SCOP Subcommittee on Policy Multimodal Task Force Meeting

Attendees:

Toks Omishakin, Tennessee DOT (Chair)  Siv Sundaram, Oklahoma DOT
Taylor Horne, Alaska DOT+PF         Jerri Bohard, Oregon DOT
Michael Kies, Arizona DOT          Rod Thompson, Oregon DOT
Paul O’Brien, Arizona DOT-Environment Tanisha Hall, Tennessee DOT
Katrina Pierce, Caltrans           Carma Smith, Tennessee DOT
Jane Hann, Colorado DOT             Sue Scribner, Vermont DOT
Mark Alexander, Connecticut DOT     Marsha Fiol, Virginia DOT
Stephen Plano, DC DOT               Robin Grier, Virginia DOT
Roy Nunnally, Indiana DOT          Elizabeth Robbins, Washington State DOT
Ken Brink, Iowa DOT                 Megan White, Washington State DOT
Brennan Dolan, Iowa DOT             Kirsten McCullough, Garver
Jorge Zamora, Iowa DOT              Melvin Brown, HNTB
Chris Herrick, Kansas DOT           Paige Felts, Volkert, Inc.
John Moore, Kentucky Transportation Cabinet Nat Coley, FHWA-Performance Management
Herb Thomson, Maine DOT              James Garland, FHWA Office of Planning
Tim Henkel, Minnesota DOT           Nelson Hoffman, FHWA-VT/NH
Gayle Unruh, Missouri DOT           Harlan Miller, FHWA
Machelle Watkins, Missouri DOT      Francine Shaw Whitson, FHWA
Adam Johnson, Mississippi DOT-Environment Katelyn Dwyer, AASHTO
Kim Thurman, Mississippi DOT        Shannon Eggleston, AASHTO
Sondra Rosenberg, Nevada DOT        Samantha Hoilett, AASHTO
Ben Ehreth, North Dakota DOT        Rachel Roper, AASHTO Liaison

Welcome and introductions

Roundtable introductions. Participants introduced themselves, their agency, their roles and responsibilities related to the MMTF, and were encouraged to share one to two issues for the current and emerging issues discussion
Background and purpose

Charter Discussion
Why a multimodal task force? Explanation of mission and goals.

Comment: The name of the committee is misleading/confusing. For many states, the term multimodal includes freight, airports, harbors, and highways. The name of the committee should more clearly describes the focus of the committee. → To be discussed further.

Comment: It is confusing that this is just a task force. A task force seems to imply that it is less important or that it will have an expiration date. → As of now, the committee will not have an expiration. The AASHTO Comprehensive Committee Review is still underway, but there is currently a place for Active Transportation.

Mission: “The Standing Committee on Planning, Subcommittee on Policy wishes to establish a Task Force on multimodal transportation planning and policy to support a balanced transportation system that provides mode options for the diverse needs of all roadway users.”

Comment: The term “roadway users” does not seem inclusive of all transportation system users. Revise “roadway users” to “all transportation system users.”

Goal #1: “Provide a forum for communications, guidance, and resources specifically focused on active transportation modes (i.e. biking, walking, and transit) for transportation agencies as they develop and operate a multimodal transportation system.”

Comment: Goal #1 says the group is “specifically focused on active transportation modes.” What about freight and other aspects of the multimodal system? → For now, we’re focused on the people side. There are other AASHTO committees that handle freight. We can coordinate with them.

Goal #2: “Support balanced representation of active transportation modes in transportation planning and policy.”

Comment: Goal #2 specifically focuses on transportation planning and policy. What about NEPA, design, and project delivery? → Some of that would fall under other AASHTO committees. In those cases, there are coordination opportunities. For example, the SCOD Technical Committee for Non-Motorized Transportation. As the AASHTO Comprehensive Committee Review moves forward, we can relook at this later.

Goal #3: “Support connectivity, mobility, accessibility, and safety for active transportation modes.”

