

Transportation Planning Update

April 2004

LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

Dear Reader,

Welcome to our first joint issue of the Transportation Planning Update! In the past, the FHWA Office of Planning, Environment and Right of Way and the Resource Center have each produced newsletters with the latest planning information. This time we are joining forces to give you an update of our major transportation planning activities.

Enjoy!

Sincerely,

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What's New for FHWA's Vital Few?

The Vital Few priorities are the focus areas that show the biggest performance gaps in the transportation system and present opportunities for FHWA to make the greatest difference. We are committed to being successful in these focus areas. This section features the activities currently being undertaken in FHWA's Vital Few focus areas:

- Safety
- Congestion Mitigation
- Environmental Stewardship and Streamlining

SAFETY

The FHWA Office of Planning, Office of Safety and Office of Interstate and Border Planning and the Resource Centers are working together to support the Safety focus area through FHWA's Safety Conscious Planning (SCP) efforts.

Safety Conscious Planning Video/Web Simulcast

The Office of Interstate and Border Planning sponsored a satellite-based videoconference and web cast presentation on Safety Conscious Planning on March 10, 2004 at the Center for Transportation and the Environment in Raleigh, North Carolina. Panelists included members from FHWA, State DOTs, MPOs and academia. The topics discussed were: an introduction to SCP, problem statement, solutions, tools and strategies, how to get started, data and partnerships, resources and strategies for locals and a call to get involved. The presentation was recorded and will be available on videocassette and on the CTE website. For more information contact **Tere Franceschi, FHWA, at (202) 366-6797**.

New Safety Conscious Planning Course

The National Highway Institute (NHI) and the National Transit Institute (NTI) are offering a new two-day course, Safety Conscious Planning. This course is part of the Transportation Planning Capacity Building and the FHWA Safety Conscious Planning programs. This training program is intended for transportation planning and safety professionals representing MPOs, state DOTs, transit agencies, FTA, FHWA, local planning organizations, Motor Carrier Safety offices, state police, law enforcement, State Highway Safety Specialists, representatives from Governors' Highway Safety, infrastructure programs and Public Utility Commissions, and consultants. For more information see <http://ntionline.com/>.

CONGESTION MITIGATION

The FHWA Office of Planning and Office of Operations jointly support the Congestion Mitigation focus area through a variety of different activities. You will find the following highlighted activities of primary interest.

“Talking Freight” Net-Conference Seminar Series

FHWA is hosting the monthly "Talking Freight" net-conferences seminars via telephone and internet on the 3rd Wednesday of every month. The Talking Freight Seminars are free, and are part of a broader Freight Professional Development (FPD) Program initiative aimed at providing technical assistance, tools, and information to help the freight and planning workforce meet the transportation challenges of tomorrow. To register for the Talking Freight seminars, please visit <http://talkingfreight.webex.com/talkingfreight/onstage/mainframe.php?Rnd4228=0.4020584813001899>.

Integrating Freight in the Transportation Planning Course

FHWA is offering a new two-day course, Integrating Freight in the Transportation Planning Process. This course is part of FHWA's Transportation Planning Capacity Building and Freight Professional Development programs. The course (139001-A) is offered through the National Highway Institute (NHI). The first 12 course offerings are free and the next 12 courses are half price to participants. Course offerings are on a first-come, first-served basis beginning in early April 2004. For the course description, and more information about hosting a NHI course, please visit <http://www.nhi.fhwa.dot.gov/coursedesc.asp?coursenum=1129>.

Freight Professional Development (FPD) Program Website

The new FPD website provides the latest information on freight transportation. Designed to build the knowledge base of freight transportation and planning professionals, the website includes information on training, university-based freight and logistics programs, technical assistance tools (e.g. freight data and analysis, economic benefit-cost), and a resource library. Please visit the FPD website at www.ops.fhwa.dot.gov/freight/fpd.

