

2008 Transportation Program Annual Report

In 2008, the Metropolitan Topeka Planning Organization continued the work of transportation planning that was begun in previous years, and brought some of tasks to completion. There was a turnover at the top of the staff in the first quarter of 2008 when Todd Girdler, Transportation Planner for the MTPO, left Topeka to pursue a similar position with the Lawrence MPO. Before leaving Todd was able to complete a new Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) the document which programs all transportation projects utilizing federal funds. Todd also completed the first quarter budget. Part-time MTPO planner Carlton Scroggins was promoted to Transportation Planner in the second quarter of 2008 and he assumed the duties previously performed by Todd Girdler. This left the MTPO staff short-handed, however, the essential duties required to continue MTPO operations were carried out for 2008 and plans to hire another MTPO transportation planner in 2009 are underway.

With the change in duties for Carlton, his time was split between his day to day GIS planning activities and continuing the MTPO activities that Todd had been responsible for. Previously Carlton's MTPO role was a GIS support role and lending review assistance to Todd, the Transportation Planner. While this created somewhat of a learning and familiarity transition for Carlton as he took over the head of the MTPO, projects and documents required by the MTPO through the CPG agreement continued to be fulfilled in 2008. The planning staff absorbed some of Carlton's previous GIS responsibilities, freeing up time for him to focus on transportation planning.

1 – MTPO Program Support & Administration

2008 Program Activities:

1. Provide staff support to the MTPO Policy Board and MTPO Technical Advisory Committee including meeting related documents and other work requested by the MTPO and/or TAC Chairpersons.
 - Prepared UPWP amendments for review at TAC & MTPO policy board meetings.
 - Prepared draft documents of the 2009 UPWP for TAC/MTPO review.
 - Prepared draft documents of Public Participation Plan with the assistance of KDOT, TMTA and FHWA.
2. Prepare agendas, minutes, announcements and meeting rooms to support the MTPO and TAC meetings, and post agendas and minutes on the web site for public review.
 - Prepared agendas for TAC & MTPO policy board meetings.
 - Posted agendas on website.
 - Secured meeting locations for MTPO, TAC meetings.
3. Monitor progress toward completing the tasks included in the approved 2008 UPWP.
 - Ongoing oversight of coordination of UPWP tasks, and daily activities
4. Prepare the 2009 UPWP.
 - Prepared several drafts of the UPWP for review and comment by KDOT and FHWA.
 - Reformatted UPWP document for 2009.

- Met with members of TAC MTPO, TMTA, FTA, FHWA, KDOT and elected City & County officials to review UPWP changes and updates for the 2009 UPWP document.
 - Prepared a final draft of the 2009 UPWP and presented that draft to TAC & MTPO KDOT, FTA & FHWA for approval.
 - Posted approved draft on website for public review.
 - Distributed approved 2009UPWP to MTPO partners.
5. Maintain records and provide reports to funding agencies on the status of transportation planning activities and resources expended.
- Prepared DBE reports for the four quarter billings.
 - Prepared billings for four quarters and delivered to KDOT for reimbursement.
 - Maintained TMTA records for software purchase.
 - Prepared an Agreement between TMTA and the MTPO for Transit software purchase.
 - Maintained and processed billings for US24 Hwy Corridor Study.
 - Maintained and submitted records for US 24hwy Corridor work.
6. Provide adequate continuing education and training opportunities for MTPO Staff and committee members.
- Assisted in preparation of 24hwy corridor materials for public, TAC and MTPO presentations.
 - Attended KAMPO meeting.
 - Attended training course sponsored by the National Transit Institute on Metropolitan Transportation Programming.
 - Attended the National Sustainable Transportation Summit in KC, focusing on planning for freight transportation throughout the region.
 - Participated in a teleconference sponsored by the City of Topeka Finance Department. The session was given by Thompson Interactive. The topic was "Time and Effort Reporting for Federal Grants: A Guide to Careful Documentation".
 - Attended Transportation Priorities Committee meetings. This is a committee that identifies transportation needs in the MTPO area and targets them for possible funding.
 - Attended KDOT Local Consult Meeting (T-Link session). T-Link is a state-wide program which leverages support for transportation projects in Kansas. Attended the Trails and Bikeways session as a representative of the Transportation priorities Committee.
 - Attended the Bi-State Planning Conference. (APA).
 - Attended the Kansas Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (KAMPO) in St. Joseph MO.
 - Attended GIS day at the University of Kansas. GIS Day is a nationally recognized day originated by Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI) for the purpose of sharing and showcasing local and national GIS applications.
7. To develop criteria and procedures to assist with the management of the MTPO and the metropolitan transportation planning process. This will include:
1. Periodic planning certification procedure,
 2. Staff support services evaluation process, and
 3. Process for evaluating the 3-C planning process and its required work products.
 - Attended a web cast on approaches to deploying 511 systems

