

## **HAGERSTOWN/EASTERN PANHANDLE MPO REGULAR MEETING – FEBRUARY 18, 2004**

The Hagerstown/Eastern Panhandle MPO held its regular meeting on Tuesday, February 18, 2004 in the Washington County Administrative Annex conference room, 80 West Baltimore Street, Hagerstown, Maryland.

Present were: Gregory I. Snook, Chairman; Jim Knode, Jefferson County Commissioner, Vice-Chairman; Mike Nixon, MD DOT; Donald C. Bailey, Richard Warner and Jack Pascoli, WV DOT-Urban Study Section; Howard Strauss, President, Berkeley County Board of County Commissioners; William Breichner, Mayor, City of Hagerstown; Kristin Aleshire, City of Hagerstown Council Member; Kathleen A. Maher, Planning Director, City of Hagerstown; Robert Gordon, Region 9-Planning and Development Council; Stephen T. Goodrich, Interim Planning Director for Washington County; Jill Baker, Associate Planner, and Sandy Coffman, Administrative Assistant, Washington County Planning Commission. Lewis Grimm, Project Manager of Cambridge Systematics, Inc. was also present.

### **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by the Chairman at 7:00 p.m.

### **MINUTES**

Mr. Strauss made a motion to accept the minutes of May 22, 2003, as presented. Seconded by Mr. Nixon. So ordered.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

- **T.I.P Amendments – West Virginia**

Mr. Bailey provided an overview of the FY 2004-2007 T.I.P. amendments for West Virginia. The first T.I.P. amendment is for the design study of the TARICO Heights Bridge project (S202-26-8.10.00), located over Miller Creek, .02 miles west of County 28. No funds are listed on the amendment sheet because there is a standing contract. The second project is for renovation of the I-81 signs from the Virginia State Line to the Maryland State Line (S302-81-0.06.00). The total cost of the sign renovation project is \$400,000. The third project is to construct a traffic circle near the Charles Town Racetrack. The total cost of the project is \$1,804,000. Mr. Breichner made a motion to approve the West Virginia T.I.P. amendments, as submitted. Seconded by Mr. Knode. Unanimously approved.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

Before proceeding, Mr. Snook advised the Council Members that Bob Arch, MPO Coordinator and Planning Director for Washington County has fallen ill and is currently receiving long-term care. The County is currently advertising for Mr. Arch's replacement. Jill Baker, Associate Planner, and Steve Goodrich, Interim Planning Director, have been assisting with MPO related matters.

- **Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) – 2005**

Ms. Baker commented that, over the years, she had worked with Mr. Arch on the updates and she is familiar with the information in both the UPWP and TIP. Ms. Baker stated that, due to some pending

budget information at the Federal level, the budget amounts for the FY 2005 UPWP are also pending. Based upon discussions with Mike Nixon and Don Bailey, last years budget numbers will be used to provide a draft to the MPO members by April and the actual numbers will be added in upon receipt.

- **Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) – 2005**

A major revamping of the TIP document occurred last year. A revised TIP for FY 2005 will include the amendments adopted over the last year. The revised TIP will also be provided in April.

- **LRTP Update – Cambridge Systematics, Inc.**

Mr. Grimm, Project Manager for Cambridge Systematics, Inc., presented an update on the Multimodal Long-Range Transportation Plan. The last update was provided in May 2003. Since then the project has continued and progress has been made. The Technical Work Committee has continued their meetings and discussions on the LRTP update. He proceeded by reviewing the highlights of the PowerPoint presentation and provided a corresponding handout (see attached copy).

- **Status of the Travel Demand Model Calibration**

Mr. Grimm reported that over half of the model has been completed, as outlined on the corresponding tables in the handout. He proceeded to explain the results and data projections.

- **Status Demographic Data Projections for Population and Employment**

Mr. Grimm summarized the demographic data projections of the traffic analysis zone level. Cambridge Systematics will continue to work with the jurisdictions on this information. He also explained the comparison on the projected residential development of Hagerstown versus Washington County, which depicts that most of the development will be concentrated in the Urban Growth Area in and around the City of Hagerstown. The projected residential development for the jurisdictions for Jefferson and Berkeley Counties should be completed over the next two to three weeks.

- **Discussion of Existing & Committed Network Projects**

Mr. Grimm summarized the major projects that the WV DOT and MD DOT are currently planning to implement over the next five to ten years. He also explained the existing, plus committed project costs for each jurisdiction outlining the resources already programmed to be expended. This also includes the major project expenditures and other spot location improvements in the three counties.