Freight Planning Peer Exchange Listserv

FHWA has developed the Freight Planning (FP) Listserv. About 500 public and private sector transportation professionals with interest and expertise in freight planning participate. The FP Listserv is an efficient and effective approach to share/seek information with/from colleagues on freight issues. You can sign-up for the FP Listserv <http://listserv.utk.edu/archives/fhwafp.html>, while you are there, check out some of the discussions and join in.

Linking Planning and Operations: Where We Are and Where We Need to Go

FHWA is developing a new Reference Guide on linking planning and operations. The guide will present specific activities that have helped planners and operators gain a better understanding of each other's roles and coordinate their work toward development of more efficient systems. FHWA is now in the process of documenting such strategies by interviewing State DOTs and MPOs that have succeeded with elements of planning and operations coordination. The guide will be organized around the following activities and programs where coordination between planning and operations has been demonstrated:

- Congestion Management Systems
- Regional ITS Architecture
- Institutional Arrangements
- Performance Management
- Data (sharing, archiving, awareness, etc.)
- Resource Sharing/Funding
- Project Implementation

The guide will present specific strategies in each of these areas along with examples and case studies. In addition, the guide will provide a self-assessment to help users focus their attention on the most productive solutions for their particular organization. The Reference Guide will be available by September 2004. For more information contact, **Robin Mayhew, FHWA, at (202) 366-1454 or Wayne Berman, FHWA, at 202-366-4069.**

“Crossing Boundaries,” is a new CD from FHWA and Public Technologies, Inc. that covers the role of regional operations in transportation planning. It can be downloaded from the following website: www.pti.org/toforum.asp. Manuals on developing public private partnerships and congestion relief for arterials are also available from the website.

“Effective Congestion Management Systems” Workshops

FHWA's Resource Center has been conducting refresher workshops on “Implementing Effective Congestion Management Systems” for metropolitan areas around the country. Sessions are scheduled for the following dates and locations:

- Sacramento, CA April 21-22, 2004
- San Luis Obispo June 29-30, 2004

There will be future sessions scheduled in the states of Michigan and Washington in July 2004. For more information or to schedule a workshop, **contact Ben Williams, FHWA Resource Center, at (404) 562-3671.**

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP & STREAMLINING

New NTI/NHI Course on Linking Planning and NEPA

This course is made up of two sessions. The Executive Seminar (4 hours) is intended for key decision makers and directors who determine the way that planning and the NEPA process are used to make decisions at individual transportation agencies and resource agencies. The staff course (3 days) is intended for technical staff members of various transportation and resource agencies that work together on the NEPA process: FHWA, FTA, state departments of transportation (DOTs), metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs), transit agencies, and state/county/local planning agencies, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Army Corps of Engineers, the Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service, US Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, tribes, State Historic Preservation Office, state departments of environmental resources, state and local air quality agencies and others. For more information or to find out when a course is being offered check out:

<http://www.ntionline.com/CourseInfo.asp?CourseNumber=FP212>

Planning Excellence Awards

FHWA and FTA Receives Over 200 Applications for New Planning Excellence Awards

FHWA and The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) have established FHWA/FTA Transportation Planning Excellence Awards. The awards are co-sponsored by the American Planning Association (APA).

These awards will recognize outstanding initiatives across the country to develop, plan, and implement innovative transportation planning practices. Awards may be given in ten categories: Transportation and Land Use Integration; Transportation Planning Integration With Other Planning and Engineering Activities; "Planning It Safe": Safety Conscious Planning; Homeland and Personal Security; Tribal Transportation Planning; Transportation Planning and Environment; Technology Applications; Planning Leadership; Public Involvement; Education; and Outreach; and Academic/Student Projects. Over 200 applications for 2004 were submitted. Awardees will be announced in July 2004 at the TRB Mid Summer Meeting. For additional information, please contact **Felicia Young, FHWA, at (202) 366-1263** or **Effie Stallsmith, FTA, at (202) 366-5653**.

Planning Capacity Building

The mission of the Transportation Planning Capacity Building (TPCB) Program is to support effective transportation planning in state, metropolitan, rural, and tribal settings. The TPCB Program provides technical assistance, peer networking, training, and other methods of support. The TPCB Program is a cooperative effort between FHWA and FTA. See www.planning.dot.gov for more information.

