

Transportation Planning Update

LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

August 2004

Dear Reader,

Welcome to our second 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. We have joined forces to give you an update of both of our major transportation planning activities.

This issue primarily focuses on the latest activities in our top priority transportation-planning areas. Enjoy!

Sincerely,

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 Co-Editor

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2004 Planning Excellence Awards

On Sunday July 25, 2004, the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration presented the 2004 Transportation Planning Excellence Awards (TPEA) in Park City, Utah. The awards are co-sponsored by the American Planning Association. The purpose of the awards program is to promote outstanding initiatives across the country that develop, plan, and implement innovative transportation planning practices. Over 220 nominations were submitted for 10 categories. Awards were presented for projects in: Phoenix, Arizona; Los Angeles, Oakland, and Sacramento, California; St. Petersburg, Florida; Atlanta, Georgia; Hanalei, Hawaii; State of and Detroit, Michigan; Kansas City, Missouri; Poughkeepsie, New York; Lincoln City, Oregon; and Houston, Texas. More details on the awards can be found at <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/tpea04/index.htm>

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. These areas are:

- Safety
- Congestion Mitigation
- Environmental Stewardship and Streamlining

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP & STREAMLINING

FHWA Environmental Conference

Over 265 participants gathered in Old Town Alexandria, Virginia from June 28-30 for the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Environmental Conference. Representation from FHWA Federal Lands Highway Division was also in attendance. Cindy Burbank, Associate Administrator of the Office of Planning, Environment, and Realty, convened one of the first sessions recommending three focus areas to complement the Vital Few Goals: 1) work

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together to improve the quality of documentation and process; 2) linking planning and NEPA is key; and, 3) continue the timeliness of the NEPA process. Presentations offered updates and new information about topics, such as Air Quality, Streamlining, Historic Preservation, Section 4(f), Legal Sufficiency issues, and Tribal Issues. In addition, conference participants explored applications for Geographic Information Systems; brainstormed training needs at the Environmental Competency Building Program workshop; witnessed Critter Crossing innovations; previewed the Negotiated Timeframe Wizard, a new web-based project management tool, along with other interactive offerings; and, shared effective practices. For more information, contact **Don Cote, FHWA Office of Project Development and Environmental Review**, at 415-744-2650 or Don.Cote@fhwa.dot.gov or check out their website at <http://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/conference/>.

CONGESTION MITIGATION

Managing Travel for Planned Special Events Handbook

The FHWA is pleased to announce the availability of the *Managing Travel for Planned Special Events Handbook* and supporting materials. This handbook emphasizes the importance and benefits of planning how best to manage travel for planned special events to improve travel safety, mobility and travel time reliability across all surface transportation modes and roadway facilities. A primer, brochure, fact sheet and technical presentation were developed to facilitate conveying key messages and concepts contained in the handbook. **These materials can be accessed on the FHWA Planned Special Events Traffic Management Program web page at http://www.ops.fhwa.dot.gov/program_areas/sp-evnts-mgmt.htm.**

Linking Planning and Operations: Looking for a Few Good Planners

The Office of Planning (HEP) and the Office of Operations (HOP) are seeking field planners for the FHWA working group on Linking Planning and Operations, which is a subcommittee of the FHWA Operations Council. Two goals of the Linking Planning and Operations Working Group are to guide development on the HEP/HOP Joint Program and provide support to advance regional approaches to transportation systems management and operations. **To get more involved, please contact Harlan Miller, FHWA Office of Planning, at (202) 366-0847 or Harlan.miller@fhwa.dot.gov; or Robin Mayhew, FHWA Office of Planning at (360) 753-9416 or robin.mayhew@fhwa.dot.gov, or Wayne Berman, FHWA Office of Operations, at (202) 366-4069 or wayne.berman@fhwa.dot.gov**

Scenario Planning

Scenario planning is an analytical tool that can help elected officials, the general public, and transportation professionals prepare for what lies ahead. By considering the various factors that will shape the future, scenario-planning can help inform and involve the public, ideally to facilitate consensus on how to deal with growth, accommodate future transportation needs, ensure a quality environment, and provide for an aging population. A number of jurisdictions have used scenario planning successfully already. To encourage others, FHWA is helping to identify opportunities for the use of scenario planning and providing technical assistance for transportation planning applications. To do this, FHWA is outreaching to FHWA Divisions to work with their State DOTs and MPOs to explore specific actions to help improve the planning process using scenario-planning tools.

