


APPROVED MINUTES
NRPC TRANSPORTATION TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
06/13/12

Members Present:

John Cashell, Town of Hudson
 Jeff Gowan, Town of Pelham
 Kyle Fox, Town of Merrimack DPW
 Emily Polychronopoulos, Intern Merrimack DPW
 Jeffrey Martin, Intern Merrimack DPW
 Bill Parker, Town of Milford
 Wayne Husband, City of Nashua
 Mark Sousa, Nashua Transit

Louise Woodworth, Nashua Transit
 Lori Lorman, Nashua Transit
 Sarah Marchant, Town of Amherst
 Steve Dookran, City of Nashua
 Joe Mendola, City of Nashua
Others Present:
 Bill Hoke, NH DOT
 Leigh Levine, FHWA
 Paul Lockwood, NH DES

Staff Present

Tim Roache, MPO Coordinator
 Julie Chizmas, Transportation Planner

Matt Waitkins, Field Data/Transportation Planner
 Karen Baker, Program Assistant

CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

Tim Roache opened the meeting at 12:08 with introductions.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE MAY 9TH MEETING

Roache referred to the minutes of May 9th, included in the agenda packet as Attachment 1 and asked for a motion to approve. Sousa moved to approve the May 9th, 2012 minutes with a second from Gowan. All were in favor.

CONGESTION MANAGEMENT PROCESS – Draft NH 101A Corridor Report

Waitkins provided a presentation on the findings of the Draft NH 101A Corridor Report. He explained how traffic congestion occurs when vehicular travel drops to an unacceptable speed, occurring as use increases and characterized by slower speeds, longer trip times, and increased vehicle queuing. He pointed out the 2 types of congestion; recurring & non-recurring. Recurring congestion is usually experienced during peak travel periods on a daily basis and non-recurring congestion is experienced when vehicular travel slows down at unpredictable times and places. He added that recurring congestion is the focus of this analysis.

He referred to the Texas Transportation Institute (TTI) which estimated in 2010 in urban areas with populations of less than 500,000 people, the average commuter spent approximately 18 hours stuck in congested traffic. He referred to various segments of NH101A which currently experience congestion during the morning and afternoon peak periods of travel.

Waitkins proceeded by pointing out the towns affected by this major east/west corridor of Route 101A which provides access to the Everett Turnpike and also serves as a retail/commercial destination and stretching from the west end of the Milford Bypass (NH101/NH101A intersection) to the Everett Turnpike in Nashua.

The State Highway Classification System designates this roadway as either a Class I (primary road) or Class IV (local road) depending on the segment, with varying number of lanes and 26 signalized intersections. NRPC maintains a database of traffic count locations and volumes which as you will see, is significant.

Waitkins referred to Table 1 pointing out the seasonally adjusted traffic volumes in different segments along the corridor. Additionally the data was collected during peak and non-peak hours and then calculated using the Travel Time Ratio: which is the ratio between actual time it takes to travel a segment of roadway during the peak period and the time it takes to travel the segment during free-flow. He explained what each time travel ratio number correlated to:

- A TTR < 1.25 means there is minimal congestion of that segment of the corridor.

- A TTR between 1.25 and 1.49 means the segment is approaching congested conditions.
- A TTR > 1.50 means the corridor is congested.

He provided morning and afternoon, both eastbound and westbound peak travel time ratios for all segments of the corridor and the economic impacts of traveling along the corridor. He provided results on the value of lost time and the value of lost fuel all due to the impacts of congestion. He concluded by informing the group of the NRPC Congestion Management Process toolbox component which provides a of potential congestion reduction and mobility strategies. The purpose of the toolbox is to identify and prioritize solutions to address congestion and mobility problems. As the CMP is implemented, the toolbox will be utilized as the starting point for evaluating solutions. The strategies included in this toolbox fit into the categories of supply management, demand management, and land use management. Waitkins concluded his presentation and asked if there were any questions and/or comments.

Husband was surprised at the amount of congestion going into the Milford Oval. Roache added that this task will be done again at different times of the year adding that the information that was calculated by person on the money and time wasted due to congestion and that a pollutant effect could be done as well.

Dookran commented on whether \$76 was a bad amount of money to have been wasted and what is expected from the 101A corridor and what is acceptable.

Cashell commented that if folks did not like 101A, they would hate Rte 3A which is bumper to bumper.

Roache said that shorter segments could be looked at. It was also noted that improvements had been pushed out to 2020 for this area in Nashua. Cashell commented that Hudson was looking into studying Rte 3A through public or private partnership. Waitkins informed that travel data had been gathered for Rte. 111, 3A and the Everett Turnpike.

Husband felt that the DW Highway/Main Street area in Nashua should also be done, while Fox felt that Continental Blvd. where it meets 101A should be done as well.

There was a question on if the main driver for the CMP is economics. Roache said it was in addition to traffic engineering component. There was discussion on the economics of improving congestion on Main Street in Nashua and 101A and what should be realistic. There was also recommendation to look at intersections at corridors. Roache said progress was being done on that. By doing these studies, Levine said that helps in identifying a project to target funds for. Levine asked if Roache/Waitkins had learned anything when comparing the 2002 Corridor MP. Roache said they had not compared the two yet. Levine suggested looking at the legacy projects in comparison to the projects in the CMP.