Planning Peer Programs: An Effective Technical Assistance Tool

The TPCB Peer Program recognizes, supports, and promotes effective transportation planning practices nationwide. The Peer Program assistance may include one on one site visits, roundtables, workshops and topic-specific forums arranged as part of existing meetings and conferences. Events are designed to suit the specific needs of a region, State or locality. Topics are selected at the applicant's request and based upon demonstrated need. For more information visit the TPCB website at <http://www.planning.dot.gov/peer.asp> or contact your local FHWA Division Office to apply.

A New Training Program for state transportation commissioners and MPO and public transportation Board Members is under development. This workshop will cover the metropolitan transportation planning processes and how transportation agency board members and transportation commissioners make decisions within it. The training will be available upon request of local and state transportation agencies. For more information, contact **Sherry Ways, FHWA, at (202) 366-1587**.

NTI/NHI Course: Financial Planning in Transportation

This three day training program is intended for the planning staffs and financial analysts of transit operators, MPO's, and other governmental agencies (state DOT's, cities and counties) who assist in the preparation of long-range transportation plans and transportation improvement programs and are involved with direct funding of transportation, or provide financial assistance to transit operators. This course will educate professionals on realistic resource and cost projection methodologies and apply improved forecasting techniques in state and local transportation plans. It is also intended for all those involved in the development and/or review of fiscal constraint documentation. See <http://www.ntionline.com> for more information.

NHI Course: Introduction to Statewide Transportation Planning

This course has been recently updated and jointly developed by both NHI and NTI. Designed as an instructor-led, two-day presentation, the overall course objective is to present the necessary knowledge and skills for participants to constructively participate in the statewide transportation planning process. More information on the course may be found at <http://nhi.fhwa.dot.gov>.

“**Executive Overview of the Metropolitan Transportation Planning**” is an 11-minute video summary of the metropolitan transportation planning process. The video is intended to educate decision makers, transportation professionals and the general public about the transportation planning process. The video is free and is available in both VHS and DVD format. For more information, contact **David Kuehn, FHWA, at (202) 366-6072**.

A Resource Center Workshop on Community Impact Assessment (CIA) is under development by the North Carolina’s Center for Transportation & Environment. The 2.5-day course is scheduled to be completed later this year. CTE is looking for examples of everyday projects that have used CIA. Contact **Leigh Lane at lblane@unity.ncsu.edu or (919)-515-8041**.

Travel Model Improvement Program

The Travel Model Improvement Program (TMIP) is a multi agency effort that includes FHWA, FTA, and USDOT Office of the Secretary, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the Department of Energy (DOE). The program is designed to help planning agencies improve their technical analysis capabilities and to improve the state of the practice of travel modeling. TMIP takes a three-pronged approach to improving travel modeling and planning analysis nationally. For more information on TMIP services and activities please visit our website at: <http://tmip.fhwa.dot.gov/> or contact **Michael Culp, FHWA at michael.culp@fhwa.dot.gov**

Micro Simulation Guide

FHWA is publishing a new report entitled “Guidelines for Applying Traffic Micro simulation Modeling Software”. It will aid in the consistent and reproducible application of micro simulation models, and will further support the credibility of today and tomorrow’s modeling tools. For more information contact **Grant Zammit, FHWA Resource Center, at (404) 562-3575**.

