Status of Stimulus

FHWA has obligated 49% of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) funds as of June 2nd.

The ARRA appropriated $1.5 billion of discretionary grant funds (TIGER Discretionary Grants) for capital investments in surface transportation infrastructure to be awarded by the U.S. Department of Transportation. These TIGER Discretionary Grants are to be awarded on a competitive basis to projects that have a significant impact on the Nation, a metropolitan area, or a region. (Complete applications for TIGER Discretionary Grants must be submitted by September 15, 2009).


DOE Funding Available for Transportation Projects that Conserve Energy

The America Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 appropriated $3.2 billion for The Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program. Transportation strategies are eligible for funding. Applications for the funding must come from states, Indian tribes, or local governments. Grant application deadlines are May 26 for states and June 25 for local governments and tribes. For more information, contact Diane Turchetta at 202-493-0158 or Diane.Turchetta@dot.gov, or see: http://www.eecbg.energy.gov

Literature Review on Megaregions

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has released, “Megaregions: Literature Review of the Implications for U.S. Infrastructure Investment and Transportation Planning,” created by the Center for Quality Growth and Regional Development at the Georgia Institute of Technology. Dr. Catherine L. Ross is Principal Investigator.
The development of regional border master-plans for infrastructure projects, conducting border-wait studies, highlighting best practices for greening the border via a workshop, and several other studies. The next meeting of the JWC will take place on July 14th and 15th in Santa Fe, New Mexico. More information on the JWC can be found at www.borderplanning.fhwa.dot.gov/mexico.asp or contact Sylvia Grijalva 602-510-7986 sylvia.grijalva@dot.gov.

**ENVIRONMENT**

**New TRB Climate Change website**

Transportation Research Board (TRB) has a new website offering information on TRB activities and products addressing transportation and climate change. To access the site, go to: http://tris.trb.org/climatechange/.

**PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

**New Course Helps Public Involvement Practitioners Become Better Communicators**

To help transportation officials acquire the communications skills and techniques needed to succeed in transportation planning and public involvement, the National Highway Institute (NHI) is now offering the course Effective Communications in Public Involvement (NHI Course No. 142059). This six-hour course is delivered entirely via the Internet, so participants can complete the course from the comfort of their own office or home over several days.

The first module is delivered via instructor-led Web-conference training (WCT) and lasts about 90 minutes. The course shifts to self-paced Web-based training for the next four modules, which last about 30 minutes each and can be completed over five business days. Participants learn how to identify project stakeholders, initiate contact with them through various communications techniques, define the emotionally charged issues, and implement a sound communications strategic plan that leads to success. A Public Meeting Survival Guide takes participants through a 10-step process of how to plan the public meeting. The sixth and final module shifts back to instructor-led WCT. To obtain more information or register for Effective Communications in Public Involvement, visit http://www.nhi.fhwa.dot.gov/Home.aspx.

**Megaregions from page 1**

of the ongoing “Megaregions and Transportation Planning” research project which examines the potential of the megaregion as a value-added structure in the development of national transportation policy and investment, while explicitly addressing the relationships among demographic change, land resources, infrastructure investment and economic development. The report places current megaregion research within the context of both previous regional planning efforts and selected regional planning initiatives related to transportation infrastructure investment, both inside and outside the United States.

The report includes profiles of ten megaregions throughout the United States: the Piedmont Atlantic Megaregion in the southeast; the Northeast Megaregion, from Boston to Washington, D.C.; megaregions in the Gulf Coast and the “Texas Triangle”; in northern and southern California; the Great Lakes Megaregion in the Midwest; the Arizona Sun Corridor; the Southern Florida Megaregion; and “Cascadia,” the megaregion running from Portland, Oregon, to Vancouver, British Columbia. In discussing the similarities and differences between these megaregions, the report highlights the megaregion as a new and potentially fruitful context for American transportation planning. The report can be found at http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/megaregions.htm.