- sponsored by the USDOT.
 - Met with KDOT staff to discuss the reorganization of the Planning and Development Bureau and the impacts of this change on the KDOT-MPO relationships.
8. Review the new regulations under SAFETEA-LU that concern MPO operations with KDOT and USDOT representatives. Discuss changes needed to the MTPO planning process to comply with these new regulations. Report major actions to the MTPO-TAC and MTPO Policy Board.
 - Continued to monitor the status of the new SAFETEA-LU federal surface transportation program and its related implementation regulations for statewide and metropolitan planning and continued to review the final planning regulations issued.
 9. Assist KDOT with the development of a new Metropolitan Planning Agreement for the Topeka MPO that will clarify the relationships of its planning partners and other MPO administrative and operational issues.
 - Work with KDOT on completing a new Metropolitan Planning Agreement for the Topeka MPO.
 10. Assist the KDOT with the revision of the MTPO Designation Agreement that is now due since SAFETEA-LU and related planning regulations have been approved.
 - Worked with KDOT on completing a revised MTPO Designation Agreement.
 11. Prepare billing information and submit requests for reimbursements to KDOT on a quarterly basis.
 - Prepared billing statements for four quarters and submitted it to KDOT for approval and reimbursement.
 - Worked with KDOT staff to create a UPWP carryover worksheet for 2008 and to calculate the carryover amount to use in the 2008 CPG supplemental that was drafted by KDOT.
 12. Continue and refine the use of a new process for claiming certain non-staff direct charges and obtaining reimbursement for those charges from the Consolidated Planning Grant.
 - Refined process for claiming certain non-staff direct charges.

2 – Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)

2008 Program Activities:

Several of the following activities are ongoing in nature or will begin in 2008 and continue onto 2009 and beyond. Many of these activities will be discussed at Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meetings in 2008 and among the planning partners in the MTPO process.

1. Train the MTPO staff in the use of the TransCAD traffic model software. This will be closely coordinated with KDOT and be a major part of this work task throughout the year. This will be the highest priority under this work task. The MTPO may elect to assist the MTPO Staff with this activity through the use of consultants and training opportunities.

- Plan is completed, no CAD training was done in 2008 for the 2012 MTP Model.
2. Review and utilize demographic data as part of the metropolitan transportation planning process and use Census data (updated as needed) as input data to the regional traffic demand model.
 - N/A at this time. Model is complete and Census updates will not be done until new 2010 Census comes out.
 - Reviewed information on the new rules for the creation of census tracts and block groups, and information about the creation of traffic analysis zones to be used in the next Census Transportation Planning Products (CTTP).
 3. Develop an MTPO traffic count program within the metropolitan planning area. This effort will be conducted in cooperation with the City of Topeka, Shawnee County and KDOT. These traffic counts will be used to assist with the calibration of the regional travel demand model. The MTPO will work with local and state officials to inventory the existing counts and determine what additional counts will be needed to provide the necessary model calibration. If additional counts are needed then the MTPO will work with these other agencies to identify the locations where counts are needed and assist the agencies in obtaining these counts to the extent feasible.
 - No activity was done on this task. The model is complete and no additional model runs were warranted in 2008.
 4. Compile transportation safety data and decide how to use this data in the next MTP. The MTPO staff will work with Topeka, Shawnee County and KDOT officials to compile accident data. The MTPO will use existing accident records developed by those agencies to address the safety issues in the MTP.
 - Time did not allow for any activity on this task in 2008.
 5. Review the Functional Classification Map and make revisions to this map as needed.
 - No revisions to the Functional Classification Map were necessary in 2008.
 6. The MTPO staff will meet with KDOT, TMTA, Topeka, and Shawnee County officials to review the funding level assumptions used in the last LRTP and update those assumptions as needed for preparing the next Metropolitan Transportation Plan. These funding assumptions will be used to create a list of recommended projects based on a reasonable expectation of funding and in order to fiscally constrain the next MTP due in 2012.
 - Time and staff turnover did not allow for any time to be spent on this activity in 2008.
 7. Continue to review freight operations, transit operations, paratransit operations, walking and bicycling issues, and inter-modal transportation issues in the MTPO metropolitan planning area and discuss how those items can be incorporated into the next MTP.
 - Attended paratransit Meetings.
 - Continued to become more educated about freight issues and how the transportation planning process impacts commercial freight operations and how freight concerns need to be integrated into the MPO planning process..
 - Attended a meeting sponsored by KDOT to discuss the heartland Flyer proposed improvements to rail passenger service in Kansas.
 8. Review the SAFETEA-LU planning regulations along with the KDOT, FHWA and FTA and

