

Tier 2 Consultation Meeting
Thursday, November 4, 2004
Final meeting summary

Participants	
Patricia Berry	CATS
Bill Brown	NIRPC
Doug Ferguson	CATS
Patricia Morris	USEPA
Ross Patronsky	CATS
Dan Rice	CATS
Mike Rogers	IEPA
Gordon Smith	IDOT
Kevin Ward	FHWA
Kermit Wies	CATS

1. Approval of the May 4, 2004 and June 30, 2004 meeting summaries
The consultation team approved the second draft May 4 and the fifth draft June 30 meeting summaries.

2. 2030 RTP Update

Mr. Wies reported that the public de-briefing on the 2030 RTP process continues.

NIPC is on track to adopt its *Common Ground Plan* by the end of this year. The process of translating *Common Ground* into a socio-economic forecast is something that will be a multi-year exercise. For the 2030 RTP Update, NIPC will try to have a quantified socio-economic model for CATS to use for testing scenarios, but it will not be suitable for use in the conformity analysis. *Common Ground* is a policy statement and the process of quantifying that for use in the travel demand analysis will require many years' work. The forecasts may be available for use in 2006.

3. 8-hour Conformity Schedule and required two-year TIP update

Ms. Berry noted that staff is working with the implementers to expedite the conformity and the update of the TIP so that Policy Committee approval may occur in March instead of June. Because of the uncertainty of our ability to attain the expedited schedule, particularly with the transit programs still up in the air, we have not yet presented the revised schedule.

Discussion continued with confirmation that the attainment year must be an analysis year. The consultation team has discussed interpolating the available socio-economic data to develop input to the models and agreed that that is acceptable. Ms. Berry asked if it would be acceptable to interpolate the VMT data and use that to feed directly into the MOBILE model. Ms. Morris said that she had discussed that possibility with USEPA headquarters, and they have said

while the socio-economic data can be interpolated for input to the travel demand models, we can not use interpolated VMT for input to the MOBILE model for the attainment year.

Headquarters' concern is that interpolating VMT would result in loss of sensitivity and accuracy. Mr. Wies agreed that some sensitivity would be lost and noted that the margin of error is large. With the constraints involved in developing a conformity-neutral TIP we are not talking about moving projects from far outlying years to 2010. The only question to the project implementers is what projects from 2012 they would expect to be completed by 2010. Given that the implementers do not operate with that level of certainty, changes will be conjectural anyway. Any change to the output would be relatively small. The staff burden of doing an additional travel demand analysis and preparing all the documentation exceeds the amount of new information that will result. Ms. Morris will double check with USEPA headquarters. No one wants the region to be in the position of inviting legal challenges.

Ms. Berry noted that she has discussed the treatment of signal interconnect projects with team members individually. Federal rules allow the signal interconnect projects to be added without a conformity analysis with the caveat that they be added at the next analysis. Since we are embarked on a conformity-neutral TIP update and a full analysis will not be undertaken for the eight-hour standard, there are not plans to add the signal interconnects. Ms. Morris and Ms. Berry agreed to discuss this item further after the meeting.

Ms. Berry expressed appreciation for agreement for concurrent review of the TIP update and the conformity for the eight-hour standard. The tight time line means we could not make the schedule without the cooperation of the state and federal agencies. Ms. Morris requested that the request for concurrent and expedited review of the conformity determination be put in writing so she can forward the request to her branch and section chiefs.

4. PM 2.5 Standard

Mr. Rogers stated that the PM_{2.5} designations are expected in the next four weeks or so. The federal register notice containing the designations will include a date, usually 60 days after the notice, of when the designations will become effective. A demonstration of conformity for PM 2.5 standard will be required within one year of the effective date. He has not received any further information on what the PM_{2.5} tests will be.

Ms. Berry stated that based on the current regulations, CATS is anticipating developing a conformity determination based on a full analysis for consideration for approval no later than October 2006. Ms. Morris said that by that time, CATS would need to produce results for both ozone and PM_{2.5}. Mr. Rogers said the PM_{2.5} determination will have an earlier deadline—probably February 2006.

Mr. Wies said the February 2006 deadline would have to be met by conducting another mini-conformity based on the existing TIP and Plan.