**BORDER ISSUES**

**US/Mexico Joint Working Committee on Transportation Planning (JWC)**

The JWC is a binational group whose primary focus is to cooperate on land transportation planning and the facilitation of efficient, safe, and economical cross-border transportation movements. The group is comprised of transportation professionals from Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Mexican Secretariat of Communication and Transportation(SCT). In addition to FHWA and SCT, the members of the JWC include representatives from the U.S. Department of State, the Mexican Secretariat of Foreign Relations, the four U.S. border state Departments of Transportation, and the six Mexican border States. The General Services Administration, Environmental Protection Agency, Customs and Border Protection of the Department of Homeland Security and their Mexican counterparts also participate in JWC meetings.

The JWC meets twice a year to discuss their biennial work plan. The current work plan includes the development of regional border master-plans for infrastructure projects, conducting border-wait studies, highlighting best practices for greening the border via a workshop, and several other studies. The next meeting of the JWC will take place on July 14th and 15th in Santa Fe, New Mexico. More information on the JWC can be found at www.borderplanning.fhwa.dot.gov/mexico.asp or contact Sylvia Grijalva 602-510-7986 sylvia.grijalva@dot.gov.
TRAILS

Trail of Tears National Historic Trail

Legislation was passed by the 111th Congress and was signed by President Obama on March 30, 2009 creating four additional nationally designated routes for the Trail of Tears National Historic Trail. See http://www.nps.gov/trte/feasibility-study.htm

TRANSIT ACTIVITIES

Technical Assistance in System Planning Available

The Federal Transit Administration Office of Systems Planning is offering technical assistance to selected metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) in regions that anticipate undertaking a corridor-level project planning study in support of an alternatives analysis (AA) for a major capital investment within a two to three-year timeframe. The MPOs in Tulsa, Olympia, and Boise were selected to receive technical assistance in metropolitan transportation planning; the assistance will be targeted to aspects that have been critical to a successful corridor study. The objective of the program is to ensure that work performed during the systems planning phase will be readily and efficiently utilized during the subsequent AA phase. For more information contact: Victor Austin (FTA), 202-366-2996 victor.austin@dot.gov .

Transit Environment Management

Under the auspices of FTA, seven transit agencies from around the country are participating in a two-year, Environmental Management System 14001 (EMS) training and implementation program. The training is being performed by the Center for Organizational and Technological Advancement at Virginia Tech University. EMS is a defined set of procedures to ensure that an organization’s daily operations comply with environmental regulations and support environmental stewardship objectives.

This is FTA’s second round of EMS training and assistance. The first round of training included ten local and regional transit agencies and was completed in January 2006. A complete report on first round along with more information on the second round can be found here: http://www.fta.dot.gov/planning/environment/planning_environment_227.html . For more information contact Jim Barr at 202-493-2633 James.Barr@dot.gov .

DATA

Training for Conducting Heavy Vehicle Use Tax Reviews

The Heavy Vehicle Use Tax (HVUT) was initiated in the Surface Transportation Assistance Act of 1982. The purpose of the tax is to impose a road use charge that has some relation to the costs occasioned by the vehicle (heavier vehicles cause more road damage than light vehicles, and therefore, should pay a higher highway funding contribution). Very briefly, vehicles with a gross vehicle weight of 55,000 pounds and over owe a tax on a sliding scale up to $550 per year to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). When the HVUT has been paid the vehicle is eligible to be registered by the State. Provisions allow for temporary and partial-year vehicle registrations. Currently, the IRS collects about $1 billion based on the HVUT and places it in the Highway Trust Fund.

The FHWA has responsibility under Section 23 USC 141(c) to ensure States are verifying proof-of-payment of the HVUT before they register such heavy vehicles. FHWA Division Offices are required to evaluate this process at least every three years. To assist the Division Office personnel in performing this responsibility, a contractor was retained to develop outreach and review assistance materials. Currently, a training course and an executive briefing module are provided the Office of Policy’s website. This information can be found at the following URL:

http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/policyinformation/hvut/module1/index.htm

FREIGHT

TALKING FREIGHT

Registration is open for the July and August Talking Freight Seminars. To register for this seminar, please visit http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/freightplanning/registration.htm You will need to register for each seminar individually by clicking on the “Enroll” link to the right of the seminar information.

