


**APPROVED MINUTES**  
**NRPC TRANSPORTATION TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**04/11/12**

**Members Present:**

Sarah Marchant, Town of Amherst  
 John Cashell, Town of Hudson  
 Jeff Babel, Town of Hollis  
 Kyle Fox, Town of Merrimack  
 Bill Parker, Town of Milford  
 Steve Dookran, City of Nashua  
 Wayne Husband, City of Nashua

Mark Sousa, NTS  
 Louise Woodworth, NTS  
 Jeff Gowan, Town of Pelham

**Others Present:**

Bill Hoke, NH DOT  
 Leigh Levine, FHWA  
 Paul Lockwood, NHDES

**Staff Present**

Kerrie Diers, Executive Director  
 Tim Roache, MPO Coordinator  
 Julie Chizmas, Transportation Planner

Jen Czysz, Senior Regional Planner  
 Matt Waitkins, Field Data/Transportation Planner  
 Karen Baker, Program Assistant

**CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Tim Roache opened the meeting at 12:10 with introductions and review of the agenda.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE MARCH 14<sup>TH</sup> MEETING**

Roache referred to the minutes of March 14<sup>th</sup>, included in the agenda packet as Attachment 1 and asked for a motion to approve. Sousa moved to approve the March 14, 2012 minutes with a second from Gowan. All were in favor.

**2010 CENSUS URBAN BOUNDARIES**

Roache informed the group that on March 26<sup>th</sup>, the US Census Bureau issues a press release announcing the new urbanized area boundaries and populations. The population within the expanded Nashua urbanized area boundary has exceeded 200,000. Roache passed around an 11 x 17 of the 2010 Census Urban Boundaries and the progression of the region back to 1990. He added that this will have implications for the region and the FHWA and NTS would be doing presentations on the implications. Roache introduced Levine for a presentation on the transition from a small Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to a Transportation Management Area (TMA).

**FHWA-Led Discussion – What to know when transitioning from a small MPO to a TMA:**

Levine started off providing information of what a Metropolitan Transportation Organization (MPO) is:

- A forum for cooperative transportation decision-making for an urbanized area with population of 50,000 or more designed to foster regional collaboration and coordination established under 23 USC 134(d).

And what a Transportation Management Area (TMA) is:

- An urban area with a population over 200,000 per requirement of the Secretary of Transportation 23 U.S.C. 134 (k)(1). TMA boundaries define where more stringent planning requirements apply and can include more than 1 MPO or Transit Agency or DOT if a TMA crosses state boundaries.

Levine proceeded by informing the group that the 200,000 population threshold had been exceeded with the new population of 226,000 which has transitioned the region to a TMA. He also provided information of the Planning Process of a TMA, Requirements, Responsibilities, Key Planning Issues, Transition to a TMA MPO, UZA & MPO Adjustments, Special Census & Resources. Below are some of the key points:

**Planning Process:**

- Continuing and comprehensive planning process carried out by the MPO in cooperation with the State and transit operators;
- Include a Congestion Management Process (CMP)
- Select all federally funded projects in consultation with the State and any affected public transit operator with exceptions;
- Receive a proportional share of the funds based on population
- Certification by the Secretary at least once every four years

**Requirements:**

- MPO's in TMA's are required to have MPO Board Membership to include officials of major public providers of transportation, State transportation officials as well as locally elected officials
- Certification reviews of the planning process conducted at least every four years by FHWA and FTA
- Reviews to be conducted would be Desk audits, On-site visits, public input meetings (*per requirements*)
- Congestion Management Process required input to development of Metropolitan Transportation Plans in TMAs with Nonattainment area TMAs subject to additional requirements (*SOV capacity increasing projects must be analyzed through and come out of a CMP*).

**Responsibilities:**

- Recipient of STP "Metro funds". MPOs in TMAs select projects to be funded with STP-Metro (and certain other) funds in consultation with the State DOT and any affected transit agency.
- Recipient of FTA 5307 funds. Funds are available for capital and planning activities, but in a TMA, not eligible for operating costs with 1% of funds to be used for transit enhancement projects

**Key Planning Issues - Changes in Planning Factors Post SAFETEA-LU**

- Previous planning factor to "protect and enhance environment, promote energy conservation and improve quality of life." Now, expanded to include "promote consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns", which promotes flexibility for States and MPOs to determine which agencies with whom to coordinate.

