



NRPC APPROVED MINUTES
NRPC TRANSPORTATION TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
11/10/10

Members Present:

John Cashell, Town of Hudson
Mark Sousa, Nashua Transit
Louise Woodworth, Nashua Transit
Wayne Husband, Nashua Traffic
Jean Marie Kennamer (A) – Nashua Traffic
Steve Dookran, City of Nashua DPW

Leon Kenison, City of Nashua DPW
John St. Pierre - Town of Amherst
Bill Parker, Town of Milford
Jeff Babel - Town of Hollis
Kyle Fox, Town of Merrimack

Staff Present

Julie Chizmas, Transportation Planner
Kerrie Diers, Executive Director

Karen M. Baker, Administrative Assistant
Steve Wagner, Regional Planner

Others Present

Eric Abrams, NHDES
Diane Sheehan, City of Nashua
Joe Mendola, City of Nashua

Emil Skoglund, Greenman-Pedersen, Inc.
Barbara Pressly, City of Nashua

CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

Julie Chizmas opened the meeting at 12:10 with introductions

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE SEPTEMBER 9TH 2010 MEETING

Chizmas referred to the minutes of September 9, 2010 included in the agenda packet as Attachment 1 and asked for a motion to approve. Sousa moved to approve the September 9, 2010 minutes with a second from Kennamer. All were in favor and the motion passed.

GROUP DISCUSSION: POTENTIAL IMPACTS OF THE 2010 US CENSUS

Chizmas provided a Power Point presentation to the group on Potential impacts of New Urbanized Area Boundaries with an opportunity for questions and input to follow. Key points from the presentation are provided below:

- Urban and rural areas are identified and classified after each decennial census.
- Urban areas of at least 2,500 people identified since 1906, areas with 50,000 or more people first defined for the 1950 Census, and Urban Clusters (2,500 – 50,000) defined after the 2000 Census.
- The Census Bureau identifies urban and rural areas solely for the purpose of tabulating and presenting statistical data while the USDOT uses Census Urbanized Area (UA) population counts and estimates for funding apportionment.
- Several FHWA programs use UAs for reporting as well as to determine apportionment and project eligibility for different funding categories.
- Surface Transportation Program (STP) Funds are sub-allocated to Urbanized Areas with over 200,000 population.
- FTA uses UAs in Section 5307 funding formula. Of particular concern is the loss of federal dollars for transit operating expenses for UAs with a population >200,000.

Chizmas provided two slides and pointed out the 2000 Census UA boundaries and their populations in comparison to the potential agglomeration after 2010 Census and those populations. The proposed criteria of at least 1,000,000 people encompassing one agglomeration is used when splitting large agglomerations with the split occurring at the metropolitan statistical area boundary or Metropolitan New

England City and Town Areas (NECTA). She pointed out that Manchester was in its own NECTA and that the Nashua Area was grouped in with the Boston NECTA.

UNKNOWNNS:

- Why Nashua Urban Area wasn't joined with Boston in 2000
- What does that mean for 2010?
- Splitting using NECTA boundaries will still result in extremely large Boston UA
- Could NECTA Divisions be used?
- Will NECTA boundaries be updated after Census?
- After 2000 Census, Operating Assistance for those Urbanized Areas that grew to be greater than 200,000 in population or became part of a larger urbanized area was grandfathered in phases (allowed 50% of Section 5307 funding to be used for operating assistance in FY06, 25% in FY07, and phased out by FY08).
- Impact of recent elections on transportation funding and SAFETEA-LU reauthorization

Chizmas concluded her presentation by informing the group of some key dates and contacts for questions and/or comments:

- Public Comment on proposed Urban Area Criteria is being accepted through November 22, 2010
In Writing Only (NO EMAIL)
- Apportionment Counts/State Pop Totals (2010): By December 31, 2010
- 2010 Population Counts for all Census geography: By April 1, 2011
- New Urban Areas Released: Spring 2012

CONTACTS:

<p>Census Bureau - Public Comments Timothy Trainor Chief, Geography Division US Census Bureau Washington, DC 20233-7400</p>	<p>Census Bureau – Questions Chris Henrie Geographic Standards and Criteria Branch Geography Division US Census Bureau christopher.j.henrie@census.gov</p>
<p>FHWA Leigh Levine Planning and Development Manager Federal Highway Administration, NH Division Office (603) 228-3057, ext. 111 leigh.levine@dot.gov</p>	<p>FTA William B. Gordon, P.E. Regional Community Planner Federal Transit Administration Region 1 (617) 494-3514 william.gordon@dot.gov</p>

Chizmas asked for questions/comments or concerns from the group (see below). She also indicated that NRPC along with RPC's and transit providers in the region would be submitting comments to the Census Bureau and encouraged folks to do the same. Below are some of the questions

Sheehan asked about becoming part of the Manchester NECTA. Chizmas indicated that Manchester was in their own NECTA division and that Boston was its own NECTA division with Nashua being a part of.

