presented to the TPB for their consideration in January 2010.

He explained that the organizational structure and bylaws of VAMPO had not been established. The Organizational Committee was seeking comments during the month of December and intended to have a draft set of bylaws by the end of January 2010.

Mr. Biesiadny said that this issue had been discussed at the last NVTA meeting. He said the NVTA was interested in a role in VAMPO and that the language in the resolution was consistent with its intentions.

9. Briefing on the TPB/FHWA Workshop Entitled: Linking Conservation and Transportation Planning in the National Capital Region

Ms. Klancher gave a brief overview of the November 9 workshop “Linking Conservation and Transportation Planning” co-hosted by the TPB and FHWA. The workshop was a follow-up to the March 2008 workshop the TPB hosted to explore how the TPB could best respond to the planning regulations that require MPOs to 1) consult with natural resource agencies on the development of the long-range plan and 2) include a discussion of potential mitigation activities in the long-range plan.

The focus of the November workshop was on advance mitigation which is doing comprehensive mitigation rather than small projects; a good example is mitigation banking. About 40 people attended the workshop from VA, MD and DC and there was a good balance of environmental resource agency and transportation agency representatives. Ms. Klancher handed out the list of next steps that were developed at the November 9 workshop and asked for feedback by December 18. Ms. Erickson commented that even though many people from MD attended the workshop, they realized that more people needed to be there since so many staff people are involved in the process.

10. Review of Draft Brochure on the 2009 CLRP and FY 2011 -2015 TIP

Mr. Hodgson presented the draft brochure of the 2009 CLRP and FY 2010-2015 TIP for Committee review. He explained that previously the CLRP and TIP brochure were produced separately, but that this year they were being combined into one brochure. Also, he noted that the brochure included the performance analysis for the CLRP, which was presented to the Committee at its November meeting. Comments on the draft brochure were to be submitted by December 11, 2009, after which the brochure will be finalized and printed for distribution at the January TPB meeting.

Mr. Kirby stated that the graph showing TIP funding levels by year could be misleading, in that it shows a steep decline in funding for the outyears.

Mr. Hodgson responded that explanatory text can accompany the graph to explain the funding levels in the TIP. Mr. Kirby also thought it might be good to highlight the trend that VMT per capita is now forecast to hold steady and even decline over the planning horizon.

Mr. Biesiadny asked if there were any significant differences between the travel demand forecasts for last year as compared to this year. Mr. Hodgson explained that the differences were minor and that changes to the inputs to the model made it difficult to make any direct comparison.

11. Status report on Activities of the Motor Vehicle Emissions Simulation Model (MOVES) Task Force

Delayed to January.

12. Other Business

Mr. Kirby complimented Chairman Erenrich on the past year's work and announced that Mr. Verzosa from the City of Fairfax would be the 2010 Chairman of the Technical Committee.

13. Adjourn