

From: Trowbridge, David
Sent: Wednesday, January 14, 2009 2:51 PM
To: Michael Rewey; Webber, Robbie; Skidmore, Paul; Gruber, Timothy; Bob Schaefer; Carl Durocher (retrotech@gdinet.com); mabasford@charter.net; Mark Shahan
Cc: Murphy, Brad; Roll, Rick; Grady, Brian; Statz, Andrew; McDonald, Robert; Nelson, Larry; Sobota, Tim; Hoffman, Jeanne
Subject: LRTPC/Northeast Neighborhoods

LRTPC members - - we will have quorum and will meet tomorrow afternoon (Thurs Jan 15, 5:00 pm, LL-110 MMB).... Please see below regarding resolution ID 12771 ... Original email from LRTPC member Eric Sundquist and reply from Bob McDonald (MPO staff)... Eric is proposing the use of vehicle miles of travel (VMT) as the measure for transportation goal (i.e., reducing VMT by NENH residents by 25%) ... He will plug in to the meeting via speaker-phone to participate in the discussion Please let me know if your quorum status changes - - best regards, David T.

-----Original Message-----

From: McDonald, Robert
Sent: Wednesday, January 14, 2009 10:26 AM
To: Statz, Andrew; Roll, Rick
Cc: Trowbridge, David; Schaefer, William; Murphy, Brad
Subject: RE: Northeast Neighborhoods

Andrew,

While VMT may be a desirable factor to measure, our problem is the ability to get a good measure of it at the City of Madison level of geography and developing a good base year estimate. WisDOT estimates of VMT are fairly gross (Countywide and Statewide level) and are based on the location of traffic counters (typically on the arterial roadway system with some collectors), gasoline sales, etc. These traffic counts, particularly on the arterial roadway system, include a significant number of regional trips from outside of the City of Madison. WisDOT's estimates are then reported to the Feds. While the estimates might be interesting to track over time, the estimates miss the VMT that is occurring on the local street system and miss the efforts where you are also trying to achieve a mode shift or trip reductions. For example, on January 1, 2004, the City of Madison reported having a total of 704.41 municipal miles (not including USH, STH, or CTH miles). Of the 704.41 miles, 68.04 miles were arterial street miles, 98.99 were collector street miles, and 537.38 were local street miles. IT WOULD BE GOOD IF WE COULD TRACK BOTH TRIPS AND VMT. There is survey data for trips by mode at the City level and the County level but it is for a specific point in time (e.g. 2001 NHTS data). VMT is more problematic to measure due to complications that I mentioned above. I still believe that sampling the neighborhood on a periodic basis for both trip-making behavior by mode and VMT over a specific time period is a good approach. If a good approach for estimating VMT can be arrived at (e.g. odometer readings, gps, etc., without privacy infringements), we should try to get that as well. Again, coming up with a good base year estimate for both trips and VMT is important.

Bob

-----Original Message-----

From: Eric Sundquist [mailto:erics@cow.s.org]
Sent: Tuesday, January 13, 2009 3:17 PM
To: Trowbridge, David
Cc: Statz, Andrew
Subject: Northeast Neighborhoods

David,

I'm scheduled to talk with Andrew on Friday. That doesn't help for Thursday's meeting, which I will miss in order to attend the Midwest Governors Association climate policy meeting.

For what it's worth, my thoughts are generally that the Northeast Neighborhoods transportation goal should be something like "motor vehicle miles traveled (VMT) per person will be 25 percent lower than the comparable figure for Madison metro area."

Here are some reasons:

1. FHWA calculates the VMT for Madison metro. WisDOT may as well. Or a base could come from the most recent two-day travel diary study in the area. In any case, a reliable baseline for comparison should be available.
2. VMT per person or per household is really what you want to measure. A trip could be one block or 100 miles. A VMT is a VMT.
3. Measuring trips is problematic.
 - a) What constitutes a trip? A walk next door? If I go to work and then the store is that one or two trips? Etc.
 - b) The Census asks about work-commute trips, which compose about 20 percent of total trips. The annual Census data (ACS) doesn't go to the tract or blockgroup level, so even if you used this not-very-illuminating metric you'd have data points only every 10 years.
4. VMT could be measured directly, by getting a sample of 50 residents to agree to send in their odometer readings (maybe in exchange for a small honorarium). Or the project could go high-tech and use GPS -- this is getting cheap, and people are less worried about the privacy issues than they were, and they appreciate the benefits, such as tracking stolen vehicles, and the possibility of enrolling in an insurance-by-the-mile program.
5. VMT of course dovetails much better with the comp plan amendment I have proposed -- so much so that the two proposals could probably be joined if the mayor agreed. Again, I won't have time with Andrew until after the LRTPC meeting, but this is something I'm going to ask him to run by Dave.
6. VMT also is more in sync with early versions of the governor's climate bill, the Midwest Governors Association climate initiative, and early thinking on SAFETEA-LU reauthorization.
7. VMT can be framed in a positive light. Reductions in VMT can indicate that people are meeting their needs and wants with lower travel cost burdens. This link is less clear with trips -- a trip goal may sound like "big government forcing people on buses." VMT reduction can be accomplished by fewer or shorter trips, carpooling, trip-chaining, etc.
Trip reduction is only about mode switching.

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