Sheehan also asked if it would be easier getting rail in the area if we became part of Boston. Sousa felt that would be a different funding element. Sousa also informed the group that the FTA region is well aware of the concerns on this and that there have been several discussions with them.

Sousa also said there are ways to reassign expenses (ex. make fuel and maintenance capitol expenses instead of operating expenses). He also suggested a change to the population criteria from 2000,000 to 250,000 to save NTS. Sousa spoke about the recently failed bill on the 100 Bus Coalition initiative which would help transit providers to keep there funding if they are under 100 vehicles. He encouraged all to

send letters to the Census Bureau or to contact their legislators to put in a bill to exclude Nashua in the population criteria. Chizmas agreed and encouraged the same adding that there is power in numbers.

Parker asked for some bullet points via email to the group for ease of writing letters.

Kenamer felt the proposed boundaries were not very symmetrical and felt it did not make sense that the Census group us with Boston instead of Manchester and group Worcester instead with Boston. Pressly asked if the Exit 36S project would help any.

Dookran asked if Sousa would consider Revenue Neutral Operating. Sousa said that would not work for NTS and would affect a lot of people. Dookran asked if we reached 200,000 population would it help with passenger rail. Sousa said that would be a question for Federal Highway or Rail Authority to address. Sousa said that NTS would not see any effects until July 2013.

UPDATES TO THE MPO PROSPECTUS

Chizmas informed the group that NRPC would be updating their MPO Prospectus and explained that this document provides a framework and that some housekeeping was necessary for consistency. She also informed that there were some discrepancies in the Bylaws and they too would also be updated along with the Public Participation Policy. Additionally, Chizmas said there was some significant updates being done to the project selection criteria which she would have a draft version for review ready for the December TTAC meeting.

STAFF PRESENTATION: RIDERSHIP PREDICTION MODEL

Schaffer provided a *Ridership Prediction Model for NTS* Power Point presentation which provided a multivariate estimation of ridership potential in non-served areas in Nashua and surrounding communities. In addition he presented maps showing actual ridership and predicted to the group with questions to follow. Below is an outline of what was presented with a few key points.

Previous work included coming up with a transit need composite index score using the 1990 and 2000 Census of Population and Housing.

Summary of the Problem

- Can we better predict (understand) ridership potential from Immediate local land use & demographics?
- Model potential from actual ridership numbers from surveys – 2008 data
- Small, detailed service areas
- What can the mapped results tell us?

Method

- Based on actual ridership numbers
- Parcel based data input
- Network analysis of bus stop service areas
- Multivariate regression analysis

Results

- Ridership estimates using map illustration
- Percentile ranks using map illustration
- Continuous Surface Map
- 3D Visualization Map

Limitations

- Model estimates ridership potential based on immediate surrounding land use and typical weekday route frequency.
- Model does not do routing or accounting for changes in service frequency, bus stop amenities, safety or other similar factors.

Potential

- Independent and quantitative.
- Immediate service area analysis.
- Can be applied to new real or hypothetical developments.
- Future land use modeling can be used as model inputs.

Schaffer concluded informing the group that there were some areas in Milford and Wilton that he was working on for the Model and asked for questions and/or comments.

Sousa commented how beneficial this model was for future potential of bus routes out of the City of Nashua (ex. Merrimack).

Sheehan asked if Schaffer did a prediction model to MBTA in Lowell. Schaffer said there would be an issue getting the data to do it.

Cashell asked if Schaffer was going on the road with this Model.

STAFF AND PROJECT UPDATES

Chizmas did not have any staff and/or project updates and encouraged the group to share if they had anything from their perspective towns.

Sousa reminded Chizmas to send out the points via email to the group regarding the proposed Urban Area Criteria and asked for support from the group.

Pressly asked Sousa if there was any potential to getting a bus terminal in Tyngsboro. Sousa said he had been working with Lowell to get Transit to Nashua and connecting with them somewhere in the middle. Pressly commented that this region is not known for working interstate. Sousa said NTS was working on getting approval from FTA to jump the border.

Cashell commented on the increase in commercial and industrial activity with companies from MA coming into Hudson.

Sousa motioned to adjourn with a second from Cashell. The meeting adjourned at **1:28pm**.