

**EXECUTIVE TRANSPORTATION AND ENVIRONMENT COUNCIL
MEETING SUMMARY**

Monday, January 8, 2007

Utah Department of Transportation
Rampton Complex, Administration Conference Room
4501 South 2700 West
Salt Lake City, Utah

PRESENT: Carlos Braceras, Utah Department of Transportation
Jerry Benson for John English, Utah Transit Authority
Larry Crist, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Larry Svoboda, Environmental Protection Agency
Bryan Cawley, Federal Highway Administration
Jim McMinimee, Utah Department of Transportation
Shane Marshall, Utah Department of Transportation
Greg Punske, Federal Highway Administration
Mike Styler, Utah Department of Natural Resources
Dianne Nielson, Utah Department of Environmental Quality
Cory Jensen, Utah State Historic Preservation Office
Matt Seddon, Utah State Historic Preservation Office
Butch Waidelich, Federal Highway Administration
John Njord, Utah Department of Transportation
Ahmad Jaber, Utah Department of Transportation
Chuck Chappell, Wasatch Front Region Council
Diane Josie, Utah Department of Transportation

I. CHAIR AND HOST WELCOME

The meeting began at 11:05 a.m. Butch Waidelich welcomed everyone to the meeting. John Njord welcomed everyone to the Utah Department of Transportation (UDOT) Administrative Offices. Self-introductions were conducted. Carlos Braceras mentioned that Shane Marshall is UDOT's new Director of Environmental Services and will be attending ETEC meetings.

Butch mentioned the possibility of discussing projects and updates such as at the Mountain View Corridor or I-15 at the end of the meeting. John briefly discussed issues involving the Mountain View Corridor alignments in Utah County including a visit to the wetlands by the Sierra Club, community impacts, and requests from cities' regarding the location of the corridor. John said that UDOT has selected 5800 West as the preferred alternative in Salt Lake County and that message has been sent to the community.

Jerry Benson from the Utah Transit Authority (UTA) mentioned the presentation conducted by UTA at the last meeting. He said the tax initiative for transit was successful. The Wasatch Front Regional Council (WFRC) presented the model projects to Salt Lake County and UTA is happy this was done early. He said UTA is currently putting together project plans and their approach is to do all the projects in the most efficient and expeditious manner possible. Their priorities are FrontRunner south and Trax lines in Salt Lake County.

II. TRAVEL DEMAND PRESENTATION (FOUR-STEP PROCESS)

Chuck Chappell from the WFRC conducted a presentation on the transportation demand model, which is also called the four-step process. He distributed “The Metropolitan Transportation Planning 4 Step Modeling Process” handout.

Chuck mentioned the long-range planning activities between UDOT and UTA and said it is a very coordinated effort. He thanked Ahmad Jaber for working with the WFRC to set a schedule for WFRC to provide a combined report by May or June. He credits UDOT for getting this coordination in place.

Chuck discussed the status of WFRC’s Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) for Weber, Davis and Salt Lake Counties. They currently have a draft list of projects up to 2030 and they’re working to combine the projects with the financial forecast through 2030. The projects are based on needs and not all projects can be built because of the cost. Their goal is to have the plan adopted by the WFRC by May 2007.

Chuck discussed the information listed on the handout including the four-step modeling process, which includes trip generation, trip distribution, mode split and network assignment. This process ultimately provides an output of the transportation needs for both the base year and the year 2030. Chuck said the output for the year 2030 isn’t an exact data point, but rather a range. He said 10% accuracy is required for the base-year information for the freeway. Carlos Braceras said that projections are exceeded for road usage. Jerry said that UTA has the same issue.

Chuck said the models were created to produce better results, but not created to come up with exact numbers for the NEPA documents. The models are used to design the highway for the peak hour capacity, but can’t be used to calculate the exact numbers of emissions.

Larry Svoboda asked if there is an area in the planning process that identifies sensitive resource areas. Chuck said yes and that WFRC looks for sensitive areas to support local governments in their planning and in overall regional growth. The information is also used to determine where to locate the transportation system itself.