There is concern over when the next SIP update with revised planning assumptions will occur. Mr. Rogers said that IEPA is required to have the 8-hour attainment demonstration SIP submitted to USEPA in June 2007 so IEPA will be putting together strategies and modeling over the next couple of years. Once submitted, an 18-month clock for conformity to the SIP budgets will start. The vehicle mix and registration data (one of the planning assumptions) currently in use relies on 2001 data. The limit on that data is that it not be more than five years old.

Mr. Patronsky asked if CATS would need to use updated data for the conformity due in October 2006. Mr. Rogers replied possibly and noted that CATS would then be using updated information prior to its use by IEPA because IEPA will not be revising the SIP just for that one assumption while a full update of the SIP is underway.

Mr. Brown said NIRPC will use the new updated information that is available for its eight-hour conformity. Mr. Rogers asked about MOBILE6.2. Mr. Patronsky said that the VOC and NO_x emission rates are unchanged between version 6.0 and 6.2. CO changes, but we do not have to run CO.

Mr. Patronsky asked for confirmation that CATS would not need to update the vehicle fleet information for the eight-hour conformity or for the analysis to be considered for approval in 2006. Mr. Rogers said that the existing 2001 data would fit into the USEPA/FHWA's 5 year window for the 2006 conformity update. Ms. Morris said the acceptability of using the 2001 data hinges on the availability of new data and that IEPA needs to determine when new data would be ready to be used prior to its use by the MPO. Mr. Rogers said that new data may be available to be used for the PM_{2.5} conformity determination

Discussion then turned to what the joint PM_{2.5} conformity determinations with CATS and NIRPC will look like. Mr. Brown said that he anticipated producing an additional table which would include the CATS results in NIRPC's documentation and vice versa. Ms. Morris asked about the timing of NIRPC's efforts. Mr. Brown said the schedule has not yet been set. Mr. Wies said the clock will be set by the designation date. Ms. Morris said that it is still expected that CATS and NIRPC will be designated as one area for PM_{2.5}. The areas were allowed to proceed separately for ozone because separate budgets existed. With PM_{2.5} the designations are occurring prior to having budgets in place. Coordination is essential since it will be conformity for the entire area.

Mr. Rogers noted that PM_{2.5} SIPs are not due until 2008. Ms. Morris said that states could opt to budget based on inventory. Mr. Rogers said he expected guidance to accompany the designations. Mr. Brown noted that there may be

more precursors for PM2.5 than for ozone. Ms. Morris said that budgets for NOx and ozone precursors may not be sufficient for PM2.5 because those budgets are based on ozone control measures. Mr. Brown asked if that meant only direct emissions would be used. Mr. Rogers said we could be faced with precursors, likely VOC and NOx, but also ammonia, sulfur dioxide, and re-entrained road dust would be included unless they are not significant.

Mr. Wies asked if ultimately the more stringent precursors may be the target for conformity. Mr. Rogers replied affirmatively. Mr. Wies said that given the likely February 2006 deadline for a new demand estimate, there will not be any new data except maybe a new NIPC file. He asked if USEPA anticipates additional demand estimates or simply MOBILE runs. Ms. Morris said she did not know yet, but it may boil down to again only testing the required analysis year.

Mr. Wies asked if the test to be passed will be a baseline/build or a build/no-build. The artifacts of the vehicle mix will cause a downward trend in PM2.5. The base/build would likely be the test; the build/no-build would double the work. Mr. Rogers said that the rule for ozone in the absence of a budget is to do both. Mr. Wies discussed the margin of error resulting from the travel demand model, input data and MOBILE model. Ms. Morris said that Illinois has been in a fortunate position with budgets in place, with PM2.5 things could become very time consuming because of the lack of budgets. Mr. Rogers said the budgets for 2007 are going to be more stringent.

Talk turned to how the results will be presented. Mr. Brown's suggestion is that there would be an additional table in the results section of NIRPC's conformity where the most recent CATS results would be listed. Another possibility would be to combine the NIRPC total with the CATS total for both the budget and emissions, but that would complicate things. Mr. Brown's suggestion of showing results from the adjacent MPO in a separate table will mean that whoever gets done first will be presenting a blank table for the other. Mr. Rogers asked if that would be acceptable to USEPA. Ms. Morris said the question is whether the public process requires both pieces to be in place. Mr. Brown said that the RTP schedules for NIRPC and CATS are at least a year apart. NIRPC expects to have the conformity determination on its latest RTP in January or February of 2005. This will not include conformity to PM2.5. Ms. Morris said she would check on the flexibility allowed. Subsequent to the consultation team meeting, Ms. Morris indicated that it is acceptable for the initial PM2.5 determination to include results from only one of the MPOs (the first one complete).