GIS Planning Resources

New GIS/ NHI Spatial Data Course

Applying Spatial Data Technologies to Transportation (NHI Course #151039A) is a two-day course that provides an overview of the different spatial data technologies. These include: GIS, remote sensing, and global positioning systems (GPS). The course also describes how these technologies may be applied to transportation decision-making, and it emphasizes the importance of working with others within an organization and outside to make the use of these spatial data technologies successful. More information on the course may be found at <http://nhi.fhwa.dot.gov>

GIS in Transportation Website

The *GIS in Transportation* website highlights innovative transportation-related applications of GIS across the country. *GIS in Transportation* is home to detailed descriptions of featured GIS applications and a searchable database of GIS applications. It also provides links to upcoming events, GIS data sources, current publications, and FHWA contacts. The *GIS in Transportation* website serves as a portal to GIS activities within FHWA and its partners and customers. (This website is really outstanding. Please take a look at it, and encourage our partners to use it.) Please direct any questions about the NHI course and feedback on the *GIS in Transportation* website to **Mark Sarmiento, FHWA, at (202) 366-4828 or mark.sarmiento@fhwa.dot.gov**.

Spearheaded by the FHWA Office of Interstate & Border Planning, the website is a constant work-in-progress. The website is located at <http://www.gis.fhwa.dot.gov/>.

Scenario Planning

Scenario Planning Roundtable

The Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration sponsored a Scenario Planning Roundtable last fall in Washington, DC. The purpose of this meeting was to provide a forum to discuss the future forces that will affect our society; identify the scenario planning tools and resources that are currently available; and identify future research opportunities to promote the increased use of scenario planning in the transportation industry. The roundtable highlighted strategies for involving the public, elected officials and other stakeholders in the scenario planning process and for coalescing public support around a particular vision/scenario for the future. A report summarizing the results of this meeting will be available by the spring of 2004. In addition, FHWA will be initiating three scenario-planning projects this year. Three states: Hawaii, New York and Rhode Island will be working with their MPOs and State DOTs to introduce the concept of scenario planning as an alternative method for decision-making. A report of their efforts will be available at

www.planning.dot.gov in Fall 2004. For additional information, contact **Felicia Young, FHWA, at (202) 366-1263** or **Sherry Ways, FHWA, at (202) 366-1587**.

Land Use & Transportation

Integrating Land Use and Transportation: Domestic Scan Tours

To more closely examine local efforts to integrate transportation and land use policies, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) is sponsoring a program of domestic scan tours. Initiated in the fall of 2002, the domestic scan tours are designed to obtain, highlight, and share successful processes, methodologies, and practices concerning the integration of local and regional transportation and land use planning.

The second scan tour took place in the Fall of 2003 and emphasized the redesign, redevelopment, and retrofitting of roadway corridors to include new design and planning elements intended to enhance the livability of each community. The scan team visited communities in three southeastern states to explore:

- o Downtown revitalization projects in Lake Worth, Delray Beach, and Fort Pierce, Florida;
- o South End and First Ward redevelopment projects and other city-wide programs in Charlotte, North Carolina; and
- o The 21st Century Waterfront Redevelopment Initiative in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

The final report on the first domestic scan conducted in 2002 and the executive summary report for the second domestic scan are available on the TCPB website (www.planning.dot.gov). A final report on the second domestic scan will be available in hardcopy and online in Spring 2004. For more information, contact **Robin Smith, FHWA** (Robin.Smith@fhwa.dot.gov) or **Felicia Young, FHWA** (Felicia.Young@fhwa.dot.gov).

Transportation Conformity News

The Transportation Conformity Team is managing several efforts to share conformity practices and research aspects of the conformity process. Most recently, the Team finished a domestic scan that identified good practices among a select number of areas in meeting the latest planning assumptions requirement of the transportation conformity process. FHWA's Transportation Conformity Team is currently involved in several activities. Significantly, we are working closely with EPA on amendments to the Transportation Conformity Rule to address the implementation of the 8-hour ozone and PM-2.5 air quality standards. The notice of proposed rulemaking, published on November 5, 2003 in the Federal Register, provided several options regarding

conformity tests for the new standards, as well as other proposed revisions to the process. Many comments were received, and FHWA, together with FTA, is working with EPA to address those comments and finalize changes to the Rule by the time 8-hour ozone nonattainment areas are designated in April of this year. In addition, we are working with EPA to finalize separate revisions to the Conformity Rule, that were proposed on June 30, 2003, to address the March 1999 Court Decision.

