

The tri-chairs welcomed the members and asked Warren Merrell to provide an update on the latest developments in the Systems Planning Office. Warren announced that Huiwei Shen was recently promoted to the manager of the Transportation Modeling section of the Systems Planning Office. The research program is being developed and will start on the first of July. Huiwei is working closely with the Model Task Force and in particular with the Transit Committee and the Public Transit Office (PTO) in an effort to support the needs of the New Starts projects and to address the needs in transit modeling and transit operational planning in general.

During the 2004 legislative session, FDOT successfully pursued some major transportation legislation to provide funding for the Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) and also provide some flexibility in addressing SIS needs. The flexibility would allow for the funding to be used to improve the connecting roadway systems to the ports, which are not part of the state roadway network. Governor Bush is expected to sign the bill without objections.

New FDOT Secretary José Abreu is very pro-transit with a major focus on intermodal planning. Initially the work program budget was \$100 million. With the passing of the bill the work program budget increased to \$500 million to be spent on intermodal projects. For more information on the bill, go to www.flsenate.gov and search for bill number 1456 in the 2004 session.

In addition to referring to the SIS, the bill will allow the Secretary to organize FDOT in the most productive manner for the agency. This flexibility has not been given to the Secretary in over 30 years. The Secretary made Ysela Llord Assistant Secretary with the Public Transit Office and Systems Planning Office reporting to her in an effort to better integrate the public transit system within the highway planning process.

Last year FDOT gave up \$200 million to help correct the budget; this year FDOT will not have to reduce their budget. The bill also stipulates if extra money becomes available from a federal bill, at least 50% of this additional funding will go towards the SIS. The additional money will be used toward upgrading the high priority routes to the seaports and airports--the routes that will have the biggest impact on the state's economy.

Committee Reports

Distrib Committee – Chair, Mike Neidhart

At the previous meeting the Distrib Committee decided to refrain from looking at enhancements to the gravity model and focus on destination choice models instead. Fang Zhao presented the findings of a research project, which compared the gravity model results with a destination choice model. Based on the results of the study the committee will be working on developing a list of optional research items. This list will be distributed among the Distrib Committee members prior to submittal to the Systems Planning Office.

Freight Committee – Chair, Frank Baron

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Daytona Beach – May 4 & 5, 2004

The Freight Committee is working with the Systems Planning Office on the development of the Statewide Freight model.

GIS Committee – Chair, Glen Ahlert
The GIS Committee is waiting on the implementation of TransCAD.

Transportation Land Use Committee - Chair, Gary Kramer
A Transportation Land Use Committee meeting was held at the last MTF meeting at which the white paper on Land Use Alternatives was approved. Currently the Systems Planning Office is working on research work, which examines different land use models for possible use in Florida. Tech report number one will document a literature review on the existing land use models. Also, the Systems Planning Office organized with the National Transit Institute the “Coordinating Transportation and Land Use” workshop which will be held June 28-30, 2004 in Pensacola. Currently, a Transportation and Land Use case study is being conducted which runs parallel to the Pensacola Long Range Transportation Plan. The study is expected to be completed in two months.

ITS Committee – Chair, Joey Gordon
No activities to report at this time.

Trip Gen Committee –
No activities to report at this time.

Hnet Committee–
No activities to report at this time.

Transit Committee – Chair, Kevin Feldt
The Transit Committee held a Transit Workshop April 7-8, 2004, attended by Jim Ryan from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). During this workshop, Mr. Ryan made a presentation pointing out that when FTA prioritizes New Starts projects, it is important that ridership projections are developed in a similar manner. In an effort to create a level playing field, the FTA has developed a reporting software called Summit. Summit allows the mode choice output to be reported in simple district summary tables as well as in a map format. Summit has brought to light some inconsistencies in the path building and mode choice models. FTA also discussed some of the shortcomings of the Florida models, mainly related to high mode choice constants used in the models. Other issues brought up were the importance of on-board surveys and how early communication between the applicant and the FTA really benefits the process.

During the Transit Committee meeting this morning it was decided to let the Systems Planning Office together with the Public Transit Office draft a scope for a research project, which would address some of the current shortcomings in the transit models and also to identify the long-term improvements that need to be addressed. The draft scope will be reviewed by the Transit Committee members prior to July 2004.

FSUTMS-TransCAD Migration Initiatives

Model Task Force Meeting
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Huiwei Shen gave a brief overview of the history of the process used to transition to FSUTMS-TransCAD. She outlined the benefits of maintaining the FSUTMS menu-driven structure, which allows for a high level of standardization, consistency in modeling methods and procedures, a high level of technical support, ongoing training workshops, sharing of technical expertise through the MTF, and continuous improvements to the modeling process as a whole.

Currently, two important items are being developed with the MTF's input. Caliper is under contract with the Systems Planning Office to develop the user interface for FSUTMS-TransCAD while the steering committee has been working on the development of interim standards to be used during the TransCAD transition. Both items were separate agenda items.

