**Bryan/College Station MPO**

**Minority Report**

Introduction

Category Two funds are intended for Metropolitan and Urban Corridor Projects. As specified in the Unified Transportation Program (UTP) these funds are intended for “mobility and added capacity projects along a corridor that improves transportation facilities in order to decrease travel time and level or duration of congestion, and to increase the safe and efficient movement of people and freight in metropolitan and urbanized areas.” The current allocation formula includes these factors:

* total vehicle miles traveled
* population
* lane miles of on system roads
* truck vehicle miles traveled
* percentage of census population below the federal poverty level
* centerline miles of on system roads
* congestion
* fatal and incapacitating crashes.

The Texas Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (TEMPO) met on several occasions and have proposed that these factors be used in the future:

* Most recent population estimate
* Number of fatal and incapacitating crashes
* Total vehicle miles traveled (VMT) both on and off system
* Truck VMT
* Lane miles on system
* Congestion data - a formula that uses the amount of congested vehicle-miles of travel on the major roadways in each MPO region.

The Bryan/College Station MPO objects to this set of factors because they do not support the Category Two goals. The Bryan/College Station MPO is filing this minority report with a suggested revised set of factors.

The Factors

The Commission and elected leadership have mandated a performance based planning system – and thus an allocation system that follows and supports Plan-Do-Act. Both TEMPO and the Bryan/College Station MPO want to allocate funds in a way that is consistent with the desired outcomes from Category Two funding. As such, the factors should be limited to those that deal with:

* Congestion
* Safety
* Efficiency

The Bryan/College Station MPO view of the factors selected by TEMPO:

* Population - an effective factor; increasing population means more strain on existing infrastructure, the likelihood of increasing congestion and reducing efficiency and thus the need for increased capacity.
* Fatal and incapacitating crashes - both a safety concern and contributor to inefficient and congested corridors. This factor is also in line with the scope of Category Two.
* Congestion - an important component of any new formula since the intent of Category Two funds is to alleviate congestion. The Bryan-College Station MPO suggests, however, that congestion cost is a measure closer to the concerns of Category Two and should be used as the measure of congestion, rather than congested vehicle-miles of travel (VMT).

The Bryan/College Station MPO does not agree with the following factors.

* Use of both VMT and Truck VMT. As calculated, VMT is very similar to population (more population usually means more VMT) and the use of VMT penalizes (removes funding) from urban areas that already do a good job of using transit, bicycling, walking and other efficient travel modes.  In addition, the VMT factor rewards regions with an Interstate Highway carrying high volumes through the region even when that VMT has little to no congestion and therefore does not indicate a need for new capacity or safety funding. In addition, TEMPO has already questioned how truck VMT is calculated.
* Use of a lane-mile factor rewards Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs) that are larger and have gotten money in the past to build roads. We do not see how this relates to the need for new capacity, and thus has no real tie to the purpose for Category Two funding.

The Bryan/College Station MPO Recommendation

Addressing congestion and safety concerns are the reasons for Category Two funding.  They are why the Texas Clear Lanes program was initiated.  Texans expect Category Two funding will attack problem areas. A system with lane-miles and vehicle-miles of travel is not inherently problematic. We therefore suggest a formula as follows:

* Estimated Population – 35%
* Fatal and Incapacitating Crashes – 15%
* Congestion Cost – 50%

The Bryan/College Station MPO supports TEMPO’s call for addressing this new formula by limiting the reduction in funds from the baseline value so that no MPO is penalized more than 10% from what their allocation would have been under the old formula. To compensate MPO regions that lose more than 10 percent, funds should be reallocated away from MPOs that receive a significant increase as a result of this new formula for the next UTP.

The Bryan/College Station MPO feels this approach best represents the purpose of Category Two funding, provides decision makers with a performance-based planning system, and incorporates the Texas Transportation Commission’s Plan-Do-Act approach.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this Minority Report.