determine how the MTPO will address the requirements for developing environmental mitigation strategies and how the MTPO will involve environmental agencies in the MTPO planning process.

- No activity on this task was performed due to staff turnover and time constraints.
9. Continue to work toward coordinating the Topeka Parks & Open Space Plan and other local comprehensive plan elements with the Metropolitan Transportation Plan approved and maintained by the MTPO.
 - Reviewed site plans for compliance to MTP.
 10. Continue to review numerous development proposals for impacts to the regional transportation system and make comments about those projects to land-use planning staff.
 - Reviewed weekly, development proposals presented at staff meetings for compliance to the MTP.
 11. Work with Topeka Planning Staff and consultants to develop a new Unified Development Code for Topeka to replace the current zoning code and subdivision regulations. The MTPO staff will review and comment on this new UDC as it is drafted to coordinate its development with the Metropolitan Transportation Plan.
 - Worked with consultants throughout the year on elements of the new UDC for Topeka;
 12. Review the Topeka Capital Improvement Plan, including discussions with the Topeka Planning Commission, in order to recommend needed transportation related projects for consideration in the development of the next Metropolitan Transportation Plan. This may also be done with the Shawnee County Planning Commission.
 - Reviewed CIP and made suggestions to Shawnee County Planning Commission as to which transportation projects should be pursued.
 13. Review public comments and comments from planning partners about the current Long Range Transportation Plan and transportation planning issues in the region. These comments will be reviewed as part of developing the MTPO's next long range plan that will be called the Metropolitan Transportation Plan.
 - No public comments were solicited on the next MTP.
 14. The timely execution of these activities may be accomplished through the use of consultants to assist the MTPO with completing certain items related to the creation and maintenance of a Metropolitan Transportation Plan that is SAFETEA-LU compliant. If the MTPO Policy Board elects to use consultant help then the MTPO Staff will administer the consultant contract through the host agency for the MTPO.

3 - Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

2008 Program Activities:

1. Work with the MTPO Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and transportation project sponsors to review proposed projects and determine which ones need to be listed in the TIP.

- Projects were selected for the new TIP in conjunction with TAC and project sponsors.
2. Work with the TAC, KDOT, and project sponsors to review and update the project selection process for TIP development, and include a description of that process in the TIP document.
 - Project selection process for the new TIP was completed.
 3. Work with KDOT and other planning partners to create a new TIP that is SAFETEA-LU compliant and prepare that document for MTPO approval in early 2008.
 - Worked with KDOT and project sponsors and created a new TIP that is SAFETEA-LU compliant.
 4. Work with the MTPO Technical Advisory Committee and other interested groups to draft any needed amendments or revisions to the 2008-2012 TIP so that projects will not be delayed due to TIP issues
 - Met with City and County officials to discuss amendments to the TIP.
 - Drafted TIP amendments.
 - Presented TIP amendments to TAC and MTPO.
 - Received and reviewed comments from TAC members about the revised TIP and discussed the proposed amendments to be added to the TIP.
 - Posted proposed amendments on MTPO website for public review.
 - Amended TIP with approved TIP amendments and KDOT, FHWA & FTA approval letters.
 5. Work to educate the new MTPO Policy Board members and local transportation project sponsors about the TIP development process and MTPO planning programs.
 - Explained TIP development process to MTPO policy board and TAC members.
 6. Work with the TAC and transportation project sponsors to develop and use project selection criteria to determine project priorities for placement in the TIP and refine the TIP development process to incorporate those selection criteria
 - Developed project selection criteria with sponsors and TAC to select projects for the new TIP.

