Project Status Report – June 2013

Progress on the South Carolina Multimodal Transportation Plan (MTP) is summarized in this, the third, Project Status Report. While work on the Plan started at the end of July, 2012 this report focuses on what the study team has been doing in the last three months.

CURRENT PLANS, CONDITIONS AND FACTORS

Safety and Security – The study team has continued to coordinate with SCDOT safety staff regarding new highway safety emphasis areas that will be included in the update to the state’s Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP). The SHSP is being updated cooperatively between SCDOT and SCDPS and will include consultation with transportation, law enforcement, and emergency services stakeholders. The plan is being updated in accordance with FHWA’s SHSP Interim Guidance developed to address the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) requirements. The update is scheduled to be completed prior to the dates established in MAP-21.

PUBLIC AND PARTNER PARTICIPATION

The study team launched the South Carolina Multimodal Transportation Plan website in October and it is available at www.scdot.org/multimodal.

The website is updated monthly and it provides information on status, planned activities and downloadable reports, as well as an opportunity to provide input. Please visit the website to read

The study team continues to meet regularly with representatives and leadership of the South Carolina Department of Commerce and the S.C. Ports Authority to continue the collaborative planning effort. SCDOT is grateful for the full participation across partner agencies, from Councils of Government and Metropolitan Planning Organizations, to Counties, state agencies, and the Federal Highway Administration in the development of the Statewide Multimodal Transportation Plan.

A series of stakeholder webinars were held April 10 and 11, 2013. These webinars were interactive presentations of statewide plan updates and initial reports. By using the webinar format, SCDOT reached as many stakeholders and interested parties by reducing travel time and expense and bringing the meeting to you at your office, home or other place of business. Event Brite invitations were emailed to the full stakeholder list. The webinars were free for participants, online, accessible by toll free phone, and were open to the public. Three webinars were held each having more focus on specific areas of interest, Freight and Rail, Interstate/Strategic Corridors, and Transit/Bike and Pedestrian.

The general presentation, which was the same for all three webinars, included overall plan progress, the final Vision, Goals and Objectives for the Statewide Multimodal Plan, the updated Strategic Corridor system, Performance Measures for the state transportation system. Each webinar then focused more detailed information based on the areas of interest, including Transit, Rail, Interstate, Strategic Corridor, and Freight plans.

Summary information on the stakeholder webinars can be found on the project website at: http://www.scdot.org/Multimodal/stakeholder_webinars.aspx
SCDOT plans to hold another round of stakeholder webinars in late summer 2013 to again deliver updates to interested parties as well as solicit feedback on plan progress in specific areas of interest.

**VISION, GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

The study team has been working with the Plan’s executive leadership team from SCDOT, SC Department of Commerce, and the SC Ports Authority to finalize the South Carolina Multimodal Transportation Plan vision and goals. The vision and goals are aligned to the Department’s Strategic Plan, as well as the 2030 Statewide Multimodal Transportation Plan and MAP-21 national goals.

**Vision:**

Safe, reliable surface transportation and infrastructure that effectively supports a healthy economy for South Carolina.

**Goals:**

**Mobility and System Reliability** – Provide surface transportation infrastructure and services that will advance the efficient and reliable movement of people and goods throughout the state.

**Safety** – Improve the safety and security of the transportation system by implementing transportation improvements that reduce fatalities and serious injuries as well as enabling effective emergency management operations.

**Infrastructure Condition** – Maintain surface transportation infrastructure assets in a state of good repair.

**Economic and Community Vitality** – Provide an efficient and effective interconnected transportation system that is coordinated with state and local planning efforts to support thriving communities and South Carolina’s economic competitiveness in global markets.

**Environment** – Partner to sustain South Carolina’s natural and cultural resources by minimizing and mitigating the impacts of state transportation improvements.

**Equity** – Manage a transportation system that recognizes the diversity of the state and strives to accommodate the mobility needs of all of South Carolina’s citizens.

The team is currently developing objectives related to each of these goals, as well as practical performance measures that can be used to track progress in meeting the Plan’s goals and objectives. These performance measures will be applied to the SC MTP as well as each of the modal plans, and the team continues to incorporate these goals and objectives into each element of the multimodal plan.

**EXISTING MULTIMODAL CONDITIONS**

As we look to the future it is important to have a thorough understanding of where we are now. Data have been gathered on all modes of transportation to assess the status of existing conditions and have been summarized in a Technical Memorandum now available on the website.
MULTIMODAL TRANSPORTATION NEEDS
Information has been gathered on the costs to maintain and implement required improvements to the state’s multimodal transportation system through the Plan’s horizon year of 2040, for highways/bridges, aviation, rail, ports, and public transportation, as well as bicycle and pedestrian modes. This information, combined with revenue forecasts, will be used in upcoming work on possible investment scenarios.

BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN CONSIDERATIONS
Comments and needs that participants identified in the last round of Multimodal Plan webinars have been addressed in the Plan documents and GIS database. In addition, the consultant team has drafted a bicycle needs technical memo that places a dollar amount on the outstanding bicycle and pedestrian needs in the state. These needs were identified by utilizing the proposed bicycle plans collected for the SCDOT bicycle GIS database. The team has also been working on finalizing bicycle and pedestrian recommendations and hopes to have these completed in the near future.

INTERSTATE PLAN
To anchor the Interstate Plan on a solid foundation of reliable, up-to-date information, research has been conducted in coordination with SCDOT staff on available data sources. The study team has utilized INRIX – a commercial provider of historic and real-time speed information and SCDOT’s automatic traffic recorder volume data covering the entire interstate system to develop the existing annual average traffic density and corresponding level of service for every segment of the interstate system. From this data, a draft list of the most congested corridors in the state have been developed. Furthermore, the study team is reviewing SCDOT’s Interstate Interchange Management System (IIMS) and available data which will be ultimately utilized to determine a current list of the most congested interchanges in the state.

STRATEGIC CORRIDOR PLAN
To supplement the Interstate Plan, the Strategic Corridor Plan focuses on non-interstate corridors important to the state’s economy. The study team has reviewed the existing strategic corridors and selection criteria to update the strategic corridor network to reflect the latest information as well as MAP-21 rural freight corridor requirements.

PUBLIC TRANSIT AND COORDINATION PLAN
Over the past few months, the study team has continued to develop the draft report for the 10 regional transit plans. Those plans were derived from the collection of existing data and future needs identified by the transit agencies and the local stakeholders within each community. The team also received approximately 2,400 public opinion survey responses from the survey that was administered in early March. The responses to the survey are incorporated into the 10 regional transit plans and into the Statewide Public Transportation Plan. The draft 10 regional transit plans and the Statewide Public Transportation Plan will be available for public comment later this summer.
In addition to the above regional transit plans and Statewide Plan, SCDOT has expressed interest in reviewing the infrastructure of human services transportation, with particular attention on the state’s Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT) program. These efforts will begin this summer.

**Freight Plan**

The study team continues through the development of the statewide freight plan. Working closely with our planning partners at the University of South Carolina and Clemson University, a range of analyses are incorporating the feedback from stakeholders received during the 6 months of stakeholder meetings and survey data collection. The freight team is also developing a Strategic Freight System, consisting of active elements of the existing supply chain in South Carolina. This planning effort is coordinated with the Strategic Corridor Plan to provide consistency in the implementation of the plan recommendations and streamline data collection efforts. The freight team continues to evaluate modal shift modeling, evaluating potential options for maximizing the use of freight infrastructure of all modes in the state. The freight team has also developed a set of Goals and Objective specific to the freight plan and the freight system in the state. This is designed to guide the continuing analysis of policy and infrastructure supporting goods movement.

**Rail Plan**

The study team continued work on the preparation of a State Rail Plan consistent with the requirements of the 2008 Passenger and Rail Investment and Improvement Act (PRIIA), as well as preliminary guidelines for state rail plans issued by FRA in August 1012. Information has been gathered from Class III railroads on their infrastructure improvement needs. Similar information is being obtained from the two Class I carriers serving the state.

**Statewide Travel Demand Model and Economic Analysis**

Through the development of the MTP, SCDOT and the study team have been in the process of evaluating the current and potential prioritization of transportation projects. Through both technical analysis and feedback from our project stakeholders around the state, the role of economic development and economic sustainability in transportation policy making has become an essential piece of the eventual MTP. SCDOT has decided to incorporate a detailed economic analysis tool into the evaluation of project prioritization and performance. To do this, the study team will be developing a statewide travel demand model as well as a customized economic modeling tool to facilitate a quantitative method for project evaluation. The statewide travel demand model will be developed with the help of SCDOT planning staff and will include a freight mode of transport modeling to support the statewide freight plan. This model will be applicable in economic modeling as well as many other transportation planning applications for SCDOT. Specifically, this model will produce valid forecast estimates of traffic volumes for the Strategic Corridor and Interstate Plans. This model will also be instrumental in estimating future levels of service and assist planners in the identification of transportation needs in the forecast years. With this in mind, the deliverables for those two plans will be delayed, pending results from the statewide model. These data are expected to be available and finalized in early Spring 2014. Progress will continue to be made on those plans in the meantime, and interim plan documents will be made available on the project website.

**Human Services Infrastructure Review**

In the update of the transit agency and human services coordination (HSC) plans, SCDOT recognized the need for a review of current practice and evaluate potential models for future coordination, with
specific attention to the state’s Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT) infrastructure. The MTP study team will expand its current work on the transit and HSC plans to include this review of the existing statewide structure for coordinated transportation services and develop alternatives for future coordination.

**WHAT’S NEXT?**

Online and telephone based webinars in late summer 2013 – please be on the lookout to find out more about how to participate from your home, office or other place of business. Detailed information on how to participate will be coming via email as well as posted to the project website.