**Key Planning Issues - Changes in Planning Factors After SAFETEA-LU**

- Pre-SAFETEA-LU, single planning factor for both safety and security. Now, safety and security are addressed separately which encourages transportation planning process to be consistent with applicable security plans and programs, as well as safety plans and initiatives

**Other Planning Issues:**

- Fiscal Constraint - Fiscal constraint required for STIPs, TIPs, and metropolitan transportation plans
- Public Participation - SAFETEA-LU refined public involvement procedures with a minimum 45-day comment period on the PPP and must include adequate, timely public notice and reasonable access, visualization techniques, electronic formats for information and convenient and accessible meeting locations and times.
- Planning and Environmental Linkages - Transportation plans must include discussions of potential environmental mitigation activities and developed in consultation with Federal, State and Tribal wildlife, land management, and regulatory agencies

**Transition to a TMA MPO:**

- New TMA MPOs will have approximately a 12-18 month transition period with compliance or good faith efforts to meet TMA requirements expected about 2014.

**UZA & MPO Adjustments:**

- There may be adjustments or “smoothing” of the Urbanized Area (UZA) boundaries, the MPO planning areas (MPA’s), and the MPO membership and organizational structure
- There may also be potential revisions to NH’s intra-state formula for PL funding allocations to MPOs

**Special Census:**

- If an MPO is expected to reach 200,000 population after 2010, but well before 2020, a local entity can ask Census Bureau for a Special Census count.

**Resources:**

For more information:

- Law – 23 USC 134 and 135 & 49 USC 5303
- Regulation - 23 CFR 450 & 49 CFR 613.100 (will refer you back to 23 CFR 450)
- Technical assistance - [www.planning.dot.gov](http://www.planning.dot.gov), [www.fta.dot.gov/planning\\_environment.html](http://www.fta.dot.gov/planning_environment.html), or [www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning)
- Training - [www.nhi.fhwa.dot.gov](http://www.nhi.fhwa.dot.gov), [www.ntionline.com](http://www.ntionline.com), or <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/resourcecenter/index.cfm>

Levine concluded his presentation and said he does not see a whole lot of radical changes, just small tweaks. Chizmas said we could gain some roads by the “smoothing” that may be eligible for funding. Sousa commented that back in 2000, there was never any mention of the area potentially exceeding the 200,000.

Dookran asked what happens if you don’t make compliance by 2014. Levine said they don’t anticipate this happening. He added that if deficiencies or Federal Regulations are not met, than a joint report is done with recommendations. Once the corrections are made, action is taken and then there is a certification period to maintain MPO certification. He added that this is very rare. In response to a Dookran question, he said there would be guidance on boundary adjustments for FHWA.

**NTS-Led Discussion**

Sousa provided a presentation on the implications to the Nashua Transit System as a result of the newly designated urban area boundaries and the Nashua region. He started off by saying that this would cut operations in half for NTS. Nighttime Service will be gone. Currently, NTS receives \$1,264,195 FTA 5307 funds per fiscal year and operates 8 daytime bus routes up until 7:05 and 3 After 7 routes until 11:00pm. The average monthly ridership is 40,965. Sousa continued saying that the Para-transit service may not be cut due to all of the ADA requirements. Sousa replied to Dookran question that they are required to provide ADA after 7:00pm if they are called. He also informed the group that NTS is not allowed to use the 50% match resulting in a \$587,412 loss.

Sousa continued saying that as a result of these potential implications to NTS, they have met with several agencies and the delegation to work on changing the language to give smaller agencies the opportunity to keep some of their operating funding. He referred to MAP 21 a Bill that will allow transit agencies with 75 or less busses to keep 75% of their funding. This bill was passed by the Senate, but not by the House.