The FHWA Office of Planning has coordinated three Peer Forums on tools and effective practices for scenario planning in the following locations:

-Binghamton, New York, June 3, 2004. Hosted by the New York FHWA Division, and the Binghamton Metropolitan Transportation Study.

-Providence, Rhode Island, June 7, 2004. Hosted by the Rhode Island FHWA Division and the Rhode Island Department of Transportation.

-Honolulu, Hawaii, June 24, 2004. Hosted by the Hawaii FHWA Division and the Hawaii Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP).

Participants in all three-peer forums came from diverse fields, including engineers and planners from local, state, and Federal agencies. At each peer forum, discussions took place regarding tools and methodology for scenario planning. In addition, participants explored how scenario-planning techniques could be implemented in their specific regions.

Participants in all three forums stated that current practices and technologies presented were useful and they expressed interest in available software, tools, and resources.

A report on all three-peer forums will be available in late September on the Transportation Planning Capacity Building website at www.planning.dot.gov. FHWA Divisions in Florida, North Carolina, Illinois and Iowa will conduct Scenario Planning workshops in fiscal year 2005. **For more information contact Sherry B. Ways, FHWA Office of Planning, at (202) 366-1587 or sherry.ways@fhwa.dot.gov**

Transportation Conformity News

EPA Releases Final Transportation Conformity Rule Amendments

The final transportation conformity rule amendments were signed on June 14, 2004. The rule finalizes two separate proposals made by EPA to address the new air quality standards and the March 1999 Court decision. However, the rule did not finalize issues related to PM2.5 precursors and hot-spot analysis for PM-10 and PM2.5 areas. These two issues will be finalized in a separate rulemaking later this year.

The rule also finalizes a number of miscellaneous provisions to clarify and streamline the transportation conformity process. **A copy of the final rule and associated materials can be found at:** <http://epa.gov/otaq/transp/conform/conf-regs.htm>.

Transportation Conformity Domestic Scan Report

The FHWA has posted the Transportation Conformity Domestic Scan report at:

<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/conformity/domsca.n.htm>. The Domestic Scan investigated two key issues related to meeting the transportation conformity requirements: how agencies are meeting the latest planning assumptions and latest emissions model requirements and how agencies are managing the transition to MOBILE6, EPA's most recent emissions model. The report will also be available in hard copy late this summer. **For more information, Contact Cecilia Ho, FHWA Office of Natural and Human Environment at Cecilia.ho@fhwa.dot.gov or 202-366-9862.**

Asset Management News

The Office of Planning recently partnered with the Office of Asset Management in the development of a white paper that defines the relationship between transportation asset management and transportation systems planning. The white paper is one of a set of seven papers exploring the relationship of asset management to each of the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) major program areas including Federal Lands, Right-of-Way, Environment, Planning; Safety, Infrastructure, and Operations.

The series of papers are intended to increase the understanding of asset management throughout FHWA by identifying its implications for each of the seven program areas and in developing a FHWA-wide action plan for coordinating and integrating asset management initiatives into FHWA programs. **For more information, contact Kenneth Petty, FHWA Office of Planning, at 202-366-6654 or kenneth.petty@fhwa.dot.gov or Francine Shaw-Whitson, FHWA Office of Asset Management, at (202) 366-8028 or francine.shaw-whitson@fhwa.dot.gov**

Tribal Planning

Tribal Project Initiatives

Tribal governments work with a number of federal and state agencies to coordinate the delivery of transportation programs. Some tribal governments have unique transportation needs and others are developing transportation programs and systems that would be familiar to transportation professionals.

Over the last year, FHWA initiated a project to see firsthand the transportation programs, systems, and needs of tribal governments. A team of FHWA Headquarters, FHWA Federal Lands, Division Office, State DOT, and Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) representatives met with tribal government elected officials and transportation staff to learn about the tribes' transportation program including staffing, funding, and working with other agencies.

Each visit started off with a meeting to learn about the tribe's program and needs. Then the team visited roadways and projects the tribes had selected. Projects included Indian Reservation Roads (IRR) projects done by BIA, projects done by the tribe, projects done by the State DOT, and some cooperative tribal/state projects. A collection of tribal transportation scan reports is available at

<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/hep/tribaltrans/tribalprog.htm>
For more information, contact Tim Penney, FHWA Office of Planning, at 202-366-2698 or tim.penney@fhwa.dot.gov.