Dates and topics for the upcoming seminars:

July 15: Credit Crunch and Impacts on Freight Transportation
Aug. 19: Highway Networks & Their Relationship to Freight
Sept. 16 Institutional Arrangements

See Talking Freight on page 4
The Talking Freight seminars are sponsored by the Federal Highway Administration and are held via web conference. This means that you view the PowerPoint presentations over the Internet while listening to the presenters over the telephone. There is no cost involved and you do not have to leave your desk to participate. However, registration and attendance is limited to 100 people.

The seminars are held on the third Wednesday of each month, 1:00 pm - 2:30 pm EDT/ 10:00 am - 11:30 am Pacific. The first hour of each seminar is dedicated to the presentations and the remaining 30 minutes are for audience question and answer. Archives of past sessions can be found at http://www.ops.fhwa.dot.gov/freight/fpd/talking_freight.htm.

TMIP Peer Review Program Seeks Volunteers

The Travel Model Improvement Program (TMIP) was created to advance the state of the practice of travel modeling and planning analysis. To that end, TMIP provides a variety of services to academics and professionals in the fields of analysis, modeling and simulation. One of the services is the Peer Review Program. Planning agencies can use peer reviews to ensure that technical processes they are applying or developing meet the agency’s needs and/or the standards of professional practice. Peer reviews of travel forecasting and data collection procedures are crucial to the planning agency’s model development and improvement efforts. TMIP supports peer reviews by assisting agencies in panel assembly, logistics and funding for travel. For more information, please visit the Peer Review section of the TMIP Web site.

The Peer Review Panels are comprised of volunteer modeling, analysis, land use and simulation experts. TMIP maintains an expert database, which is used to assist the approved agencies selecting the peer review panel members. We are in the process of updating this database. If you are interested in serving on a future peer review expert panel, please provide us with your contact information by filling the registration form on the TMIP Web site.

TMIP Virtual Mentoring and Technical Support Center

The Virtual Mentoring and Technical Support Center is now open. Please visit http://tmip.fhwa.dot.gov/ for virtual office hours. The TMIP mission is to support and empower planning agencies through leadership, innovation and support of planning analysis improvements to provide better information to support transportation and planning decisions.

BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN

GIS-Bicycle/Pedestrian Peer Exchange

On May 11th & 12th, 2009, the Office of Interstate and Border Planning sponsored a peer exchange hosted by the Miami-Dade County MPO in Miami, Florida. Planned in conjunction with Gabe Rousseau in the Office of Natural & Human Environment, the exchange brought together professionals representing Michigan DOT, New Jersey DOT, Two-Rivers-Ottauquechee Regional Commission, Martin MPO, Broward County Department of Environmental Protection and Growth, the City of Miami, and the Seattle DOT. They shared lessons and challenges in using GIS to accomplish various bicycle/pedestrian transportation objectives. A summary report of the exchange will be available by the end of June on the FHWA GIS in Transportation website (http://gis.fhwa.dot.gov).

For further information please contact Mark Sarmiento (mark.sarmiento@dot.gov), HEPl-10, 202-366-4828.

REALTY

Newly Revised Project Development Guide

The FHWA Office of Real Estate Services has updated its Project Development Guide (PDG). The PDG is available on the FHWA website and contains a practical approach to developing a right-of-way project, with additional information to explain how others have handled a variety of right-of-way problems. It is accessible at the following link: http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/realestate/pdg.htm. For further information, please contact Kathy Facer by email at Kathleen.Facer@dot.gov or by telephone at 785-271-2448 x 224.
New FHWA Team Leader

Rob Ritter has become the new Leader for the Sustainable Transport and Climate Change Team within the Office of Natural and Human Environment. Rob has extensive experience in transportation planning, environment, and climate change. He is currently the team leader for the Capacity Building Team in the Office of Planning. In this position, he has directed training and technical assistance for the FHWA transportation planning program. He was the lead author of a white paper outlining a new framework for transportation planning for reauthorization that includes a key climate change component. He is also leading Phase II of the Gulf Coast Study, which will further study the impacts of climate change on transportation infrastructure and operations and develop risk assessment tools.