- **Discussion of Public Information Meetings**

Mr. Grimm briefly highlighted some of the observations from the October 2003 public information meetings. He thanked those members who did attend the public meetings. He also commented that they were disappointed with the low number of attendees, which is not unusual for projects of this nature. However, those who did attend were very engaged and vocal on items they liked or didn't like and offered positive, constructive suggestions. He also discussed the timing of the next round of public meetings slated for the spring of 2004. The content of upcoming public meetings will include the population/employment forecasts; existing plus committed highway network; future travel demand forecasts/problems and the next steps in the process of the LRTP.

- **Question/Answers Session**

Q - Mr. Gordon: Is the completion of the project still anticipated for this summer?

A - Mr. Grimm: Maybe, but most likely it will be completed in the fall of 2004. A detailed schedule will be worked out.

\*\*\*\*\*

Q – Mr. Gordon: With the regulations on public involvement, does the FHWA look at the attendance numbers at the public meetings, and how will that be viewed?

A – Mr. Grimm: FHWA understands that each type of project has a different audience. The documentation record will reflect that there were extensive outreach activities, and

sincere efforts were made to have a broad, diverse range of attendees. On the regional level, it is difficult to obtain people's interest and keep them engaged.

\*\*\*\*\*

Q- Mr. Knode: The PanTran systems in Berkeley and Jefferson Counties are undergoing changes in their funding base. Was this taken into account?

A – Mr. Grimm: Yes. Historically, PanTran has been a rural transit system and most of the Federal and State funding support has come directly through the WV-DOT. Now, that the size of the area has increased, the system has been reclassified as a “small urban” system and their funding is from the Federal Transit Administration. West Virginia does not provide any support to the urban transit systems. The non-Federal matching funds have to come from city and county governments and passenger fares. This funding process is phased out over a five-year period, to fund the match on a local level. Mr. Grimm added that Fredericksburg, Virginia started a local bus system and from the beginning, they were very aggressive in looking at the private sector for support (i.e. shopping centers, college, etc.), to the point where the local share is very small.

\*\*\*\*\*

Q – Mr. Snook: The screenline on I-70 runs north and south. Does that mean that any road that bisects I-70 would be included in that count or is it just mainly I-81? Why include the other roads as a part of the base model when I-81, Route 65, or other major roads are where the bulk of the traffic is? Is the base year count for 2003? What do you estimate the daily traffic basis is for I-81?

A – Mr. Grimm: The screenline includes any road that crosses I-70 from north to south. It is a combination of both the major and minor collector roads, to replicate the traffic volumes on both. The base year count is mostly 2002. The daily two-way volume for I-81 is probably around 45,000 to 50,000. The volume on I-70 is very similar to I-81.

\*\*\*\*\*

Q- Mr. Snook: What does CR 1 stand for on the screenline table?

A- Mr. Grimm: CR 1 stands for County Route 1. Screenline 5-CR 1/Maryland 65 examines the traffic mainly traveling east/west across the Berkeley and Jefferson County lines. The screenlines are broken down into quadrants within each county, to be able to estimate the current east/west and north/south movements. The closer we can match the model of today, will provide a higher probability that we'll be able to more closely predict the future of traffic demands.

\*\*\*\*\*

Q – Mr. Snook: There was a comment about rail traffic during the public meetings. Was that comment about passenger or freight rail traffic?

A - Mr. Grimm: The comment was primarily related to freight traffic along the major north/south line. Residents in the Charles Town and Ranson areas see problems with more trains and longer trains, which cause issues with traffic movement and emergency equipment access.

A – Mr. Knode: There has been a significant increase of trains in Jefferson County. Several years ago, signs were placed at all of the crossings notifying travelers of increased rail traffic.

\*\*\*\*\*

Q – Mr. Snook: Was there any comments in reference to air service or air traffic in the Martinsburg or Hagerstown areas?

A – Mr. Grimm: None that I can recall. But we do know that good access is needed for both airport facilities.

\*\*\*\*\*

Q – Mr. Snook: Yesterday we had a presentation from another consultant in reference to the Early Action Compact process for attainment of the 8-hour ozone standard. How does that fit into what Cambridge Systematics is looking at?

A – Mr. Grimm: It is a parallel effort. The EAC work will take outputs of their modeling activities.

There being no further questions, Mr. Snook thanked Mr. Grimm for his presentation.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

- **Early Action Compact (EAC)**

Mr. Strauss reported that Berkeley County plans to met the next EAC milestone by the end of March. Mr. Goodrich stated that Washington County is on the same schedule and plans to submit the final plan by the upcoming deadline. Mr. Nixon commented that he did not anticipate any problems with Washington County meeting the March 31<sup>st</sup> deadline.

## **FUTURE MEETING**

Mr. Snook stated that the next MPO regular meeting would be held in May 2004.

## **ADJOURMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

---

Greg I. Snook, MPO Chairman