Goal #4: “Support coordination between existing multimodal groups such as the AASHTO Technical Committee for Non-motorized Transportation.”

(There are lots of coordination opportunities—for example with the Technical Committee for Non-Motorized Transportation, the Standing Committee on Public Transportation, and the Standing Committee on Environment. In addition, the Standing
Committee on Highways adopted the resolution, Direction on Flexibility in Design Standards, which directs the Subcommittee on Design to develop more flexibility into the next Green Book.

Goal #5: “Furtherance of multimodal policies established in MAP-21 and the FAST Act.”
(This especially refers to the new language that Complete Streets shall be considered.)

Goal #6: “Provide guidance and comments on Notices of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRMs) related to multimodal transportation from US DOT (FHWA and FTA).”

Membership: The Steering Committee is being formed. The committee will include members of State DOTs and federal and local government agencies.

Comment (Shannon Eggleston, AASHTO): The task force needs to be multidisciplinary. People from other AASHTO committees should be invited to be on the task force. SCOE would like to be involved. SCOE is developing a draft bicycle and pedestrian task to be included in one of their contracts.

Comment (Sondra Rosenberg, AASHTO CV/AV Task Force): It would be great to coordinate with the CV/AV task force and determine how the two groups can promote safety for all transportation system users.

Current and Emerging Issues Discussion
This can be a very polarizing issue. Need to understand how to speak to the different stakeholders involved. Different stakeholders will be interested in different issues and benefits of active transportation. To those providing funding—like legislatures—they want to hear how it gets people to jobs and the doctor. They’re not necessarily open to hearing about community or health benefits.

Vermont passed Complete Streets legislation by statute. In Vermont, pedestrian facilities are locally owned and maintained. Sometimes the State sees a need for pedestrian facilities, but it is not supported locally and therefore difficult to implement. How do other states handle similar situations?

In Tennessee, during the planning and design phase, if a community wants to go beyond State DOT standards, the locals must pay and maintain it. Understand the difficulty in getting support/funding for active transportation projects. Earlier this year, the legislature introduced a bill that tried to cut gas-tax funding for bicycle, pedestrian projects. Transportation has been consistently subsidized by the general fund so difficult to understand.

Health benefits are a big focus. In addition, in terms of our ability to affect safety, at this point very little is engineering related while the majority is policy related. We really need to focus on policy. For example, NHTSA involvement.

 Seems like the CV/AV goal is how to build the transportation system for CV/AV vs. what it should be in how to build a transportation system that meets the needs of its users and how to build for a multimodal system.

- Maybe if we focus on the point of view of the users. We also need to include non-capital improvements, like policy. TDM is multimodal—it’s often not considered that, but it is.
- TDM didn’t resonate so had to package it as transportation options.
- Future is TISMO. We’re built out. How can we operate what we have more efficiently?
How can we be more proactive? Are we meeting ADA compliance? Challenges there. EJ/transportation disadvantaged/Equity—multimodal impacts all segments of the population.

In Colorado, bike paths go in and out of parks. The users are being taxed by landowners to hold events and use is being restricted.

   We already pay taxes for parks and roads. Fees to get into parks are tax deductible.

Have to think beyond the road—coastal trails are being used to get to work.

Check out the NCHRP INVEST tool.

What about performance measures?

- Right now, Oregon is basing the performance measures on the data we have available. The stakeholders are not happy with this. They feel they are not measuring if people can actually get to their destinations.
- Nevada had a meeting with MPOs on developing non-motorized performance measures. Use miles of bike facilities added, miles of sidewalk added, percent of ADA transition plan completed, number of Complete Streets projects, etc. Eventually, want to move towards the percentage of system, but we are not there yet.
- Even if the stakeholders don’t feel like all of the performance measures are useful, it may still be important internally to help ensure progress within the State DOT. Performance measures aren’t only intended for external stakeholders, but internal ones as well.