FHWA/FTA Certification Handbook Update

An updated version of the Transportation Management Area Certification Process Field Handbook is now available through a direct link from the Office of Planning’s site on StaffNet or through the Volpe Certification website. This reference tool is intended to be an internal resource for use by FHWA/FTA field offices when preparing for and conducting TMA certification reviews. The Handbook has been updated to reflect compliance of the metropolitan planning process with SAFETEA-LU and to highlight new examples.

Another powerful tool available through the Volpe website is the Certification Report Database. The large inventory of past certification review reports from across the nation, can be used to prepare for an upcoming Certification review or see how past Certification teams have responded to issues that arise during reviews. If you have any questions about this latest version of the handbook, or how to access the website, please contact Spencer Stevens at 202-366-0149 spencer.stevens@dot.gov. If you have any questions about the certification review database, how to access the site, or how to use it, please contact John Humeston at 404-562-3667 john.humeston@dot.gov.

3D Visualization Peer Exchange

The Office of Interstate and Border Planning (HEPI) is sponsoring, with assistance from the FHWA Resource Center, a peer exchange on the application of 3D Visualization techniques and technologies. This meeting will be hosted by the North Carolina DOT in Raleigh, North Carolina on July 8th and 9th, 2009. Representatives from Baltimore MPO, CalTrans, Minnesota DOT, New York DOT, North Carolina DOT, and Volusia County MPO will share their experiences in and knowledge of using 3D Visualization to better help communicate information to decision makers and the public. A summary report of the peer exchange will be made available afterwards for those interested in learning more about the peer exchange.

For further information please contact Mark Sarmiento 202-366-4828 mark.sarmiento@dot.gov or Ben Williams 404-562-3671 ben.williams@dot.gov.

GIS for Eco-Logical Peer Exchange

A peer exchange that focuses on GIS applications that further Eco-Logical principles will be held in Austin, Texas on July 22nd and 23rd, 2009. Sponsored by the Office of Interstate and Border Planning (HEPI) and planned in conjunction with the Office of Project Development and Environmental Review this exchange will bring together professionals from the MPOs from Austin, Houston, Dallas, Peoria, IL, Kansas City and Oregon State University, and the Audubon Society of New Hampshire. The participants will relate the lessons they have learned in using geospatial technologies to help transportation agencies and their partners implement an ecosystem approach to developing infrastructure projects. Participants will demonstrate and present their work and engage in roundtable discussions on issues related to applying GIS to this effort. A summary report of this exchange will be made available afterwards on the GIS in Transportation website (http://gis.fhwa.dot.gov).

For more information please contact Mark Sarmiento 202-366-4828 mark.sarmiento@dot.gov or Bethany Bacher-Gresock 202-366-4196 bethaney.bacher@dot.gov or Kimberly Majerus 708-283-4346 kimberly.majerus@dot.gov.

GIS in Transportation Newsletter

Published on a quarterly basis this newsletter highlights a specific GIS application or effort occurring at transportation agencies across the country. It provides an opportunity for GIS professionals to express their 5

See GIS Newsletter on page 6
views related to geospatial technologies and alerts readers to recently released reports and upcoming events centered on geospatial technologies. The summer edition of the GIS in Transportation Newsletter will be coming out in July. Past editions are available at the GIS in Transportation website http://gis.fhwa.dot.gov/newsletters.asp. For more information please contact Mark Sarmiento 202-366-4828 mark.sarmiento@dot.gov.

"Planning On the Web" Training Seminar Series

To help support the FHWA and FTA staff and promote continuous professional development of agency planners, the FHWA Resource Center is offering a series of internal web-based training seminars through an initiative known as “Planning on the Web” (POW). The POW training sessions are for the FHWA and FTA staff and will generally last 90 minutes to 2 hours.

Mark your calendars, the dates of the POW sessions are changing!! They will now be on the third Tuesday of the month at 1 pm eastern time. Below are topics for subsequent months:

- July 21st Jump Starting Freight Planning in Your Area
- August 18th EJ / Title VI - Latest Developments & Notable Practices
- October 20th Cost Estimation for Planners
- November: 17th Project Selection and Evaluation Criteria Used in Transportation Planning

If you cannot attend the POW session for a particular month, the presentations and other information resources are available on the RC internal website, as well as the Planning CoP. Pre-registration e-mail for each session will be sent to the FHWA Field Planners e-mail group approximately 3 weeks before each session. We hope to “see” you at the next session and to hear your feedback on the session, as well as future POW topics. If you have a topic that you think would be valuable to offer as a POW web-based training seminar, please contact Lisa Randall, Ken Petty, or any member of the RC Planning team.