Terrence Corkery of the Systems Planning Office is finalizing next fiscal year's training program. The following workshops are being planned:

- 3 FSUTMS Modeling Workshops (4 Days)
- 4 FSUTMS Comprehensive Modeling Workshops(4 Days)
- 1 Traffic Impact Analysis Workshop (3 Days)
- 1 Model Calibration Workshop (3 Days)
- 2 FSUTMS GISDK Scripting Workshops (2 Days)
- 1 Transit Intermodal Modeling Workshop (3 Days)
- 1 Florida Model Applications Workshop (2 Days)
- 1 FSUTMS Executive Summary Seminar (1 Day)

As a final note Huiwei Shen stressed the importance to stay involved in the process and that everybody's input is needed and requested to make a successful transition.

FSUTMS Interim Standards and Enhancements

Ken Kaltenbach of The Corradino Group, and Tom Rossi of Cambridge Systematics, presented the Interim Standards and Enhancements, which are documented in the white paper published in April 2004. The white paper provides a brief history of the process and also points out that the transition offers the opportunity to make enhancements and to establish new standards.

Items addressed during the presentation were:

FSUTMS user interface

Caliper is currently developing the interface. Decisions made at this point are to have the FSUTMS user interface resident within TransCAD, to have a "splash screen" come up when activating FSUTMS, to allow the selection of the model through the use of a map, and to have a model-specific graphical interface.

File naming convention

A specific file naming convention has been developed. This convention consists of four items: a data description, the name of the alternative, an indication if whether it is a user- or program-generated file, and a TransCAD suffix.

File/directory structure

The directory structure will consist first of a master directory, which will include all the input files. The next directory will be the scenario or alternative directory, which would contain only one scenario. Each scenario would have four subdirectories, input subdirectory, temp subdirectory, output subdirectory, and a report subdirectory.

Model structure/logic (flowchart)

It was decided that the existing model structure/logic will be retained in FSUTMS-TransCAD. The model set up will be simplified to include only the Highway-Only and the Generalized Nested Logit Mode Choice Model option.

Default FSUTMS-TransCAD procedures

FSUTMS-TransCAD will wrap around the existing external Tranplan/Fortran mode choice models and the existing EMIS program for air quality analysis. All other programs use native TransCAD procedures including change to the TransCAD gravity models, either doubly-constrained or singly-constrained, and the TransCAD transit path-building algorithm (Pathfinder).

Default model parameters and coefficients

At this point, the existing FSUTMS parameters will be retained in FSUTMS-TransCAD.

Input and output files (databases, networks, zone data)

Provide linked versions of main databases (zone, network, and transit route) in three subdirectories of scenario. These would be the input, temp and output subdirectories.

Database field names

Use GIS-TM database field names as an interim standard for FSUTMS-TransCAD.

Network coding standards

Retain existing FSUTMS network coding standards in the interim.

Standard GIS themes/templates

Caliper has created an initial set of templates/ maps for users during conversion. This set will be used as an interim standard pending additional input.

Roadway geography

May adopt Caliper's Florida Statewide Network as interim base map.

Standard reports/outputs

A preliminary list of standard output reports has been included in the white paper.

FSUTMS-TransCAD User Interface

Howard Slavin pointed out that the latest TransCAD Version is 4.7. The preliminary CTTTP part two has been published, while part three should be coming out shortly. Caliper will be distributing this information. The conversion process is coming along. Caliper is taking direction from the Systems Planning Office.

Andres Rabinowicz of Caliper presented the latest FSUTMS-TransCAD User Interface. The new interface is in its preliminary stages and is written in XML. As opposed to the user interface that was developed during the conversion process, this scenario manager separates the user interface from the model logic. In setting up a scenario manager, it is important to specify the relationship between the files/scenarios that are being run. It can

be set up so that changes are made to all the related files/scenarios or in such a way that a change in the current file/database will not alter any other files.

Summary of Group Discussions

The second day the MTF members were divided into six groups with approximately 10 members in each group. The groups were given 5 topics to be discussed for 30 minutes each: roadway geography, standard reports and output, GIS themes, user interface, and miscellaneous. The latest version of the white paper (posted on the Model Task Force website: <http://www.dot.state.fl.us/planning/systems/stm/mtf/mtfhome.htm>) summarizes the suggestions resulting from the group discussions.

Recommendation of Action Items

Recommendation was made by the Public Transit Office to analyze what type of data is needed to improve upon the transit modeling process. A request was made to start a data committee, which would focus on all data requirements. A motion was made to start the committee, passing unanimously. The tri-chairs will appoint a committee chair and a suggestion was made to have one person from each of the existing committees serve on the Data Committee in order to coordinate research efforts in the committees. A teleconference will be scheduled to identify possible members for the newly formed committee.

A motion was made to reactivate the HNET Committee and rename the committee to Highway Committee (motion passed). A motion was made to rename the Highway Committee to Network Committee (motion failed).

American Community Survey Issues

Tom Rossi of Cambridge Systematics, Inc. presented a comparison of the results of the American Community Survey (ACS) with the CTTTP Long Form survey. The ACS replaced the CTTTP Long Form survey with a smaller sample, continuous survey.

Traffic Count Database

Shi-Chiang Li pointed out that although FDOT takes 15-minute traffic counts, the counts are not saved in the database. Li urged the members to talk to the traffic count people in their District to start saving the 15-minute interval counts in the database.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 PM.