Mr. Wies distributed the FHWA Travel Model Certification Checklist which was released about 6 to 8 months ago. Mr. Wies said that the checklist was developed as a "helping document", but given the one size fits all aspects of the document, he would like to review some sections of the checklist with the federal reviewers. Mr. Ward suggested that Mr. Wies and he meet with staff of the FHWA Resource Center for that review.

With regards to PM2.5 precursors, Mr. Rogers said that the guidance that comes with designation should allow for the States to determine if a precursor is significant for an area and that the EPA shouldn't just add them in.

Mr. Wies asked Mr. Rogers if once the designation is declared the more stringent of whatever precursor of VOC or NOx will be the target for conformity? And there won't be a separate test for PM2.5? Mr. Rogers replied that since we are handling them all together, the answer would be yes. Mr. Wies's second question was whether it is anticipated that there will need to be additional demand estimates, or will a new MOBILE run with new information suffice for the conformity due in approximately February 2006? Ms. Morris stated that it will depend on the analysis years required for PM2.5.

5. 2000 Census

Ms. Berry said that the RTA is working with SEWRPC on the FTA FY06 distribution. When the FY 05 distribution was finalized, it was agreed that if Wisconsin did not use the FTA funds, then for FY 06 all funds would go to northeastern Illinois. CATS is in discussion with SEWRPC on documenting the existing cooperative efforts of the two adjoining MPOs.

CATS staff has met with Grundy and Kendall County officials and will continue discussions with the counties and the municipalities regarding the CATS Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA). The subregional planning staff has been a big help in these discussions. It appears likely that only the urbanized part of Grundy County (Aux Sable township) will be included in the MPA and that all of Kendall County will be included. The primary concern of the local officials is the funding implications. The MPA discussions are being addressed at each meeting of the Council of Mayors Executive Committee and the Work Program and Policy Committees. If all of Kendall County becomes part of the MPA, it is likely that there would be an additional member added to both the Policy and Work Program Committees and that some subregional planning funds would go to Kendall County for either their own Planning Liaison or to contribute to Kane and Will's PL funding for additional work.

6. Projects of Air Quality Benefit (PAQB)

Mr. Rogers said he had asked that the PAQB work be presented to the consultation team. If needed for future conformity determinations, credit for these projects may be used to by CATS. Mr. Rice presented a draft report prepared by CATS staff for the Air Quality and Transportation Management Task Force on this program to monitor projects that have air quality benefits. The report identifies over 90 non-modeled projects as possible candidates, of which approximately 50 projects have been evaluated by CATS staff using an adaptation of the CMAQ methodologies. These projects are estimated to provide 0.02 tons of VOC eliminated per day. Ms. Morris recommended the report look at NOx and PM2.5. Mr. Ward recommended including projects that are modeled

but may be better understood individually. Ms. Morris noted that when and if CATS needs to do a build/no-build conformity test for PM2.5 this approach may be helpful. Mr. Wies concurred that a separate analysis for some of the projects might be helpful. Construction practices may also need a review. This is uncharted ground for us. All agreed that the documentation was a good start.

Mr. Rice said that CMAQ looks at NOx and VOC, how to look at PM2.5 is still to be determined. The projects have been identified and an annual process has been undertaken. He noted that for some of the projects where the answer under the potential PAQB column is “no”, it could be that no methodology is currently in place and for some of them, the benefit is too small to be shown. Mr. Rogers suggested adding a key to the table and including an explanation as to why some projects are listed as “no” for potential air quality benefit.

7. TDM Annex of the Chicago Central Area Evacuation Plan

Mr. Vick presented elements of an evacuation plan developed by emergency responders and transportation providers for the CBD of Chicago in case of terrorist attack or other emergencies. The plan looks at the transportation system at the time of the incident, after the incident and reconstruction of the system. Also of importance were the measures to be used.

8. Other business

No other business was presented to the consultation team.

9. Next Meeting

The next meeting was left on call.