



Place: Manchester Community College

Date: April 13, 2016

Notes Taken by: Karen Huberdeau

Time: 1-2 pm

Meeting Notes

Project #: 52392.01

Re: I-293 Exits 6 and 7
Manchester #16099
Technical Advisory Committee Meeting #2

ATTENDEES

Keith Cota	-	NHDOT
Trent Zanes	-	NHDOT
Marc Laurin	-	NHDOT
Leigh Levine	-	FHWA
William Craig	-	City of Manchester
Bill Klubben	-	City of Manchester
Bruce Thomas	-	City of Manchester
Adam Jacobs	-	Town of Goffstown
Mark Lemay	-	Town of Goffstown
Karen Keeler	-	Manchester Community College
Jeff Nyhan	-	Manchester Community College
Tim White	-	SNHPC
Marty Kennedy	-	VHB
Karen Huberdeau	-	VHB

Mr. Keith Cota, the New Hampshire Department of Transportation's (NHDOT) Project Manager for the project, opened the meeting by introducing the meeting agenda. The agenda included an overview of the data that has been collected thus far, a discussion on the project's purpose and need statement, and a brief introduction to the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) INVEST project sustainability tool that will be used on this project.

Mr. Marty Kennedy, VHB's Project Manager for the project, continued the presentation by discussing the data that VHB has collected. He added that the maps shown throughout the presentation are still a work in progress and are currently being quality control checked. He stated that he would provide final PDFs to the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) members when the data collection process is complete.

Mr. Kennedy presented and discussed a series of graphs depicting the monthly, daily, and hourly traffic volume characteristics and trends along the I-293 mainline. Some of the trends showed that:

- Traffic volumes tend to peak during the summer months
- Weekday volumes in June tend to peak on Friday's
- Sunday volumes in the southbound direction reflect tourist activity

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- Weekday hourly volumes show peak southbound volumes in the morning and peak northbound volumes in the evening

Mr. Kennedy informed the committee that turning movement counts have been conducted at 23 locations throughout the project area for the weekday AM and PM peak periods. These locations include the interchange ramps and nearby intersections.

Mr. Kennedy presented a graph depicting the 200 highest I-293 mainline hourly volumes. He explained why the 30th highest hour volume is used as the appropriate design hour condition. He noted that it would be wasteful to design a highway for the highest hourly volume while designing for the average hourly condition might result in an inadequate design.

Mr. Kennedy continued by presenting the crash data that has been collected. He showed a heat map of the highest crash areas within the project area. The data revealed over 300 crashes over the past 4 years. He confirmed that addressing safety deficiencies is an important element of this project. He discussed some safety issues that were brought forth in the planning study (Part A):

- Traffic congestion on the Exit 6 Amoskeag Circle
- Traffic backing onto the interstate from the ramps
- High volume weaving movements in the southbound direction at Exit 6
- Exit 6 NB On-ramp acceleration lane is too short
- Exit 7 only provides connectivity to and from the North

Mr. Kennedy proceeded to show various existing environmental resource maps including, flood plains, wetlands, cultural/historical, archeological, farmland soils, groundwater, wildlife habitats, hazardous sites, and noise monitoring locations.

Mr. Mark Lemay, representing the town of Goffstown, questioned the traffic counts in the winter. He asked why the trends were not similar to the summer months, with motorists traveling to/from the north for winter activities such as skiing.

Mr. Kennedy responded that although there is an increase in winter seasonal tourist activity the volume of traffic is less than during the summer months. He added that aside from specific seasonal activity such as skiing, people in general tend to travel less during the winter months.

Mr. Cota added that traffic volumes show I-293 to be more of a commuter route and that traffic patterns for winter and summer recreation are higher on I-95 or I-93.

Mr. Cota asked if there were additional noise monitoring sites that should be considered for the analysis – particularly in the residential area to the north of the Community College.

Mr. Kennedy responded that the noise monitoring sites that were shown on the map were collected in order to calibrate the noise model. He stated that the model will provide noise levels for the entire corridor, and that the depicted locations are used solely to adjust the model to best reflect the existing conditions.

Mr. Kennedy continued by defining a project's purpose and need statement. He explained that a purpose and need statement serves to establish a basis for the development of a reasonable range of alternatives and assists with the

selection of a proposed action. He added that VHB will be preparing a draft purpose and need statement to review with NHDOT and FHWA. The draft statement will then be shared with the committee.

Mr. Kennedy proceeded to discuss the FHWA INVEST (Infrastructure Voluntary Evaluation Sustainability Tool) program that will be used to assess the project. He described INVEST as a self-evaluation tool comprised of voluntary sustainability best practices used to enhance projects.

Mr. Kennedy stated that the "project development" criteria will be explored throughout this part of the project (Part B). He provided a list of the criteria and added that they may not all be applicable to the project but the list shows the range of opportunities. Mr. Kennedy stressed that our purpose for using the tool is not so much about obtaining a high score, but rather to identify opportunities to enhance the sustainability of the project moving forward.

Mr. Kennedy informed the committee that the next TAC meeting (May 18th) will be a workshop on INVEST. He stated that VHB, NHDOT, and FHWA will meet prior to the next TAC meeting to pre-score the project based on the current scope and the typical project process. The pre-scoring will be provided to the committee at the workshop where the members will then form breakout groups to analyze the score and discuss ways to improve the score as the project moves forward.

Mr. Kennedy stated that at the end of the Part B phase of the project, the committee will meet again to re-score the project to determine whether we had been successful in implementing any sustainability enhancements. This rescore will also provide the committee the opportunity to identify potential sustainability objectives for the final design and construction phases of the project.

Mr. Cota asked the committee to take on a voluntary homework assignment. He provided the members with the INVEST website: <https://www.sustainablehighways.org/> He asked the committee to review the tool in preparation for next month's meeting.

Mr. Cota then proceeded to discuss the benefits on the INVEST tool. He added that the tool provides opportunities to balance the benefits of the project and the needs of the multiple communities involved.

Mr. Tim White, representing the Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission (SNHPC), questioned if there will be an upper limit established for the price the DOT and FHWA will be willing to spend on the implementation of the various INVEST criteria. He stated that cost will most likely limit the implementation.

Mr. Cota responded that funding will likely be an influential factor and not a deciding factor if the actions are supported through project decisions. He noted that some actions will be more appropriate than others and the analysis will need to determine the cost of the alternatives to the various communities involved, as well as how the actions will be maintained. He added that an answer will most likely come through the INVEST analysis process.

Mr. Kennedy added that the process will provide an opportunity for an open discussion on the benefits and costs of potential actions. He noted that the INVEST tool will provide the opportunity to at least consider potential sustainability actions that otherwise might not have been considered.

Mr. Leigh Levine, representing FHWA, confirmed that the INVEST tool provides a list of best practices. He added that the process will provide a learning opportunity and introduce various opportunities to improve the project.

Mr. Kennedy briefly discussed the project schedule, stating that the bulk of the work will be performed through the summer months and into the fall. He informed the committee that he will be providing them important documentation to discuss and to anticipate project activity ramping up over the next few meetings.

Mr. Kennedy concluded the meeting by thanking the committee for their attendance and informing the members that he would send out information before the next meeting to better describe the INVEST workshop and summarize the data collection process.

The meeting concluded at 2:00 pm.