FHWA National Tribal Transportation Conference

The FHWA National Tribal Conference was held August 17-18, 2004 in Minneapolis, MN at the Minneapolis Airport Marriott. There were discussions and shared experience on a range of tribal transportation issues including safety, IRR program, planning, economic development, reauthorization/new regulations/legal issues, general coordination, recent tribal transportation scans, project Agreements between State DOTs and Bureau of Indian Affairs, Tribal networking with FHWA, and more! **For more information, contact Tim Penney, FHWA Office of Planning, at 202-366-2698 or tim.penney@fhwa.dot.gov.**

Peer Workshop on Tribal Transportation

A Transportation Planning Capacity Building (TPCB) Program Peer Workshop was conducted in Albuquerque New Mexico on March 2, 2004. This workshop was jointly sponsored by the Office of Planning, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the Federal Lands Highway and the Office of Planning and Environment, Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to provide a forum in which representatives from tribal governments of varying size could share insights learned during the development of transit services for their respective communities. During the Transit Breakout Sessions, presenters focused on how existing resources and partnerships might be used to plan, develop, tailor, and eventually fully implement a transit system that meets differing tribes' unique needs. Representatives from the Stillaguamish (Washington), Sitka (Alaska), and Comanche

(Oklahoma) tribes gave presentations. All three tribes participate in transit systems by either operating their own or collaborating with other neighboring transit systems. A copy of the full report is located on the TPCB website at <http://www.planning.dot.gov/Peer/NewMex/NewMex.htm> For further information on tribal transportation, contact **Robin Mayhew, FHWA, at 360-753-9416 or robin.mayhew@fhwa.dot.gov.**

Federal Lands Highway

Federal Lands Highway Program Management Systems Final Rule

The final rule; 23 CFR Parts 970, 971, 972 and 973 for the development and implementation of safety, bridge, pavement and congestion management systems for transportation facilities serving the Federal Lands Highway Program; Management Systems was published in the Federal Register on Friday, February 27, 2004. These rules pertain to the National Park Service and the Park Roads and Parkways Program, the Forest Service and the Forest Highway Program, the Fish and Wildlife Service and the Refuge Roads Program, the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Indian Reservation Roads Program as required by the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21). These management systems will provide a strategic approach to transportation planning, program development, and project selection.

http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fedreg/a040227c.html

For more information contact **Bob Bini, FHWA Federal Lands Highway, at robert.bini@fhwa.dot.gov or 202-366-6799.**

Pedestrians & Bikes

New Pedestrian Facilities Users Guide

In an effort to help communities create pedestrian-friendly environments, researchers at the Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center have released the Pedestrian Facilities Users Guide. Created as part of a Federal Highway Administration study, the guide contains useful information regarding how to create walking environments, the main causes of pedestrian crashes and ways to counter them, and engineering improvements that can be made to improve the quality of life for all citizens. **It is available online at the the Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center website http://www.walkinginfo.org/insight/features_articles/userguide.htm.**

Safe Routes to School Course Nearing Completion

The Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center received funding from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to

develop a National Safe Routes to School Training Course and to establish a national marketing and delivery strategy.

The course will be completed and pilot tested in September 2004. It has a modular structure, so that delivery can be customized for the needs and desires of individual communities. The course will range from a half-day general overview to a two-day course with field exercises. Using a workshop style approach, it will provide training to a cross-section of community members and professionals such as engineers, planners, safety educators, community, public health, police and school officials. Participants will learn how to make changes to existing schools to encourage and enable safe walking and bicycling, how to plan and properly accommodate new schools, and develop an action plan for their area. These workshops can also serve as a training curriculum for state level instructors and resource people. **Contact: Charlie Zegeer, Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center, at Charlie_zegeer@unc.edu or 919-962-2203.**

Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center Newsletter

A wealth of information about designing safe environments for walkers and bicyclists is in the Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center (PBIC) Newsletter. The University of North Carolina Highway Safety Research Center under a grant from the Federal Highway Administration operates PBIC. You can sign up for an electronic version at <http://www.pedbikeinfo.org/>.

Financial Improvements

Revisions to Office of Management & Budget Grant Circulars

In [May 10, 2004, Federal Register](#) the Office of Management & Budget (OMB) published a notice of revisions to the 3 grants management cost principle circulars including A-87, Cost Principles for State, Local, and Indian Tribal Governments. The revisions, which were effective on June 9, 2004, simplify the cost principles by making the descriptions of similar cost items consistent across the Circulars where possible, and reducing the possibility of misinterpretation.