4 - Public Participation Plan (PPP)

2008 Program Activities:

1. The MTPO will work with KDOT, FHWA and FTA officials to review the SAFETEA-LU metropolitan planning regulations and complete the process of developing a new Public Participation Plan (PPP) called for by those regulations.
 - Reviewed PPP's of other MPOs and the current PPP for the MTPO and made draft changes the MTPO PPP.
 - Submitted these changes for review by KDOT, TMTA & FHWA.
 - Made draft versions of revised PPP and submitted to KDOT TMTA & FHWA.
 - Organized a committee to further review and revise the MTPO PPP in the first quarter of 2009.
2. The MTPO will provide information and may hold informational meetings to educate area

residents about the roles and activities of the MTPO, and input from those meetings will be documented and incorporated into the MTPO process and products.

- Participated in public review meetings of the 24hwy corridor study.
 - Public comments were gathered and utilized in study preparation.
 - Participated in public meetings for 24hwy corridor study & presentations to other stakeholders.
3. Efforts will be made to make community groups aware of regional transportation planning decisions that are being made and to seek their input into these MTPO decisions.
 - TIP amendments were posted on the website and emailed to interested parties. Bikeways plans were discussed with members of the KAW Valley bicycle club.
 - Presentations were made to the paratransit council.
 4. Persons with disabilities will be encouraged to provide input to the MTPO, and the MTPO will strive to better understand issues that are important to the area's ADA eligible population.
 - No activities were performed on this task in the 2008. However more emphasis will be put on this task in 2009.
 5. Persons with low incomes and minority group members will be encouraged to provide input to the MTPO process, and the MTPO will strive to better understand issues that are important to these segments of the region's population.
 - No activity in this task was performed in the fourth quarter. However more will be done in 2009.
 6. The MTPO will continue to distribute the Citizen's Guide to Transportation Decision Making as well as similar documents and to use those resources to provide citizens in the region with useful information about how they can become involved in the MTPO planning process.
 - This document is still available and can be obtained in the MTPO staff office.
 7. The MTPO staff will attend training and meet with FHWA and FTA officials as requested in order to learn more about Environmental Justice and public involvement techniques. MTPO staff will attend pertinent Environmental Justice and Public Involvement training held in nearby cities.
 - Reviewed various documents on Environmental Justice and incorporated this information in the drafting of the new PPP.
 - Reviewed standards for Limited English Proficiency (LEP) and included this information in the new PPP draft.
 8. The MTPO and its staff and committees will attend public involvement activities designed to gain public insight and comments about the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and all other required MTPO documents as well as any other documents or studies being conducted by the MTPO.
 - MTPO Staff participated in several Corridor study meetings as well as public involvement for this study.
 - MTPO Staff attended TAC meetings and MTPO meetings throughout the year.
 - MTPO Staff attended paratransit meetings and gave presentations.
 - MTPO Staff attended Transportation Priorities Committee Meetings and

- gave presentations.
- MTPO staff organized and participated in ad-hoc Bikeways Study meetings, preparing maps and documents.

