

Minutes
Transportation Research Board
Public Transportation Planning and Development Committee Meeting
Committee AP025
January 15, 2008

1. The meeting was called to order at 8:10 a.m. by the committee's Chairman Ed Beimborn. Members and friends introduced themselves.

2. The minutes of last year's meetings and the summer meeting were approved.

3. TRB Activities:

Peter Shaw: TRB is at capacity and it has been another successful meeting with over 10,000 participants and over 700 sessions.

This year was the first meeting with a commercial exhibit.

The 2009 theme for the Annual Meeting is *Transportation, Energy and Climate Change*'

The TRB research database is up and running. Committees need to enter topics and keep them up to date.

TRB has introduced a new Webinar series.

TRB is trying to address the request by some members to have TRB sessions certified by the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) to qualify towards individual member certification. There is however a significant cost implication as well as many practical issues.

TCRP: Synthesis problem statements are due in March, and main research problem statements are due in June.

4. Paper Reviews

Brendon Hemily reported that the committee received 31 papers, a 50% increase over the previous year, creating a large increase in the workload. Brendon thanked everyone who contributed to the Paper Review process.

10 papers were accepted for presentation at Presentation Sessions, and 6 papers were accepted for presentation at Poster Board Sessions.

5. Issues Related to the Design of the Paper Review System

Brendon presented an issue related to the design of the Paper Review System that has been raised by some reviewers. It concerns *the identification of papers submitted ONLY for Presentation or Publication*. This has been an issue in the past, but was

even more so this year because the committee received even more papers that were submitted “For Presentation Only” (presumably because they have been previously submitted to other journals); the committee also received one paper that was submitted “For Publication Only” (both this year and last). Individual Reviewers are never told whether a paper has been only submitted for presentation, or only for publication. This issue was discussed and various issues were identified.

Following this discussion, there was a strong feeling that it would be useful for reviewers to see a clear indication at the top of the review page indicating whether a paper was submitted for presentation only, for publication only, or for both. It was also suggested that some of the irrelevant fields (such as “Publication Recommendation” for “presentation only” papers) be greyed out but this is perhaps more complex to agree upon and design.

Spell Checker. During the discussion, another issue was raised by Steve Polzin that it would also be useful to have a Spell Checker in the system. He pointed out that an increasing number of papers are being submitted from abroad by researchers whose first language is not English (in particular from China). As a result, reviewers are increasingly commenting on grammar/spelling in the text, but it is embarrassing to find spelling mistakes in one’s own Reviews (which happens because people are pressed for time to meet deadlines when they prepare the reviews) while criticizing the author’s spelling. Many committee members had similar experiences.

Everyone agreed that a spell checker would be valuable.

Action Item: Brendon volunteered to present these two issues to Pete Shaw (this has been done)

6. Committee Strategic Plan

Rich Bickel made a power point presentation concerning the preparation of the draft Committee 2008 – 2010 Strategic Plan. The presentation discussed:

- the strategic plan development process,
- the highlights from the survey of committee members, and
- the key elements of the draft plan itself.

The committee discussed and unanimously adopted the Strategic Plan (motion by Rich Bickel, seconded by Francis Cheung). Ed thanked Rich on behalf of the committee for all the hard work he put into the preparation of the plan.

The plan and presentation can be found on the committee web site.

see: <http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/CUTS/trb/straplan.pdf>

As a follow-up to the above discussion, the committee discussed ways to increase the visibility of the committee’s activities. Various concepts were discussed:

- Organizing another Specialty Conference: this has been proposed but requires a large amount of volunteer energy that may be difficult to find in the short term.
- Presentation sessions: These are always popular, and relatively easy to organize. However, they are subject to overall session space limitations.
- International Coordination: Francis Cheung raised the possibility of increased coordination with various transportation research institutions in Europe, which could take the form of study tours, participation in conferences, joint sessions, etc. Though of considerable interest, funding remains a considerable challenge.
- Webinars: These are quite feasible and may provide a good avenue to explore.

7. 2007 Specialty Conference on Transit and Land use

Ed Beimborn made a power point presentation to report on some of the key discussions and conclusions from the TRB specialty conference that was initiated by AP025. The conference was entitled: ***Best Practices: Coordination of Transit, Regional Transportation Planning and Land Use***, and held August 26-28, 2007 in Denver.