He added that there is also the 100 Bus Coalition which lets you keep 50% of your funding if you have less than 100 busses, but there was some confusion on the language, which they are looking at. Sousa said that if the confusion in the language is figured out for the 100 Bus Coalition, or if MAP 21 passes, this would help keep the NTS afloat. As a last resort, there is hope for a grandfather clause. Sousa said that if this happens, it would first cut the transit employees and they would also have to go to quarterly reporting. Dookran asked if they could raise the bus fare by a dollar. Sousa replied that you can’t use bus fare as match. There was further discussion on funding and match. Sousa concluded that they leave 1 million on the table each year because they don’t have the match and this is the highest in the State.

Roache said to the group that any community can put up the match with Federal money left on the table and this will increase transit.

#### **METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN (MTP) UPDATE**

##### Needs Assessment

Roache informed the group that the Transportation Needs Survey would be sent out next week as part of the outreach for the MTP update. He asked that everyone fill it out and have your family and friends as well. Roache said that one of the goals of the survey is to get 3 or 4 major projects prioritized.

Chizmas proceeded to review the survey with TTAC. She added that it would be on the NRPC website and paper copies can be made available. Babel asked if it could be sent to the towns to have it posted on their websites. Chizmas said it can be done. Gowan asked if this was one survey per household, driver, person, etc.? Roache said you can take the survey as many times as you want. Chizmas said usually it is only one per computer, but she set it up so that all members from a household could take it from the same computer.

##### Existing Conditions

Roache said he was working on the Needs Analysis and wrapping up the Existing Conditions Chapters.

#### **S/TIP AMENDMENT 5 – DISCUSSION ONLY**

Roache reviewed S/TIP Amendment #5 with the group reminding them of the TTAC and EC meetings held in January & March where the NHDOT made a commitment to move funds from 101A project to the E. Hollis Street project, stating the changes would be reflected in Amendment #5. Amendment #5 was released and the changes did not reflect the E. Hollis Street project. Follow up letters were sent and the project has been added to S/TIP Amendment #5. A public comment period and will be held and a motion to recommend approval by the NRPC Commission will be sought at the May 9, 2012 TTAC meeting.

Roache continued by reviewing the amendment. He added that there were no real issues for the region or issues with air quality.

Dookran commented that he heard word that Councilor Wheeler had made a commitment to go back and review the information on rail. Diers commented that FTA was not interested in doing the rail portion to Nashua, adding that the FTA funds could not be used.

Roache said they would take another crack at STIP A5 at the May TTAC meeting.

#### **STAFF AND PROJECT UPDATES**

##### NH DOT Project Advertising Schedule Updates

Was sent out to folks via email

##### Exit 36S

Roache informed the group that Exit 36S funds are being reviewed for expenditure and are currently with the Legislative Fiscal Committee and will then be sent to the Governor and Council. Once they have been approved by both committees, we can move forward with the project study.

##### Granite State Future

Czys explained to the group that the HUD Sustainable Project has been officially given a name: "A Granite State Future." She briefly explained the process as being a 3 phase project. Phase I is coordination with State Agencies for the framework, Phase II is the Regional Planning Process and Phase III will be pulling everything together in one consensus document for the State shaped by the livability principles.

Roache added that all the MTP and LRP work will tie back into the regional plan. Lockwood asked if there could be coordination between the Granite State Future project and the MTP even though it is not every three years and the GSF is a 3 year project. Roache said they would coordinate to tie everything in.

Levine talked about scenario plans and how this would tie in as well. Currently there they were working on a general update schedule or cycle and that the hope was to coordinate with Granite State Future for the next update.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

Dookran commented on the transition to a TMA and the designation of the area asking if there was any chance on getting in on the MAP 21. Roache said it would be good, but not sure how much, and they would not have to fight for their life. He was not sure how the funding would shake out except for the STP funds. He added that it would be good to have DOT at the table for input.

There was a question on the ROW not being included in STIP A5 for the E Hollis Street Project. Roache said it was moved to 2014 because the ROW would have triggered air quality and why only the PE was included in the amendment.

Motion to adjourn came from Cashell with a second from Babel. The meeting adjourned at 1:20 pm.