5 – Corridor Studies & Special Studies

2008 Program Activities:

1. The major project under this work task will be the MTPO management and completion of the US Highway 24 Corridor-Access Management-Circulation-Land Use Plan. This project will use most of the time allocated to this work task and have the highest priority under this task. This Study is designed to be a holistic review and analysis of mobility and land use relationships in the corridor. This project will also include an extensive public participation component. Work on this project will begin in late 2007 and continue through most of 2008.
 - Attend Corridor Advisory Committee meetings for the US 24 study with the project team and consultants to review web site material and maps for public meetings.
 - MTPO staff worked with corridor consultants and supplied them with map data and background information for use in the US24 hwy Study.
 - Analyzed maps of scenarios for the US-24 corridor study, and recommended changes.
 - Organized public involvement meetings for the US-24 study.
 - Attended public involvement events for the US24 corridor study at Seaman High School.
2. Staff will conduct field reviews of the areas/corridors to be studied and will compile other background information regarding existing conditions within the study area. Plans for the development or redevelopment of these areas will be prepared, with special emphasis on land use and transportation impacts within the area/corridor. Street vacations, access controls, and traffic calming techniques as tools for neighborhood safety and/or for arterial congestion management may be utilized.
 - Reviewed proposals for future corridor studies, in preparation for possible inclusion in the 2009 UPWP.
 - Began preparation of a scope of services for proposed corridor study to be conducted in 2009.
 - Created maps for presentations for the proposed new corridor study.
3. The MTPO staff will identify special studies or surveys that are needed to address special concerns or issues raised by the MTPO Policy Board and MTPO-Technical Advisory Committee or other advisory committees during the course of the year.
 - No activity on this task was performed other than the previously indicated proposed corridor study.
4. A review and update of the Regional Trails & Greenways Plan will be initiated in 2008 to reflect trail developments that have happened in the last few years and coordinate this off-road system with planning work to be done in 2009-2010 for the on-road portion of regional bikeway planning in the Topeka Area. Some work on the development of a new bikeway plan for the Topeka Area may be accomplished in 2008, but most of it will have to wait until after the US Highway 24 Study is completed. The MTPO will review the Regional Trails & Greenways Plan in the second half of 2008 and make necessary updates to that plan. This

effort may include the coordination of MTPO and KDOT staffs and others to develop an educational program to assist both bicyclist and motorists in the area. This bikeway planning will also be coordinated with any Safe Routes To School programs being developed by local school districts. This bikeway planning effort may be coordinated with the pedestrian planning activities for the region or the MTPO may decide to initiate a separate study of pedestrian issues in the region.

- No Trails plan update was performed however the current Trails & Greenways Plan was utilized as a reference for a new Bikeways study.
 - MTPO staff organized a committee to begin a study for a new Bikeways Plan.
 - Maps and materials were prepared by the MTPO staff for use by the Bikeways study committee.
 - Meetings were held of the Bikeways study committee.
5. A review of freight services and issues in the region may also be conducted in 2008. This area of regional transportation planning needs to be addressed to meet the requirements under SAFETEA-LU to involve various interested parties in the MPO process and to address mobility issues for the movement of goods as well as people around the metropolitan area. The MTPO staff will work in 2008 to identify freight sector representatives that can participate in the regional transportation planning process. The MTPO staff will also continue to attend Talking Freight web cast and other training opportunities to learn more about freight planning issues. The KDOT is planning on conducting a major freight study in 2008 and has asked the MTPO Staff to participate in that effort. The MTPO staff will assist the KDOT in this study to the extent feasible and make comments on it as it is developed.
- Participated in two Talking Freight web casts sponsored by the FHWA activity was performed on this activity in the fourth quarter.
6. The MTPO Staff has also been asked by the MTPO Policy Board to review the 2002 Wanamaker Corridor Study along with Topeka Public Works Staff. The MTPO- Technical Advisory Committee will discuss this study during 2008 and make comments on its current applicability to the corridor to the MTPO Policy Board. The Topeka Public Works Staff may use information from this study to develop road improvement projects for consideration of the next capital improvement plan for the city.
- This study is not necessary and will not be performed.
7. The MTPO Staff will continue to assist he Topeka Public works Department and other local groups with developing a regional wayfinding system to help visitors to our region find area attractions and to efficiently route them from the interstates and principal arterials to these visitor sites. During 2008 the MTPO staff will be assisting local groups with Phase 3 of this Wayfinding System implementation.
- Funding for the third phase of the wayfinding signs has not been identified however sign locations are complete. No activity was performed on this activity in the fourth quarter.

The timely execution of these activities may be accomplished through the use of consultants to assist the MTPO with completing certain items under this work task. If the MTPO Policy Board elects to use consultant help then the MTPO Staff will administer the consultant contract through the host agency for the MTPO.

