

Memorandum

TO: Regan Hammond, John Orr
FROM: Tracy Selin, Joe Guerre
DATE: June 21, 2010
RE: Performance Framework Workshop

Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) staff and the Cambridge Systematics (CS) General Planning Consultant team held the first stakeholder workshop on the Performance Framework currently under development for the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) element of Plan 2040. The workshop was held Thursday, June 17, from 9:00AM-12:00AM at ARC offices. Attendees included Transportation Coordinating Committee (TCC) and Land Use Coordinating Committee (LUCC) members as well as a number of key stakeholder invitees. Workshop material included an overview of each step of the performance framework, with facilitated discussion throughout.

This memorandum summarizes key topics discussed at the workshop and our recommendations for each. This summary is followed by a more thorough list of questions and comments received at the workshop and a list of workshop attendees.

Key Discussion Topics

1. In general, workshop attendees seemed to understand the overall framework approach, with comments geared primarily towards adding “more” to the framework as opposed to modifying the approach. There seemed to be some general confusion over the technical methods to implement KDP1 and how performance measures used at that point differ from those used at KDP3.
 - Technical methods for KDP1 and KDP3 will both require more detailed explanation in the future simply given the detail involved with each of these steps and their impact on RTP development. Given the amount of material included in the first workshop, time limitations did not provide for detailed technical explanation for either.
 - We do not recommend revising the framework. However, simplified messaging should be developed for KDP1.
 - CS will develop a list of succinct talking points for ARC to help explain the intent and application of KDP1 in the framework.
2. Several participants suggested including Travel Demand Management (TDM) as its own program area in KDP1. They noted that TDM should be called out given the state (and

federal) emphasis on TDM as a critical transportation investment area. The TDM program would reflect commute options type programs to reduce VMT and not larger demand management strategies such as value pricing or managed lanes.

- TDM was originally included in the draft framework as a separate program, but was dropped in the interest of time, with emphasis placed instead on Bicycle / Pedestrian program.
 - We recommend that TDM remain as is currently reflected in the framework, in order to keep KDPI streamlined, avoid difficulties in establishing the relationship between TDM funds and system performance, and reflect that fact that TDM is entirely funded via CMAQ funds currently, and has its own associated funding/evaluation process.
 - We recommend adding a policy filter step under the ARC/Other program, in which policies and priorities regarding the allocation of “other” funds to the various project types can be addressed.
3. Several workshop participants suggested the inclusion of the Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) program as its own program area in KDP1.
- We recommend that the LCI program remain as is currently reflected in the framework. As noted at the workshop, LCI studies may produce a wide variety of project recommendations that cross many program areas. This precludes an opportunity for a predicted performance assessment under KDP1.
 - Increased or decreased funding for LCI can be dictated by ARC support for the nationally award winning program which also serves as a direct reflection of Plan 2040 sustainability and livability principles. These policies and priorities could be addressed in the new “ARC/Other” policy filter recommended in item #2 above.
 - As reflected in our Task 1 recommendations, we feel the most effective and meaningful application of the LCI principles into transportation system projects via the RTP performance framework is the land use screen proposed for KDP2.
4. Many of the multi-modal/land use issues raised during the workshop dealt with project details that are likely to be unknown during long-range plan development, but could be addressed through project development activities.
- There are two places where policies can be directly integrated in the framework approach. The first is KDP2, when projects are filtered out based on Plan 2040 policies. The second is in plan monitoring, during which ARC can ensure that design-level policies are incorporated into the project development process.
 - We recommend considering the addition of a policy dimension to the plan monitoring/management element of the framework to address issues such as context sensitive or complete streets design.
5. Based on feedback from participants regarding prioritization of Management and Operations (M&O) and bike/ped projects, we recommend the following general approach:

- First, categorize M&O and bike/ped projects as either regional or local importance. For local importance, ARC should rely on local priorities as defined in their CTPs. For regional importance, ARC should develop and apply a prioritization process.
- This will dramatically reduce the number of projects that ARC has to evaluate.
- Allocation of funds to local projects, might best be done by formula (lanes miles, delay, VMT, etc.) or some type of equitable distribution.
- Since the M&O and bike/ped prioritization methodologies are much less mature than those used for road and transit expansion projects, ARC may prefer developing these methodologies after this plan update so that more time is available for obtaining stakeholder buy-in.

Other Questions and Comments

1. Comment: Explain "Other/ARC Programs".

Response: This program area is intended to capture general, programmatic investment strategies such as ARC funded studies. Because study recommendations can result in proposed investment strategies across multiple program areas, they do not lend themselves to predictive performance assessment conducted as part of KDP1. Funding for ARC programs, however, should compliment overall direction of Plan 2040.