A discussion was held regarding issues at the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) stage. Ahmad mentioned that when the Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) submit lists for RTPs, it's important to get feed back early in the process. Dianne Nielson said that federal lands do the forecasting upfront to get it into the plan and they still get challenged. She said the only thing she's seen that works is if all the parties are at the table at the very beginning and hold their commitment through the process. Larry Crist asked if WFRC has gotten much input from resource agencies. Chuck said agencies could provide more input.

III. ENVIRONMENTAL AIR QUALITY REQUIREMENTS

Larry Svoboda with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Dianne Nielson with the Utah Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) conducted a presentation on new developments in air quality and the recently revised PM2.5 standards.

Larry gave a brief history on EPA's particulate regulations, how they've changed and why. He said that EPA began regulating particulate matter in the 1970's, which included everything from gravel to fine particles. In 1987, it became evident that the problem was with the fine particles that stayed in the atmosphere and that these particles were not healthy for individuals. He said that in recent years, we've developed a better understanding of the health effects of these particles and it is believed that they contribute to premature death, chronic bronchitis, heart attacks, days of missed work and school. It is estimated that the cost is \$17-35 billion dollars per year. Dianne mentioned that the DEQ supports the health-based science on the safety concerns for the standards.

Larry said the two numbers assessed by the EPA for the standards are the 24-hour value and the annual value. In 1997, EPA promulgated a PM2.5 standard of 65 ug/m³. This standard was challenged legally, but ultimately the issues were resolved and the new standard was implemented. Effective September 2006, EPA changed the standard for the 24-hour value from 65 ug/m³ to 35 ug/m³. The annual value stayed the same.

Dianne Nielson conducted a presentation on how the data is monitored. She showed graphs illustrating the three-year averages for the PM2.5. All counties that are monitored were in attainment with the 24-hour standard set in 1997. However, based on past exposures and the changes in the 24-hour standard, those counties will likely be in non-attainment in the future. Dianne mentioned the metropolitan areas likely to violate the 24-hour standard are Logan, Ogden, Clearfield, Salt Lake, Provo and Orem. She said if the standard is violated in one city or area, the whole metropolitan statistical area is in violation. If the area is in non-attainment, then there is no conformity between the transportation plan and the environmental plan which results in the loss of federal money for state and local government projects.

Dianne said the State needs to develop specific strategies to address the problems of non-attainment. She showed graphs illustrating that most of the pollution is coming from on-road vehicles. John asked what amount of the particles are generated from engine combustion compared to the amount of particles generated by dust from the highway. Dianne said the majority is from combustion of fossil fuels and she agreed to provide John with the percentage of highway dust generated by vehicles.

Dianne discussed the challenges in shrinking the areas where problems are found by putting out more monitors. DEQ is proposing that the areas be based on a township and range basis. She said they want to identify the areas where there are problems to develop strategies to mitigate the problems. Issues that need to be addressed are the money, technical staff, modeling and partnerships with EPA and transportation, and identifying areas with problems in order to mitigate the problems. Carlos asked about other mitigation actions that can be considered. Dianne said that California is currently dealing with this issue. She said actions include the creation of vehicle standards that are more stringent, bringing in cleaner vehicles at a faster pace, and requiring power plants and refineries to meet certain types of standards.

Dianne mentioned another issue that will be coming is EPA's review on ozone standards. We're in attainment right now, but that may change.

III. SAFETEA-LU COORDINATION PLANS

Due to time constraints, Butch Waidelich was not able to conduct this presentation.

ACTION ITEM: Butch to conduct this presentation at a future meeting.

V. OTHER AGENDA ITEMS

No other agenda items were discussed.

VI. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS AND SCHEDULE NEXT MEETING

Larry Svoboda will host the next meeting on Monday, April 2, 2007 from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Environmental Protection Agency Region 8 Offices, 1595 Wynkoop Street in Denver, Colorado. John mentioned using the state planes to travel from Salt Lake City to Denver to attend the meeting. The trip would be a day-trip.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:10 p.m.