6 – Regional Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Architecture

Planned Program Activities:

Work on developing and implementing the ITS for our region will continue for many years. The first ever ITS architecture for our region was completed in 2007. As new transportation improvement projects enter the design stage, the project sponsors will be encouraged to consider ITS issues in project design. The MTPO and local public works departments, along with KDOT, will help in this effort to educate our region's design and construction professionals about our Regional ITS Architecture and the National ITS Architecture. The MTPO will also work along with the TMTA, KDOT and the FTA to incorporate ITS features into the region's transit system.

- The ITS system is in place, however, no enhancements were made to the system in 2008.

The MTPO is currently planning on making major reviews and upgrades to its regional ITS architecture whenever there is a major change to the National ITS Architecture or in advance of the development of a new Metropolitan Transportation Plan. The MTP is currently on a five-year update schedule as required by federal regulations for areas in attainment of air quality standards. The planned overhaul of the recently approved 2007 Topeka-Shawnee County ITS Architecture is noted below and is closely coordinated with the next planned update of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan due by April 2012.

7 – Transit Planning Activities

2008 Program Activities:

Practically all of the MTPO transit planning duties were transferred to the Topeka Metropolitan Transit Authority (TMTA) in 2008. The MTPO staff assisted with this transition by helping TMTA set up and their own in-house GIS mapping system so that they are now able to create and manipulate their own bus routing data for map and website display. The staffs assistance to TMTA in 2008 consisted mainly of periodically lending training and transferring map files to TMTA. However, the MTPO staff continued to coordinate with TMTA on the placement of new bus routes, and to acquire input on the transit aspect planning documents, as well as coordinating ITS developments. The following is an outline of the planning activities that were performed by TMTA in 2008, as submitted by TMTA staff:

TMTA 2008 Major Accomplishments

1. Fare Increase
TMTA initiated a public participation process consisting of three public meetings and a public hearing requesting input and comments on a 25% fare increase. Following approval by the TMTA Board of Director's, TMTA implemented the fare increase in May 2008.
2. Trapeze Scheduling Software
KDOT, the MTPO, and TMTA worked through the proper procurement procedures and funding allocations to complete the reimbursement to TMTA for demand-response scheduling software that assists in more efficient and effective trip scheduling.

3. GIS Mapping Software
TMTA purchased GIS software in order to design and produce route maps and route analysis in-house. The MTPO worked with TMTA to transfer existing files for TMTA to begin utilizing in day-to-day operations.
4. US 24 Advisory Committee Member
TMTA utilized transit experience and expertise in participating and making recommendations to the consultant team designing the Corridor Land Use Plan.

2008 Program Activities

Work Performed from January 1, 2008 – December 31, 2008

1. Provided overall transit planning support for the fixed route system, demand response service, and the evening/Sunday service. Maintained transit planning system which assisted in maximum utilization of federal grants.
2. Continued to review routes and schedules through an in-house service committee composed of three road supervisors, multiple drivers, Planner, Director of Operations, Director of Maintenance, and the General Manager. Charged with reviewing route recommendations, including additions and deletions.
3. Provided day-to-day operational planning for road and traffic condition detours.
4. Maintained the collection, reporting, and analysis of ridership and vehicle data to the national database and to the general public.
5. Initiated a public input process to receive comment on a fare increase.
6. Implemented a 25% fare increase in May 2008.
7. Completed the proper procurement and funding paperwork needed for TMTA to receive reimbursement for Trapeze Scheduling Software purchased in 2007.
8. Attended US Highway 24 Corridor Land Use Study public and advisory committee meetings.
9. Attended regularly scheduled MTPO Policy Board and Technical Advisory Committee meetings.
10. Attended Safe Streets Coalition meetings.
11. Met with MTPO staff regarding TIP amendments and revisions.
12. Met with MTPO staff for assistance in GIS mapping techniques.
13. Maintained financial accounting for planning functions at TMTA.

14. Regularly rode fixed route system to ensure passenger's comments and concerns were addressed.
15. Continued to update TMTA website regarding news releases, ridership counts, policies, schedules, and changes in service.
16. TMTA attended T-Link and KPTA meetings to participation in long range transportation plans.
17. TMTA worked with private and public transit providers to develop programs designed to increase mobility among the transit dependent population, encourage greater transit use among all population groups, especially choice riders, and improve transit vehicle utilization.