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN (MTP) UPDATE

Roache provided a summary of the MTP update and progress to date: The NRPC is working to complete a full update to the Long Range Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and Air Quality Conformity Analysis. The full update of the MTP entails analyzing recent trends and projections of traffic data, demographics, and employment data. It also requires the reorganization and revision of the contents of the plan. It was anticipated that this effort would require additional time to complete and was planned to meet the NRPC quarterly Commission meetings with a review of the Draft MTP in September and approval of the Final MTP in December.

There are a number of overlapping planning processes and initiatives that influence the planned schedule of the MTP update.

1. The Air Quality Conformity Analysis (AQA) process associated with the update to the MTP and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) has been revised. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has developed a new motor vehicle emission simulator model (MOVES). This new model requires

a number of changes to the flow of the AQA process. MOVES is currently being housed and run at the Department of Environmental Services (NHDES). In order to provide the required vehicle emission factors for the AQA, NHDES needs Travel Demand Model output from NRPC. To meet the NHDES Schedule and the schedule of the other MPO's the NRPC must develop and approve a list of projects to be modeled in advance of the completion of the Full MTP update.

2. The recently launched Granite State Future process requires coordination of the MTP Process.
3. The next Ten Year Plan Update will begin in January 2013 and require NRPC to review existing project lists. This process requires a consideration of the projects listed in the MTP for inclusion in the TYP.

To address the immediate needs related to the changes in the air quality conformity process NRPC will:

1. Complete a minor update to the existing Long Range transportation Plan and Project List.
2. Complete the 2013-2016 Transportation Improvement Program.
3. Complete the associated Air Quality Conformity analyses.

This process will be completed in mid-August and documents prepared for adoption by the Full Commission at the FY13 September Meeting.

The full update to the MTP will continue through the fall and coordinate with the Granite State Future and Ten Year Plan processes. This approach will improve efficiency and allow improved integration between the Ten Year Plan Process and the update of the MTP. It will benefit the region by allowing for full consideration of the planning analyses completed as part of the MTP, Granite State Future and Ten Year Plan initiatives. The end result will be a fully updated and integrated transportation plan that provides guidance and direction to transportation investment decisions.

Roache passed around completed sections of the MTP as well as a goals and objectives summary sheet and asked Levine for input on this new schedule. Levine said it is usually a 4 year cycle minimum requirement for the updates to the MTP so he felt the minor update should be good.

Roache referred to the Goals and Objectives handout adding that he would like approval on the project list. He added that this was necessary in order to get the list to NHDES to get the MOVES model work done.

He informed the group that the projects listed on page 1 of the handout would be provided to NHDES and included in the Travel Demand Model in order to later do the Air Quality Conformity. Husband questioned the E. Hollis Street project. Roache explained that 2022 would be the first year for the AQ so there would be no effect on when it was built. **After further discussion, it was moved by Sousa and seconded by Cashell that the Long Range Transportation Plan projects list included in the Travel Demand Model be approved for submission to the NHDES. All were in favor and the motion passed.**

FHWA LED-DISCUSSION: OZONE STANDARD AND CONFORMITY IN NEW HAMPSHIRE

Levine and Lockwood passed around a handout showing the chronology of ozone standards and NH activities. Lockwood summarized the 1hr and 8hr standards and attainment from 1971 of which the 1hr primary standard was established to 2011 when EPA rescinded their proposed revision of the from 2010 until a 5 year study was completed in 2013. On May 21st EPA issued 2 final rulings revoking the 1997 and ozone standard implementation of the 8 hour 2008 standard. Additionally, EPA designated all of NH as "unclassifiable/attainment" under more stringent 2008 ozone standards effective July 20, 2012. Lockwood said that basically what this means is that conformity on transportation projects goes away 1 year from July 20, 2012.

Levine reviewed some of the questions that would be posed to Don Cooke with the EPA. He added that in 2010, EPA was going to come up with new standards. Currently, the Nashua Region is in attainment for the "97" and "08" standards, so unless they change the standard, then Southern NH could go into non-attainment and in 2013, if it is going to happen, there will be a 1 year delay. It would be business as usual until 2013, then



everything would go away. Roache said to continue down the road until 2013 asked Levine about CMAQ money. Levine said there would be more flexibility in CMAQ funds. Lockwood added that the emission reduction benefits would be good to use for CMAQ funds which would be available on a statewide basis but not until 2013.

STAFF AND PROJECT UPDATES

NH DOT Project Advertising Schedule Updates

Roache passed around the Advertising Schedule summary sheet.

OTHER BUSINESS

Roache asked if anyone had anything they wanted to share with the group for events happening in their City or Town. Husband mentioned the traffic signal updates that would be starting up soon for the City of Nashua. Gowan referred to the Pelham project that would be starting soon. Fox mentioned that the Merrimack Premium outlets would be opening this coming weekend. Dookran said the Broad Street Parkway had be started improvements to the main highway design with fall of 2013 for construction. Roache informed the group that the Exit 36S Study contract would be brought to Governor and Council for approval on June 28th. He added that this was an in house NRPC contract with NMCOG.

Motion to adjourn came from Gowan with a second from Husband. The meeting adjourned at 1:15 pm.