FY 2010 Call for Service

The FHWA Office of Technical Services released the annual call for services the week of May 26th to the field. This is the annual opportunity for FHWA field offices to assess the needs of their partners for training and technical assistance by specific discipline areas, including planning. Responses are due July 3rd. Any questions on the annual call for service for planning can be directed to your Resource Center Planning Team Regional Liaison.

The latest update to the Planning Menu of Training and Technical Services has been sent to FHWA field offices and posted on the RC Planning website http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/resourcecenter/teams/planning/courses.cfm. Field Offices are encouraged to share this Resource with MPO and State partners highlighting the available planning resources, technical assistance and
training by topic.

2009 FHWA PEAR Seminar

April 28, 2009, the FHWA Associate Administrator for Planning, Environment and Realty (HEP), Gloria Shepherd, announced the 2009 Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Joint Planning, Environment, Air Quality and Realty (PEAR) Disciplines seminar to the field offices. The HEP is partnering with the Resource Center to present official learning and development opportunities to field specialists in FHWA’s mission critical program areas. The PEAR seminar will offer valuable tools, solutions, technical sessions and networking opportunities for all attendees. This is also a great opportunity for interactive discussions of core PEAR topics along with emerging issues and best practices aimed at assisting field program specialists in achieving the Agency’s planning, air quality, environment, and real estate goals.

The PEAR discipline seminar to be held in Phoenix, Arizona, Monday, August 31 to Thursday, September 3, 2009. All field and Headquarters specialists are invited to participate in this meeting however, funding support will be given to GS-11, GS-12 and GS-13 field specialists from Division Offices, Resource Center, and Federal Lands Highway to attend. If you have any questions, contact Susan Grosser, 202-366-2825 Susan.Grosser@dot.gov.

FIELD ACTIVITIES

Staff Changes

*There have been several changes in staff recently.*

- **Barbara Breslin**  CT Div. Planning  to Rhode Island Div. Planning,
- **Kirk Fauver**  TX Div. Planning  to Resource Center Operations Team,
- **Shundreka Givan**  PDP  to TX Division Planning,
- **Dan Johnson**  joined Resource Center Environment Team,
- **Stephanie Gibson**  Central Federal Lands Division to CO Division Environment,
- **Susan Jennings** joined NE Division Environment,
- **Stephanie Hickman**  joined ND Division Planning
- **Britta Stein**  PDP to TN Division Planning

WORKSHOPS & TRAINING

**FHWA Resource Center**
For information see contacts at  www.fhwa.dot.gov/resourcecenter/teams/planning/index.cfm .


- 6/26/2009 Transportation Conformity 101, Columbia SC,  Contact Melinda Mathais at 803-898-3269, mathiamc@dhec.sc.gov

- 6/30/2009-7/1/2009 MOVES Model Training, Frankfort KY, Contact Bernadette Dupont at (502) 223-6729 Bernadette.Dupont@dot.gov

- 7/23/2009 Congestion Management Process Gulfport, MS  Contact: Mitzi Crystal 228-864-1167 mcrystal@grpc.com

- 7/7/2009 The Visualization Toolbox:A Practical Primer for Transportation Raleigh, NC Contact: Loretta Barren, (919)747-7025, loretta.barren@dot.gov

- 8/25-27/2009 MOVES Model training @ STAQS 2009 Conference, Jacksonville FL, To register go for STAQS and or the MOVES training go to:  http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/resourcecenter/staqs/

**National Transit Institute**
For registration instructions see:  www.ntionline.com/CourseDates.asp

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**National Highway Institute**
Try out the new NHI Web site at  www.nhi.fhwa.dot.gov/home.aspx. Also, you can now check the schedule of web conferences at www.nhi.fhwa.dot.gov/resources/webconference/eventcalendar.aspx

