

SPC Transportation Operations & Safety Committee

Tuesday, March 24, 2009, 10:00AM
Regional Enterprise Tower, 23rd Floor, Fetterolf Room

ATTENDEES

Amanda Broadwater, City of Pittsburgh	Anthony Castellone, McMahon Associates
Frank Cippel, PennDOT District 11-0	Dominic D'Andrea, SPC
Robb Dean, PennDOT District 12-0	Chuck DiPietro, SPC
Rachel Duda, PennDOT District 12-0	Dan Farley, PennDOT BHSTE (via conf. call)
Max Heckman, Michael Baker Corporation	Jim Hunt, FHWA (via conf. call)
Tom Klevan, SPC	Eric Kaunert, Cranberry Township
Paul Koza, PennDOT District 10-0	Todd Kravits, PennDOT District 11-0
Blake Langland, Design Information Technology	Glenda Murphy, Olszak
Matt Pavlosky, SPC	Lou Rocchini, Maguire Group
Regis Ryan, PennDOT BHSTE (via conf. call)	Lisa Kay Schweyer, SPC
Barb Sloan, Cambridge Systematics	Doug Smith, SPC
Jim Stupar, City of Pittsburgh EMA	Scott Thompson-Graves, WR&A
Carol Uminski, SPC	

MEETING SUMMARY

- Following introductions, Regis Ryan provided an update on the status of the Bureau of Highway Safety & Traffic Engineering's (BHSTE) 511 implementation project. Telvent Farradyne was given Notice to Proceed in November 2008, with an aggressive schedule of getting Phase A launched by June 2009. This initial service will include a website, e-mail alert service, and interactive voice recognition (IVR). It will fuse data from PennDOT and the Turnpike Commission and will also include private traffic flow data provided by INRIX. Phase B will include additional enhancements to the basic system, which will occur within 24 months of NTP.
- In anticipation of the stakeholder outreach coordination that will take place as part of Phase B of 511 development, SPC has been conducting a web-based traveler information survey since January. Max Heckman and Glenda Murphy provided a snapshot of the input received to date. As of March 12th, SPC has received 694 responses to the survey. A map illustrating the geographic distribution of these responses, which shows fairly balanced representation from throughout the region, was provided. Todd Kravits questioned whether the volume of responses was low given that SPC, PennDOT, and transit authority distribution lists include multiple thousands of e-mail addresses. Glenda responded that the response rate is fairly typical. Some of the highlights from the preliminary survey results:
 - 90% of respondents indicated that automobile travel was the mode that they most often looked for travel information about.
 - The current sources of travel information most often used by survey respondents were Mapquest, Google Maps, and other internet-based sources of driving directions; TV news reports; and radio news reports.
 - Respondents indicated that the most important types of information to them were weather alerts, congestion alerts, and construction alerts.
 - 81% of respondents had never heard of 511.

- SPC will close the survey on Friday, March 27th and the Baker-Olszak team will begin analyzing the data and putting together a Traveler Information Needs and Opportunities Report. A special work session of operations and transit stakeholders will be held as this report develops.
- Domenic D'Andrea provided an update on the status of the regional traffic signal program, and highlighted the results of a pilot SINC-UP project conducted in Evans City, Butler County. This project cost approximately \$20,000 and provided a 43:1 benefit-cost ratio. Eastbound (peak direction) travel times were reduced by 64% and westbound travel times were reduced by 20% in the PM peak. Domenic showed a before and after video illustrating the difference in travel through the heart of this corridor during the evening peak. Domenic also provided an update on SPC's on-going LED purchasing program.
- Blake Langland gave a presentation on traffic signal asset management and important factors that agencies should consider when developing an asset management system. He discussed various levels of asset management sophistication from pencil and paper inventories to spreadsheets and databases to custom-designed software applications. He also discussed the emerging concept of Software As A Service (SAAS) and the pros, cons, and long-term costs of using different methods.
- Doug Smith provided a web tour of some of the new features of SPC's Congestion Management Process (CMP) website, including the new Strategy Implementation & Monitoring Effectiveness section, park-n-ride utilization graphics, and crash analyses for each corridor. Planning Partners are encouraged to e-mail SPC with any potential additions to the Strategy Implementation & Monitoring Effectiveness section of the CMP.
- SPC is nearing the end of the current 3-year data collection cycle for the CMP and will be contacting the Counties and Districts to set up work sessions as part of the triennial CMP network review process.
- SPC conducted a Road Safety Audit pilot project at the intersection of S.R. 3021 and T-307 in Cranberry Township, Butler County last week. Doug Smith provided an overview of the RSA process and highlighted the preliminary findings of the Cranberry RSA. FHWA provided Tom McDonald of the Iowa LTAP program as a technical advisor for the pilot project through its peer-to-peer program. SPC intends to conduct one RSA in each of the three PennDOT Districts during the next fiscal year and will be soliciting candidates from the Districts.
- During lunch, Blake Langland demonstrated the traffic signal asset management application that Design Information Technology has created. The application is web-based, provides various levels of user interaction, is fully customizable, and allows agencies to actively manage their assets, including tracking maintenance and inspection activities, rather than simply serving as an inventory tracking system.
- The next meeting of the regional Transportation Operations & Safety Committee is tentatively scheduled for June 23, 2009. Committee participants are encouraged to submit potential agenda topics for future meetings.