For further information on transportation conformity, please visit the website at:

<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/conform.htm> or contact **Cecilia Ho, FHWA, at (202) 366-9862** or cecilia.ho@fhwa.dot.gov or **Gary Jensen, FHWA, (202) 366-2048** or gary.jensen@fhwa.dot.gov.

Census Transportation Planning Package

Census Transportation Planning Package (CTPP)

The Census Bureau will complete the initial distribution of the CTPP Part 2 (Place of Work) tabulations to State DOTs and MPOs before the end of February 2004. Following that, finalized copies of Part 1 (Place of Residence) will be distributed, including copies to the general public. Finally, Part 3 (Flow between Home and Work) will be released, again with an initial distribution to the State DOTs and MPOs in March and April. The Bureau of Transportation Statistics at <http://www.transtats.bts.gov/> will handle public distribution of the CTPP 2000, similar to the 1990 CTPP

For more complete information on CTPP check out both the USDOT webpage: <http://www.dot.gov/ctpp> and the TRB Census Subcommittee webpage: <http://www.trbcensus.com>

For more information, please contact **Ed Christopher, FHWA Resource Center at 708-283-3534**, or **Elaine Murakami, FHWA Office of Planning at 206-220-4460**.

Transit Planning News

United We Ride Initiative

On Tuesday, February 24, 2004, President Bush issued Executive Order 13330 on Human Service Transportation Coordination in order to "enhance access to transportation to improve mobility, employment opportunities, and access to community services for persons who are transportation-disadvantaged." The order establishes the Interagency Transportation Coordination Council on Access and Mobility within the Department of Transportation. Council membership will consist of the Secretaries of Transportation, Health and Human Services, Education, Labor, Veterans Affairs, Agriculture, Housing and Urban Development, and

the Interior, the Attorney General, and the Commissioner of Social Security. The Department of Transportation, FTA, with its partners, are launching *United We Ride* –a new five part initiative—to breakdown the barriers between transit programs and human service agency transportation services.

For more information see:

http://www.fta.dot.gov/CCAM/United_We_Ride.html or

Bryna Helfer, FTA at Bryna.Helfer@fta.dot.gov

FHWA's National Planning Services

In May 2003, FHWA restructured its four, geographic based Resource Centers, which were focused on delivering training and technical assistance and deploying technologies in a particular geographic region. As part of the reorganization, eleven national technical teams were created which deliver services and products on a national basis. Planning is one of these teams.

The Planning Team operates on a virtual basis with members located in one of four locations (Baltimore, Atlanta, Olympia Fields and San Francisco) but available to meet customer needs anywhere in the country. Team members and locations are: Brian Betlyon (Baltimore); Ed Christopher (Olympia Fields); Bob Radics (Atlanta); Fawn Thompson (Atlanta); Jim Thorne (Olympia Fields); Ben Williams (Atlanta); and Lisa Randall (San Francisco).

In support of FHWA national objectives, and in coordination with the Office of Planning Environment and Realty, Resource Center Planning Team members can provide expert assistance and training and promote new technologies to FHWA Division Offices, State DOTs and MPOs and other agencies on a range of planning issues, including:

- Border Planning
- Census and Transportation Planning Data
- Congestion Management Systems
- Environmental Justice and Title VI
- Freight Planning
- GIS and Transportation Planning
- Land Use and Transportation Planning
- Linking Planning and NEPA
- Operations and Planning
- Safety Conscious Planning
- Planning Fundamentals (including metropolitan and statewide plans, programs & processes)
- Scenario Planning
- Travel Demand Modeling

In many of these areas, we have ready-to-go briefings and courses that can be tailored to meet your needs.

For additional information on how the Resource Center Planning Technical Service Team can assist you, please contact **Lisa Randall, Team Leader, FHWA Resource Center, at (415) 744-2649.**

Calendar of Events

Please review the following calendars for upcoming transportation events:

FHWA Planning Environment and Realty Calendar

<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/hep/calendar.htm>

FHWA Resource Center Calendar

<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/resourcecenter/calendar.cfm>