

Transportation Technical Advisory Group
September 9, 2014
Meeting Minutes

Participants

TTAG:	Mr. Jeremy Ginsberg, Darien; Mr. James Michel, Greenwich; Mr. Mike Yeosock, Norwalk Pete Ratkiewicz, Westport; Mr. Mani Poola, Stamford; Mr. Robert Nerney, Wilton;
SWRPA:	Ms. Sue Prosi; Mr. Ryan Hall;
Other:	Ms. Roxane Fromson, CTDOT.

At 10:07 a.m. Ms. Susan Prosi called the meeting to order. The meeting was held at the Norwalk Fire Department at 121 Connecticut Avenue, Norwalk, CT.

1. TTAG Meeting Minutes: June 11, 2014

The meeting minutes were then approved as amended following a motion by Mr. Pete Ratkiewicz and a second by Mr. Jeremy Ginsburg. The motion carried unanimously.

2. Public Involvement

There were no members of the public present.

3. Transportation Improvement Program*

3a. FFY2012-2015 TIP Amendments*

Ms. Prosi summarized the CTDOT's request for an amendment to the TIP (SWRTIP#2014-006). CTDOT proposes funding a marketing program for CTFastrak by using funding from the CMAQ Statewide Marketing Projects. The funding will be drawn from the NY-NJ-CT Moderate Air Quality and Greater CT Moderate Air Quality CMAQ programs. CTDOT intends to reprogram Project 170-3106 funding (\$1,220,000 federal with state match of \$1,525,000) from the statewide marketing program to Fastrak funding. CTDOT also intends to reprogram additional funding for Fastrak from the CMAQ Statewide Marketing Greater CT Moderate Air Quality funding source. Combined, these two sources will bring the total funding for the Fastrak marketing project to \$3,659,000.

Ms. Prosi brought up a number of questions and concerns with CTDOT's request to transfer funds between these two programs. They include:

- What Statewide Marketing Program for transportation demand management will not be undertaken with the transfer of funding?
- Why can statewide marketing efforts be reduced or eliminated? How effective has the statewide marketing program been?
- What funding sources can be used to marketing transit services in the South Western Region – particularly to support the soon-to-be-completed Norwalk Transit District AVL system.
- Historically, the South Western Region requested performance metrics for the TDM, CTRides, and other ridesharing programs. Will this data be provided for the current TDM and ridesharing programs, and if not, will they be provided for current programs and established for the Fastrak program?
- The South Western TTAG and MPO have previously expressed their opinion that CMAQ funding should be used for capital projects that contribute to improvement of air quality such as

- signal systems, advanced parking guidance, etc.
- Why isn't a larger share of CMAQ funding allocated to "regional" or "municipal" projects? The last CMAQ funding solicitation provided \$10 million to regions and municipalities with a project cap of \$3 million.

Ms. Roxane Fromson provided information in response to the talking points. Beginning with the CMAQ program, CTDOT chose to allocate \$10 million to the program in 2011. CTDOT is planning on another CMAQ solicitation in the near future. The amount available for regions/municipalities hasn't been determined.

The TTAG also acknowledged the South Western Region's on-going preference to use CMAQ and other federal funds for capital projects. Only a fraction of the region's submitted CMAQ eligible projects get funded, and CTDOT's solicitation for CMAQ projects is not consistent. As noted in the meeting packet and in the discussion, the last CTDOT CMAQ solicitation was in 2011 with only \$10M available through the competitive process.

Ms. Fromson advised that the Statewide TDM Program (CTRides) has achieved efficiencies through a single contractor rather than the three ridesharing brokerages and another contractor that were previously used. One efficiency was marketing of CTRides and the TDM programs which then freed up the Statewide Marketing project funding. Without any transfer of funds toward CTFastrak, the funds would not have been used. With these savings, CTDOT will dedicate the majority of the remaining funds on media purchases for CTRides throughout the state with an emphasis on advertising the upcoming CTFastrak project.

The TTAG agreed that marketing of transit services is important for the upcoming CTFastrak project and transit services in the South Western Region both bus and rail. Mr. Jeremy Ginsberg asked how success of the marketing program will be determined, and how success of marketing and of Fastrak ridership will be determined. Also, how much on-going marketing funding for Fastrak is planned and does the degree of marketing vary based upon Fastrak ridership success or failure. For marketing of transit services, and for Fastrak, is there a target percentage of total project operating costs that can be set and also applied to all transit services? Funding for bus transit services offered by Norwalk Transit and CTTransit is needed. More information on total costs for Fastrak was requested to include more than construction of the line, but operations, fleet and maintenance facility.

Ms. Fromson promised to bring these concerns to the project manager of the TDM Program, Jim Stutz.

Ms. Prosi and Mr. Mani Poola described another TIP request from CTDOT. The proposed project for mid-block pedestrian crossing and signals on Washington Boulevard. The existing crossing just south of Bell Street will be upgraded and a HAWK signal installed. A new crossing and HAWK signal will be installed south of Broad Street between 1035 and 1055 Washington Boulevard addresses. This crossing will provide a connection to the Mill River Multiuse Trail. Mr. Poola handed out the aerial view of the proposed improvements. The projects will increase pedestrian safety. The CTDOT cost estimate for the project is \$200,000 for design 2014-2016 and \$650,000 for construction. The TTAG did not oppose the project, which will be forwarded to the MPO for addition to the TIP at the next MPO meeting. The proposed improvements also tie in to the Stamford "Street Smart" project which aims to improve pedestrian safety town-wide. This campaign was launched after there were three pedestrian fatalities in Stamford in the last year. CTDOT is asked to provide the detailed project construction cost estimate.