2. Comment: Will lump sum funding for road and transit preservation be combined as it appears on Framework graphic?

Response: No. The KDP1 analysis is intended to inform how large those lump sum amounts should be (separately) with lump sum levels programmed accordingly in the RTP.

CS Note: CS will change this in the final graphic.

3. Comment: Are preservation funds for the existing system and future system treated separately in the KDP1 analysis?

Response: Yes. The intent is to first define funding needed to maintain the existing system (road and non-road). Accounting for incremental preservation funding needed to support operations/maintenance of additional new capacity will be accounted for via the Road Expansion, Transit Expansion and Bike/Ped Expansion programs. This approach reflects a more accurate cost of system expansion, while clarifying the distinction between system expansion and preserving the existing system.

4. Comment: How is preservation funding for the existing bike/ped system treated? Not reflecting funding to maintain the existing bike/ped system could lead to urban disinvestment. How are bike/ped trails treated?

Response: For on-road bike system and sidewalks, funding can be captured through the funding needed to maintain existing road system. Trails are not directly considered.

CS Note: Options to address existing bike/ped preservation funding are as follows – 1) include in bike/ped program, 2) include in road preservation, and 3) create a new program. CS recommends keeping it in #2.

Maintenance of sidewalks in many areas is the responsibility of property owners. This is not an area that CS recommends for inclusion in RTP performance framework.

5. Comment: Will the costs associated with existing transit preservation reflect pre- or post-MARTA cuts? The Region may need to increase emphasis on transit and not accept today's standards as a baseline. There also may be a need to take into account impending federal safety mandates that could impact service/costs.

Response: For KDP1 analysis, we recommend a two-step costing process. First, develop costs needed to bring regional transit service to minimum acceptable level of service. Second, develop costs needed to maintain that service level over life of Plan 2040 horizon. The intent is to help ARC decision makers get a better understanding of true costs of maintaining the *existing* system, before considering system expansion of any sort.

CS Note: These cost numbers should be developed in a straightforward manner with assumptions documented, similar to other program areas. Potential future policy constraints or considerations do not need to be reflected.

If available, additional cost data points would enrich this analysis. For example, develop the cost of maintaining the anticipated level of service (LOS) after the MARTA cuts are made and develop the cost of achieving and maintaining an ideal LOS. This would give decision makers three funding options – worst case, minimal acceptable, and ideal.

6. Comment: May want to consider including right-of-way (ROW) preservation as element of future transit preservation costs.

CS Note: This should be discussed further when transit costs are estimated.

7. Add “connectivity” in the road expansion program category, along with road capacity and future preservation.

Response: Connectivity is best handled at the project level (KDP3) rather than at the network level (KDP1).

KDP2

1. Comment: Is KDP2 an interactive process between locals and ARC? If a project is filtered out, do sponsor get a chance to modify and resubmit?

Response: The intent is to provide sponsors a process for adjusting project proposals to be in line with Plan 2040 policy. The timing/opportunity for sponsors to be able to re-submit *existing project proposals* within Plan 2040 schedule is not yet known because policies are not defined yet.

CS Note: Once ARC has more details on the types of policy filters that will be used, it should become clear that if a project does not get through a policy filter, simply modifying a written scope will not help (i.e., the intent is to move towards establishing a higher threshold for projects to move forward in the process). Also remember, at KDP2, ARC is applying big picture policies, not project design policies.

2. Comment: Previous RTPs had their own policies. Will this replace those policies?

Response: Yes, Plan 2040 will reflect updated policies with increased emphasis on sustainability, livability and integrated transportation/land use planning. KDP2 policy filters will reflect Plan 2040 policies directly.

3. Comment: Is the extension of a project considered a new project, subject to re-review at KDP2?

Response: No. Scope refinements that occur throughout the project development process would be handled in the Plan Management component of the framework.

4. Comment (multiple, specific KDP2 policy filters discussion): KDP2 policies should:

- Link to desired outcomes;
- Emphasize connectivity;
- Reflect existing land use and infrastructure as well as projected changes in land use;
- Reflect access management planning; and
- Support intermodal investment. For example, connectivity between transportation networks, park-n-ride lots. Also, are there transit plans/systems/policies against which roadway projects should be checked?

Response: These and other factors will be considered during the policy identification and development process.

5. Comment: Is the intent of KDPs 1-2 to provide more balance/regional equity in funding? Clarify the role of equity/congressional leveling in the process.

Response: The intent is not to ensure funding equity across jurisdictions, but to provide ARC an objective means to evaluate project in terms of the broader, regional Plan 2040 goals/objectives. Equity considerations would come into account at KDP4 where ARC selects high-performing projects based on multiple planning factors (e.g., equity, project synergies, etc).