See NHI on page 8
New Course
- FHWA-NHI-13003 Advanced Freight Planning
- FHWA-NHI-134068 Addressing Uncertainty in Cost Estimating
- FHWA-NHI-134078 TCCC GPS Technology
- FHWA-NHI-142048 Managing Road Impacts of Stream Ecosystems: An Interdisciplinary Approach
- FHWA-NHI-134077 Contract Administration Core Curriculum (Resource Center Workshop)
- FHWA-NHI-133072 High Occupancy Vehicle Facilities
- FHWA-NHI-310116 FHWA Role in Public Private Partnerships

Updated Course
- FHWA-NHI-380073 Fundamentals of Planning, Design, and Approval of Interchange Improvements to the Interstate System

Web Courses
- Complete Listing of All NHI Web-based Courses
- FHWA-NHI-310115/310115A Introducing Highway Federal-Aid
- NHI-139006 Integrating Freight in the Transportation Planning Process

Executive Summary:
- FHWA-NHI-139006 Integrating Freight in the Transportation Planning Process

Scheduled Courses in the next Quarter:

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Travel Model Improvement Program Workshops
For more detail see: http://tmip.fhwa.dot.gov/conf_courses/ or contact: Sarah Sun 202-493-0071 sarah.sun@dot.gov. For the NHI travel demand courses see the NHI list.

Currently the only training that the TMIP program has approved is through web seminars. Check back with the website http://tmip.fhwa.dot.gov/discussions/webinars/ for future sessions.

These sessions will focus on the estimation process for logit models, which are used not only for mode choice but often for other model components. The session will focus on multinomial and nested logit models. The discussion will include the statistical methods used and the evaluation of model estimation results. The software used in model estimation will be discussed, as well as the programs used for model application.

- 6/18/2009 Activity Model Development Experiences
- 7/16/2009 Travel Modeling Workshop #9: Experiences in Model Development, Webinar Wrap-Up

2009 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Jun 28 - Jul 1, 2009 IRWA’s Annual International Education Conference, Indianapolis, Indiana

Jul 7 - 8, 2009 State Trail Administrators Meeting, Gainesville, FL

Jul 9 - 12, 2009 Southeastern Equestrian Trails Conference, Gainesville FL, Florida Greenways and Trails Foundation

Jul 12-15, 2009 12th Conference on National Scenic and Historic Trails, Missoula, MT


Jul 28-29, 2009 2009 Transportation Land Use Planning and Air Quality Conference, Denver, CO

Aug 9 - 12, 2009 ITE 2009 Annual Meeting and Exhibit, Henry B. Gonzales Convention Center, San Antonio, TX


Aug 23-26, 2009 2009 National Scenic Byways Conference Denver, CO

Aug 23-27, 2009 ITS America National Rural ITS Conference Seaside, OR

See Calendar on page 9
Aug 30 - Sept. 2, 2009 Association for Commuter Transportation (ACT) 2009 Conference, Washington DC

Sept 16-17, 2009 North American Freight Flows Conference 2009 Irvine, California

2009 National Highway Data Workshop and Conference California Sept 22-24, 2009

October 7-9, 2009 Association of Pedestrian & Bycycle Professionals, Professional Development Seminar Walk 21 Conference New York City, NY

October 19-22, 2009 8th National Conference on Asset Management Portland, Oregon

Oct 22-27, 2009 AASHTO (American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials) 2009 Annual Meeting Palm Desert, CA

Oct 27-30, 2009 AMPO (Association of MPOs) Annual Meeting Savannah, GA


Oct 30-Nov 1, 2009 Rail-Volution Annual Conference Boston, MA

Nov 10-12, 2009 Fifth National GIS in Transit Conference, St. Petersburg, Florida

September 2010 TRB 12th National Tools of the Trade Conference Williamsburg, VA

NOTICE: The information and articles in this newsletter are for your information and do not necessarily constitute policy positions of the Federal Highway Administration or Federal Transit Administration. The mention of commercial products, their source or their use in connection with material reported herein is not to be construed as either an actual or implied endorsement of such products.