In the [May 11, 2004, Federal Register](#), the Office of Management & Budget (OMB) published a final rule establishing title 2 in the Code of Federal Regulations (2 CFR) for grants and other financial assistance and nonprocurement agreements. CFR consists of two subtitles, A and B. In subtitle A, OMB published government-wide guidance to Federal agencies for grants and agreements. Other Circulars will also be relocated to subtitle A of 2 CFR. Federal agencies, such as U.S. DOT, that implement the OMB guidance through regulation will publish their agency-wide implementing regulations (e.g., 49 CFR parts 18 and 19) in subtitle B. The OMB expects that this consolidation of the OMB guidance and co-location of agency regulations will provide a good foundation for streamlining and simplifying the policy framework for grants and agreements.

All of the OMB grants management circulars can be accessed from a [new page](#) on the Office of Planning, Environment, and Realty internet web site. **For more information on administration of FHWA planning grants, contact Tony Solury, FHWA Office of Planning, Environment and Realty, at 202-366-5003 or Ken Petty, FHWA Office of Planning, at 202-366-6654.**

GARVEE and Federal-aid Grant Management Tool Workshop

The FHWA Resource Center Financial Technical Services Team is conducting a workshop on September 1 and 2, 2004 in Boston, Massachusetts. The workshop will cover the use and issuance of Grant Anticipation Revenue Vehicles (GARVEEs), including legal authority for issuance, insurance, rating and basic structuring issues. Also planned will be discussions and case studies related to tapered match, flexible match, toll credits, advance construction and state infrastructure banks, as well as oversight and other issues related to non-traditionally financed projects. For additional information, including registration, **contact Jim Hatter at (404) 562-3929 or send an email to jim.hatter@fhwa.dot.gov**

Freight

Virtual Freight Team

The Resource Center, in partnership with the Office of Freight Management and Operations and Office of Planning, created a Virtual Freight Team (VFT) to identify, develop and deliver targeted technical assistance on freight to FHWA customers. Due to the crosscutting nature of freight, the VFT is integrating and leveraging the technical talents of the Resource Center's Technical Service Teams (TSTs) on Planning, Operations/ITS, Safety, Finance, Environment, and Air Quality. The VFT will support the strategic and policy efforts of the FHWA Freight Council, and will work to respond to new freight training and technical needs as they are identified. **If you see an opportunity where the VFT can assist you, please notify Lisa Randall, FHWA Resource Center, at lisa.randall@fhwa.dot.gov, Scott Johnson, FHWA, at scott.johnson@fhwa.dot.gov and/or Eloise Powell, FHWA Office of Planning, at Eloise.Freeman-Powell@fhwa.dot.gov.**

States & Other Partners

TXDOT Statewide Travel Survey program

One common problem in the national data arena is that data is not collected on a scheduled basis and therefore occurs infrequently. It is not unusual for some MPOs to have 15 years or more between their household travel surveys. The costs of household surveys have precluded the consideration of other types of surveys. Some smaller and medium-sized

MPOs may never have locally collected travel surveys and rely much more on Census data and volume counts, and use borrowed constants and factors for their models.

The Texas Department of Transportation has developed a statewide travel survey program that assures each MPO that data will be collected on a 10-year cycle. Texas has 25 MPOs, ranging from the smallest (Victoria, with a population of 84,000), to the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) that covers the Dallas-Ft. Worth region with over 5 million population. The travel survey program supports the statewide planning and research (SPR) program by insuring that MPOs have up to date information for their travel demand models. This program uses SPR funds, but individual MPOs can augment with PL funds to increase the survey sample sizes or make other local adjustments. For example, the statewide program might have a sample size of 1,500 households in any MPO region. However, a larger MPO might want to have more households, e.g. 2,500, with stratification by different geography, land use, or another characteristic. The MPO would be able to modify the overall scale of the project by combining PL funds with SP&R funds.

Texas is divided into 14 survey regions, with some regions having multiple MPOs. For example, in 2004, the Valley region that includes the Brownsville, Harlingen, and Hidalgo County MPOs will be surveyed.

The survey set includes:

- Household
- External Station
- Workplace
- Commercial Vehicle
- Travel time / Delay

Each MPO is assured of their turn in the schedule.

This survey program has already covered 13 urban areas. This coordinated approach also assures that many standards can be applied across the different surveys, resulting in greater comparability across time and space. **For more information about the TxDOT survey program, please contact Mr. Charlie Hall, cdhall@dot.state.tx.us**

Transit Planning News

Transit @ The Table: A Guide to Participation in Metropolitan Decisionmaking

Transit @ The Table looks into how transit agencies can be proactive players in the metropolitan planning process. This investigative work identifies recurring deficiencies, or "missed opportunities," as well as effective practices – all based upon the personal accounts and testimonials of practitioners. The study finds that intuitive transit operators and "progressive" MPOs present the right combination for increasing understanding of interagency dynamics in planning processes, with both immediate and long-term benefits. Public

transportation agencies have more voice in deciding critical transportation policy, funding allocations, creating a modal balance in decision-making, and increased input into flexibility funding opportunities. It is hoped that this report will encourage transit agencies to fully engage in the planning processes of their locales.