The conference Proceedings web site contains not only the presentations at the conference, but also a wide range of other valuable resources related to transit and land use.

See: <http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/CUTS/trb/conf/>.

8. Report from FTA

Charlie Goodman provided a report on various FTA activities of interest to the Committee. These included:

- The Public Transportation Participation Pilot Program
- The activities of the Center for Transit-Oriented Development (CTOD)
- A new FTA website devoted to TOD and Joint Development
- Transit at the Table II (to be published by April 2008)
- Transportation Planning Capacity-Building Program (TPCB), including updated guidance documents for decisionmakers, and a Peer-Exchange Program
- Targeted Technical Assistance (before New Starts)
- Private Transit Operator Participation in Transportation Planning
- Emergency Preparedness and Security in Planning
- And various FTA activities, guidance, and regulations.

A brief overview document was handed out and is attached to the Minutes.

9. Report on European Developments

Francis Cheung has volunteered to keep the Committee abreast of various international developments, and made a report covering a variety of topics, including:

- The decision in the Netherlands to move towards road pricing on all roads based on distance traveled, by time of day, by type of vehicle, etc. The policy will be financially neutral with an equivalent reduction in vehicle taxes and licenses.
- A first video conference was held between FHWA and counterparts in the Netherlands.
- A focus on transportation research in Europe around the theme *Greener, Safer, Smarter*
- An emphasis on Integrated Mobility Management, and renewed research on the Value of Time and the Value of Reliability
- The Netherlands OV Chipcard project, a nation-wide public transportation smart card
- Exploration of the use of mobile phones for transit payment
- Research on free/low fare public transportation: one project in Belgium, and 9 demonstrations in the Netherlands
- Focus on benchmarking performance of major transit systems, Dutch Railways, Dutch rail infrastructure company, etc.
- Focus on bicycles (which represents a 27% mode share in the Netherlands)
- In Europe, a new Green Paper on Urban Transport is due in 2009
- A recent European Green Paper on Energy, which includes an emphasis on green propulsion for transit
- A European continued focus on Climate Change and the reduction of CO₂ from vehicles, which supports transit
- The VIIth European Research Framework program is just getting underway
- The European Galileo GPS project
- A focus on passenger Charters for Public Transport
- The ECMT is now called the International Transportation Forum (ITF) and is focusing on the issue of Climate Change

Action Item: Francis provided a large number of documents on international programs. Brendon volunteered to put together a very brief synthesis of pertinent information for committee members.

5. Other Committee Activities:

It was announced that the committee will undergo membership rotation this year.

It was decided to not have a summer meeting of the committee.

Action Item: A committee of Ed Beimborn, Todd Hemingson, Matt Sibull and Don Emerson will attempt to organize a conference session for next year's Annual Meeting on the topic of *Transit Planning Approaches for Climate Change and Energy Issues*

In addition, there should be a follow-up to the conference to identify potential R&D needs for the database, or to feed ideas to FTA programs

10. The meeting was adjourned at 11:15 a.m.

Attachment

[FTA Office of Systems Planning and Related FTA Program Status](#)

Public Transportation Participation Pilot Program

The Public Transportation Participation Pilot Program (PTP Program) funds small applied research projects to improve public participation in public transportation planning at the regional or project level. Fourteen (14) research projects were selected to participate in the first two years of the Program. Projects focus on a variety of aspects of public involvement in planning, including: data collection, information dissemination, consensus building, and measuring performance. Products will document tools, best practices, and lessons learned. http://www.fta.dot.gov/planning/programs/planning_environment_5925.html. Solicitation of proposals for a third year of program year will take place shortly – through www.Grants.Gov.

Center for Transit-Oriented Development

The Center for Transit-Oriented Development is a nonprofit effort dedicated to providing best practices, research and tools to support transit-oriented development (TOD). CTOD is funded by the FTA to be a national clearinghouse to help develop standards for TOD and provide technical assistance. Among work products are a demographic, land use, and travel behavior database, case studies, and a study of opportunities/barriers associated with providing affordable housing near transit. Recent publication include “TOD 101: Why Transit-Oriented Development and Why Now?” and “TOD 202: Station Area Planning: How to Make great Transit-Oriented Places.” For more information, go to <http://www.reconnectingamerica.org/public/tod>