Requested FHWA/FTA Amendments – SWRTIP#2014-006

Region	FACode	Proj#	AQCD	Rte/Sys	Town	Description	Phase	Year	Tot\$(000)	Fed\$(000)	Sta\$(000)	Loc\$(000)	Comments
75	CMAQ	0170-3106	X6	VARIOUS	STATEWIDE	FY13: STATEWIDE MARKETING (NY-NJ-CT MODERATE) -TRANSFER TO FTA (5307S)	OTH	2015	1,525	1,220	305	0	MOVE FROM FFY '13 TO FFY '15, INCRE. EST. FROM FED. \$553K & TRANSFER TO FTA (5307S)
75	5307S	0170-3106	X6	VARIOUS	STATEWIDE	FY13: STATEWIDE MARKETING (NY-NJ-CT MODERATE) -TRANSFER FROM FHWA (CMAQ)	OTH	2015	1,525	1,220	305	0	TRANSFER FROM FHWA (CMAQ)

Code Key:

AQC X6 = exempt

4. CTDOT Capital Plan Update to 2015 – 2019

Ms. Prosi directed the TTAG to CTDOT’s Capital Plan Update which shows CTDOT’s constrained vision for how funding will be spent over the next 5 years. This document includes the LOTCIP allocation by region. CTDOT is currently accepting comments on the Capital Plan. Ms. Prosi asked that any comments be directed to her by September 23, 2014 so input along with SWRP A comments can be compiled and submitted to CTDOT. SWRPA will post the draft 2015 Capital Plan reformatted to show projects by town, statewide, region and transit. The TTAG will be advised of the availability of the new format which will be posted on the TTAG webpage.

5. Upcoming Action Items for South Western Region MPO

Ms. Prosi gave an update on SWRPA’s Title VI program and various components including a brief update on new Title VI requirements. In order to comply for USDOT and CTDOT requirements, the Title VI program must be endorsed by MPO. Ms. Prosi also asked the TTAG for contacts of community and religious groups in order to increase SWRPA’s public outreach capabilities.

6. Planning Studies funded by STP Urban, LOTCIP or Regional Transportation Planning

Ms. Prosi briefed the TTAG on CTDOT’s planning study process. It requires the submittal of proposed planning studies by October 31st of each year if CTDOT technical reviews and participation are required. Study concepts are to be provided to Ms. Prosi by September 26, 2014.

7. STP-Urban and LOTCIP

Ms. Prosi referred the TTAG to CTDOT’s 2014 STP-Urban report. CTDOT is processing the regions’ first two LOTCIP projects (Greenwich Sound Beach Bridge and Stamford Fiber Optic Trunk Cable). CTDOT is also reviewing the Westport Route 136 and Bayberry Lane project and the Greenwich Frontage Road project. SWRPA is developing the RFQ for LOTCIP consultant support. CTDOT is looking at alternative uses of South Western Region STP Urban funding has proposed Washington Boulevard pedestrian crossings with HAWK signals which were discussed under the TIP agenda item 3.

8. SWRPA Transportation Planning and Environmental Planning Activities

8a.Regional Long Range Transportation Plan Update

Ms. Prosi referenced the upcoming Long Range Transportation Plan update. The update will focus on what has changed in the region in terms of projects and priorities. SWRPA will send out guidance for feedback within the coming month with the intent of finalizing a draft document by February 2015. MPO approval is needed by May 2015.

8b. Transportation Studies: active and in development

Ms. Prosi mentioned the ongoing High Ridge/Long Ridge program, the Glendale/Springdale TOD study, the Westport Bus Study, the Westport Rail Study, and the Stamford Bus & Shuttle Study.

8c. Hazard mitigation Plan Update (formerly called Predisaster Mitigation Plan Update)

Ms. Prosi mentioned that is currently working on the Hazard Mitigation Plan update. The plan will be submitted to DEMHS for review. DEMHS review will take one year.

9. South Western and Housatonic Valley Regions Merger Status Report

Ms. Prosi announced that Bethel had approved its COG ordinance on September 5th, clearing the 60% threshold required for the creation of WCCOG. A letter was sent to OPM with all the certified ordinances and requesting official dedication of WCCOG. The process of hiring a new executive director of WCCOG is ongoing. There are currently two final candidates.

10. New Business

10a. Upcoming Meetings

Ms. Prosi referenced the upcoming meetings and events, including the September 18th MPO meeting at the Norwalk Transit District. The next TTAG meeting will be held on October 8th at Darien Town Hall or Norwalk Fire Department. A subsequent MPO meeting will be held at the Norwalk Transit District on October 23rd.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:25 p.m.

Handouts:

- *CTDOT Washington Boulevard Pedestrian Crossing Improvements Concepts*
- *CTDOT Capital Plan Update to 2015-2019*
- *Planning Studies Funded by STP Urban, LOTCIP or Regional Transportation Planning*

Minutes approved by TTAG as revised: October 8, 2014