CS Note: Preference is to handle this during TIP development, not plan development.

6. Comment: Applaud ARC for pursuing a performance-based approach. Might consider putting KDP2 before KDP1.

CS Note: Strong preference for keeping as is.

KDP3

1. Comment: Should consider weighting crash types differently if crash reduction is used for project evaluation.

Response: This will be considered.

2. Comment (multiple, specific KDP3 project-evaluation discussion): KDP3 measures should:
 - Link to Plan 2040 objectives;
 - Be consistent with policies defined at KDP2;
 - Include air quality/emissions assessment; and
 - Reflect design details of project scope.

Response: These and other factors will be considered.

3. Comment: Road preservation analysis could be weighted against number of vehicles on a given corridor. Bridge ratings should reflect quality/sufficiency, not width/span of bridge deck area.

CS Note: We recommend using percent pavement deficient and percent of bridge deficient weighted by bridge deck area as the measure rather than weighting deficiencies by VMT. Introducing VMT makes it harder to comprehend the implications of potential performance levels. For example, if the region maintains 85 percent of its pavements in good condition, it would be possible to estimate the cost (i.e., needs) for addressing the remaining 15 percent. This would not be possible if the target were to ensure 85 percent of VMT occurred on good pavement.

The bridge rating reflects the entire condition of the bridge, not just deck. Weighting the total condition by deck area reflects the difference in costs between fixing a very small bridge and fixing a very large bridge.

4. Comment: The economic growth measures appear to focus on new development, not existing infrastructure.

Response: No, just the opposite. Intent is to invest in areas where local conditions (e.g., existing infrastructure, land use) will support greater potential return on investment.

5. Comment: What if the type of investment being evaluated conflicts with local objectives?

Response: ARC is primarily evaluating projects identified by the locals/project sponsors.

6. Comment: Economic growth measures should link more directly to emerging critical employment growth areas such as healthcare and education.

CS Note: In KDP3, modify "freight readiness index" to shift focus from freight intensive industries to health care and higher education industries. Consider dropping "supporting facilities" because this will overlap with the new readiness index.

7. Comment (various, M&O prioritization discussion): M&O projects are currently prioritized at local level based on consideration of:
- Local traffic studies;
 - Crash data;
 - Citizen input;
 - Land use, projected changes in development that will impact travel patterns;
 - Choke point issues;
 - Preliminary cost assessment;
 - Utilities/cost; and
 - Age of infrastructure, equipment condition.

CS Note: See discussion on item #5 on page 2 above for recommended approach.

8. Comment (various, Bike/Ped Prioritization discussion): Bike/Ped projects are currently prioritized based on:
- Location, in relation to parks and schools, major destination areas, LCI (or other small area) studies;
 - Safe routes to schools; and
 - Connectivity.

CS Note: See discussion on item #5 on page 2 above for recommended approach.

9. Comment: For Transit Boarding measure, may want to consider difference between existing boarding versus new boarding.

CS Note: Will need to look at results to decided appropriate way to reflect ridership – net ridership or change in ridership.

10. Comment: What role will CTPs play in the process:

Response: CTPs are intended to help project sponsors define funding requests. Existing CTP recommendations are being reflected in ARC's project compilation list. ARC will not be conducting a new call for projects for Plan 2040, hence this round of project evaluation will be conducted against an existing pool of projects.

Workshop Attendees

ARC

- Jane Hayse
- John Orr
- Regan Hammond
- David Haynes
- David Emory
- Cain Williamson
- David D'onofrio
- Jim Skinner
- Jean Hee Park
- Elaine Olivares
- Kofi Wakhisi

Consultant Team

- Tracy Selin
- Joe Guerre
- Bruce Landis
- Aaron Fortner
- Lakey Boyd

Attendees

- Cheri Hobson-Mathews, Henry County
- Don Williams, MARTA
- Patrick Vu, SRTA
- Andrew Baker, DeKalb County
- Sally Flocks, PEDS
- Megan McClendon, RS&H
- Vince Edwards, Gwinnett County
- Anthony Dukes, Spalding County
- Heather Alhadeff, Perkins Will
- Brian Gist, SELC
- John Maximale, LCC
- Wyatt Kendall, SELC
- Phil Mallon, Fayette County
- Cedric Clark, CoSS
- Randy Hulseley, DCDOT
- Kyetha Clark, Marietta
- Brian Border, GRTA
- Justin Edwards, MARTA
- Laraine Vance, Cobb County

- Chris Chovan, Roswell
- Roussan Francois, Fulton County
- Denise Starling, BATMA
- Nancy Lovingood, Gwinnett
- Henry Green, GDOT
- Tom McQueen, GDOT