FTA Website - Transit-Oriented and Joint-Development

FTA has created a page on its website devoted to Transit-Oriented and Joint Development activities. The site provides useful information on how FTA financial assistance can support such joint development activities as transferring land for nearby real estate development; preparing land for development; providing enhanced access; and developing on-site community services such as dependent care, health care, public safety, or commercial conveniences. <http://www.fta.dot.gov/tod>

Transit-at the Table: A Guide to Participation in Metropolitan Decision-making

This FTA report presents the observations and recommendations of transit agencies from large metropolitan areas on how to secure strategic positions in the metropolitan planning process. The “Self Assessment Checklist” can be a useful resource for agencies to evaluate the extent and quality of their planning partnerships. www.planning.dot.gov/Documents/tat.htm A follow-up report, focused on transit/MPO partnerships in small / medium-sized areas, nears completion. A third study will begin shortly, which will focus on transit participation in the Statewide Transportation Planning process.

Transportation Planning Capacity-Building Program (TPCB) www.planning.dot.gov

The Transportation Planning Process: Key Issues - A Briefing Book for Transportation Decisionmakers, Officials, and Staff has been updated to reflect SAFETEA-LU, the Final Rule on Planning, and Statewide Planning.

www.planning.dot.gov/documents/briefingbook/bbook.htm. The Peer-Exchange Program sponsors peer exchanges, on request. www.planning.dot.gov/peer.asp.

Targeted Technical Assistance (before New Starts)

Soliciting interested MPOs and transit operators for over-the-shoulder technical assistance to prepare for

conducting an Alternatives Analysis www.fta.dot.gov/planning/metro/planning_environment_7392.html

New Starts Program www.fta.dot.gov/planning/planning_environment_5221.html

- New Starts / Small Starts Rulemaking suspended
- Contractor Perf. Assessment Report, www.fta.dot.gov/documents/CPAR_Final_Report_-_2007.pdf
- Alternatives Analysis training: New York (4/29-5/1, Seattle (7/22-24)
- 2 Travel Forecasting for New Starts Workshops in Sept. 2008: Washington, DC and San Francisco
- New Starts/Small Starts Workshops Scheduled:
 - APTA Legislative Conference (March)
 - APTA Rail Conference (June)
 - APTA Annual Meeting (October)

Private Transit Operator Participation in Transportation Planning

- FTA entered into a cooperative agreement with the Taxicab, Limousine & Paratransit Association to provide educational seminars, instructional articles and other web-based materials to assist private for-hire vehicle operators in becoming involved in transportation planning processes.
- FTA created a new webpage and brochure devoted to Private Enterprise Participation in Planning and Service Delivery, <http://www.fta.dot.gov/private/>, to provide helpful information for the private sector to get involved in transit projects.

Emergency Preparedness and Security in Planning

- FTA staff has assembled a draft report of case studies of MPO support of transportation system security, including emergency preparedness and evacuation and is seeking other examples.
- Work is nearing completion on a series of MPO case studies under an FTA-sponsored, AMPO-administered project, "Innovation in Safety & Security in Transportation Planning Incentive Grant Program," which focuses on the work of 4 MPOs: Boise, ID, Buffalo, NY, Dallas, TX, and Gulfport, MS. The project will be completed June 2008.

Other FTA Activities, Guidance, and Regulations

- Transportation Planning Excellence Awards – FTA/FHWA, with APA – closed Feb. 29, 2008

- FY 07 Awards: Alternative Transportation in Parks and Public Lands (ATPPL) - October 15, 2007
- FY 08 Solicitation of Capital and Planning Projects for ATPPL - closed Feb 29, 2008
- Circular for FTA's Metropolitan Planning and State Planning and Research Programs – in process
- Environmental Impact and Related Procedures (August 7, 2007)
- Notice of Availability of Proposed Policy Guidance on Evaluation Measures for New Starts/Small Starts (August 3, 2007)
- Final Guidance on New Starts/Small Starts Policies and Procedures and Notice of Availability of Updated Reporting Instructions (June 4, 2007)
- Public-Private Partnership Pilot Program: Agency Response to Comments (May 1, 2007)
- Elderly Individuals and Individuals With Disabilities, Job Access and Reverse Commute, and New Freedom Programs: Final Circulars (March 29, 2007)
- National Transportation Institute training courses in transportation planning, covering topics such as Statewide and Metropolitan Transportation Planning, Programming, Financial Planning, and Public Involvement. Visit the NTI site for more information - www.ntionline.com.