

Chicago Area Transportation Study
Tier 2 Consultation Meeting
April 17, 2006
Final Meeting Summary

Participants	Representing
John Baczek	IDOT
Theresa Claxton	FHWA
Chris DiPalma (via phone)	FHWA
Doug Ferguson	CATS
Matt Fuller	FHWA
Pete Harmet	IDOT
Michael Leslie	USEPA
Clarita Lao	IDOT
Ross Patronsky	CATS
Mark Pitstick	RTA
Mike Rogers	IEPA
Gordon Smith	IDOT
JD Stevenson	FHWA
Rich Young	IDOT

1. Approval of the March 21, 2006 meeting summary

The first draft March meeting summary was approved, subject to a clarification by Mr. Wies of a point in the first item.

2. PM_{2.5} Hot-Spot Analysis – TIP work types

Mr. Patronsky distributed a listing of TIP work types with their proposed relationship to the four types of projects of air quality concern. He noted that about 700 of the roughly 1,600 projects in the TIP had one or more work types that were listed as hot spot candidate types.

Mr. Patronsky then asked for the group's opinion about including signal interconnects (S-TIM) in the list of work types that could be associated with a project of air quality concern. Interconnects are presumed to speed up traffic for conformity purposes, so perhaps they should not be included. On the other hand, the MOBILE model does not significantly alter direct PM_{2.5} emission rates in response to speed changes. The team agreed that the work type should stay on the list.

Mr. Rogers asked about the reasons for including intersection improvements in the list as a hot spot candidate type, since the guidance addresses projects that will, by their nature, improve traffic flow. Mr. Patronsky said that the work type was intended as a first screen, and that other criteria, such as the level of service, percentage of diesel traffic and type of improvement, would also be considered in deciding whether a hot spot analysis is needed.

Mr. Pitstick asked about the inclusion of parking projects in the list. Mr. Patronsky explained that he had done this because particular projects may increase diesel (bus) traffic to a location. He said that he expected most parking projects, which largely attract gas-powered cars, would not be subject to hot spot analysis because they wouldn't involve significant diesel traffic.

Mr. Pitstick also asked about the inclusion of fleet expansion projects. Mr. Patronsky replied that he thought this would apply in the case of expanding a fleet by building a new terminal facility, not in the case of general fleet expansion, where the vehicles would be spread among a number of terminals.

The team agreed to accept the list.

(Following the meeting, Mr. Smith and Mr. Rogers recommended removing the "Program Group" and "Exempt Status" columns from the list, since they were not directly relevant to a work type's status as a hot spot candidate type. Mr. Patronsky agreed to do this.)

3. PM_{2.5} Hot-Spot Analysis – I-55 Stevenson Expy from Weber Rd to I-80 (TIP ID 12-97-0027)

Mr. Patronsky said that the I-55 project has a work type (H-AL, Highway/Road - Add Lanes) that is on the list of work types that may be subject to hot spot analysis under the first criterion: "New or expanded highway projects that have a significant number of or significant increase in diesel vehicles." Thus, the project must be reviewed for the volume of diesel traffic.

Mr. Patronsky presented a chart breaking out gas versus diesel VMT for the region as a whole based on the output of the travel demand model. He proposed that this data be used in determining whether the I-55 project had "significant" diesel traffic. Based on this data, diesel traffic averages about 6.25% of total VMT. Mr. Baczek indicated that 10% of the peak traffic on that section of I-55 is truck (diesel) traffic.

Mr. Leslie recommended linking the diesel VMT to monitors with exceedences in the area. Mr. Rogers said IEPA would identify the monitors in the vicinity of the project, together with their observations.

Mr. Leslie suggested that what is needed is to generate emission factors based on the relative volume of diesel traffic for the section. Mr. Patronsky replied that CATS' method for emissions estimations applies VMT from the travel demand model to emissions rates for each of the 28 MOBILE6 vehicle types. Thus, if present volumes plus projected volumes for 2010, 2020, and 2030 can be supplied along with the estimated percentage of diesel traffic, CATS staff can estimate emissions for each of the model years.

Mr. Rogers expressed concerns about the monitor locations for a quantitative analysis. He noted that he and Mr. Zyznieuski had worked for about a year to correlate VMT with values at nearby monitors, but were unsuccessful.

Mr. Stevenson indicated that there is a PM_{2.5} hot spot analysis example from Maryland and that he will distribute it to the group.

Mr. Patronsky reviewed CATS' needs to model the PM_{2.5} emissions for the years 2002, 2010, 2020 and 2030: an estimation of overall VMT (or ADT if that is what is available) plus the percentage of VMT generated by diesel vehicles. CATS will use emission rates generated for the PM_{2.5} conformity determination to estimate emissions for the project.

IDOT District 1 will produce the PM_{2.5} hot spot analysis document and will handle the public comment period. At Mr. Baczek's request, Mr. Patronsky agreed that CATS would make its web site available for posting the analysis and request for comments. After some discussion about using the CATS mailing list to contact potential commenter's, Mr. Baczek concluded that it would be logistically infeasible.

Mr. Stevenson indicated that a NEPA report is need for the final product and approval. The team agreed that the hot spot analysis did not need to be brought back to consultation.

The Dan Ryan (I-90/94) project (TIP ID 01-00-0024) is letting five contracts in May for the main line; IDOT has been advised that a hot spot analysis would be required if the project is one of air quality concern. Mr. Harmet asked the purpose of doing the hot-spot analysis on a project that has already begun construction. Mr. Stevenson responded that federal action was still required for the five contracts to be let, and that the regulations specified a hot spot analysis for projects requiring federal action.

Mr. Patronsky said that CATS staff would initiate the determination of whether the project was of air quality concern by reviewing the work types for the applicable TIP IDs (the Dan Ryan has more than one) against the previously-approved list of work types that may lead to a project of air quality concern.

He suggested using the same approach as proposed for the I-55 project: CATS will prepare a table of PM_{2.5} emissions analysis for the years 2002, 2010, 2020 and 2030 based on VMT and diesel percentage information provided by IDOT. The final report and the public comment will be handled by IDOT. Monitoring data will be provided by IEPA.

Mr. Rogers raised the point that there was an assumption that the project would "pass" the emissions analysis. He recommended that some thought be given to what to do if that didn't happen. IDOT, FHWA, IEPA and USEPA representatives agreed to meet to discuss a fallback position in case the analysis did not turn out as expected. Mr. DiPalma noted that there are mitigation factors listed in the guidance (p.32-33) that could help determine fallback options.

Mr. Baczek asked if there was a need for a review of the public comment letter used. Ms. Lao stated that the letter would be sent to FHWA, EPA and IEPA for review. FHWA, EPA and IEPA agreed to review it.

4. Other Business

No other business was brought to the consultation team.

5. Next Meeting

The next meeting was left on call.