Transit @ The Table ends with a Self-Assessment Checklist for transit operators that can help them assess the level and quality of their agency's involvement in the key activities, products, and outcomes of metropolitan planning. While this "Are You" list illuminates issues and opportunities, possibly the greatest value of this work is the interaction that it can emerge among planning partners. **For more information contact Effie Stallsmith, FTA Office of Planning and Environment, at (202) 366-6563 or effie.stallsmith@fta.dot.gov.**

Calendar of Events

Here are a few of the upcoming events of interest to the planning community:

August 22-24, 2004. TRB Conference on Performance Measures to Improve Transportation Systems. Beckman Center, Irvine, California. Conference information: www.trb.org/Conferences/Performance. Contact [Kimberly Fisher](mailto:Kimberly.Fisher@nas.edu) at kfisher@nas.edu.

August 29 - September 1, 2004 Sixth National Meeting on Access Management Conference Information Kansas City, Missouri. Contact: [Kimberly Fisher](mailto:Kimberly.Fisher@nas.edu) at kfisher@nas.edu.

September 4, 2004 [Workshop on Non-Metropolitan, Local Official Consultation](#) San Antonio, TX
The workshop for Texas Association of Regional Council representatives was undertaken as part of the FHWA/NADO/NACo partnership activities for rural and small communities. The workshops are designed for local officials who want to be more familiar with the transportation planning process and are open to people who are registered for the associated meeting.
Sponsor: Texas Association of Regional Councils

September 7-10, 2004 ProWalk/ProBike Conference, Victoria, BC www.bikewalk.org/pwpb2004/pwpb2004.htm

September 15, 2004 FHWA Talking Freight Series: Freight Security Issues. For more information contact: Eloise Freeman-Powell, FHWA, at Eloise.Freeman-Powell@fhwa.dot.gov or Scott Johnson, FHWA at scott.Johnson@fhwa.dot.gov.

September 22-24, 2004 [Ninth National Conference on Transportation Planning For Small and Medium-Sized Communities: "Tools of the](#)

Trade" Colorado Springs, Colorado Contact: [Kimberly Fisher](mailto:Kimberly.Fisher@nas.edu) at kfisher@nas.edu.

Oct 12 – 15, 2004 [AMPO Annual Meeting](#) San Antonio, TX
This is an annual national meeting. Presentations on non-metropolitan local official consultation may be part of the program. For more information check out the AMPO website at www.ampo.org.

October 20, 2004 FHWA Talking Freight Series: Perspectives from Freight Transportation Providers: Air Cargo and Logistics. For more information contact: Eloise Freeman-Powell, FHWA, at Eloise.Freeman-Powell@fhwa.dot.gov or Scott Johnson, FHWA at scott.Johnson@fhwa.dot.gov

Nov 1 – 2, 2004 [Personal Travel Surveys Conference](#) Washington, DC
This workshop will bring together a variety of professionals working with the 2001 National Household Travel Survey (NHTS) data to showcase applications for policy and planning. Contact: Tom Palmerlee, Transportation Research Board, at 202-334-2907 TPalmerlee@nas.edu

Nov 16 – 18, 2004 [Highway Statistics Seminar](#) Holiday Inn in Arlington (Rosslyn)
This annual seminar provides guidance and sharing for State DOT partners and data providers to FHWA, as well as FHWA Division personnel.
Sponsor: FHWA: Office of Highway Policy Information
Contact: Marsha Reynolds
Phone: 202-366-5029
Email: Marsha.Reynolds@fhwa.dot.gov

November 17, 2004 FHWA Talking Freight Series: Uses of Freight Technology. For more information contact: Eloise Freeman-Powell, FHWA, at Eloise.Freeman-Powell@fhwa.dot.gov or Scott Johnson, FHWA at scott.Johnson@fhwa.dot.gov

December 15, 2004 FHWA Talking Freight Series: Multijurisdictional Coalitions. For more information contact: Eloise Freeman-Powell, FHWA, at Eloise.Freeman-Powell@fhwa.dot.gov or Scott Johnson, FHWA at scott.Johnson@fhwa.dot.gov

For more information, 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.htm>

TRB Conferences & Workshops
<http://www4.trb.org/trb/calendar.nsf>