# I-93 Corridor Interagency Task Force Meeting June 6, 2012 NHDOT, Hazen Drive Room 114

# **Meeting Notes**

### **Attendees:**

Bill Cass, NHDOT

Tobey Reynolds, NHDOT

Tom Irwin, CLF

Bill Watson, NHDOT

Denise Markow, NHDOT

Pete Stamnas, NHDOT

David Preece, SNHPC

Tony Komornick, MVPC

Kit Morgan, NHDOT

Tom Irwin, CLF

Kerrie Diers, NRPC

Tim Roache, NRPC

Cindy Vigue, FHWA

Cliff Sinnott, RPC

Becky Ohler, NHDES

Others??

## **Background/Purpose of the Meeting and Taskforce**

Introductions were made, with attendees identifying themselves and the organization they represent.

Bill Cass provided background as to the purpose for creating the taskforce, referring to a memo from Commissioner George Campbell to FHWA in March 2011. At that time, the Department indicated its commitment to monitor traffic volumes and to utilize Travel Demand Management (TDM) and Transportation Systems Management (TSM) measures that will manage the traffic demands, capacity and condition of the I-93 Corridor between the NH/Mass state line and I-293 interchange.

It was also noted that the I-93 Corridor is not just a highway corridor, but a true transportation corridor, moving people and goods from NH to the Greater Boston area and beyond.

# <u>Current Status – TDM Elements in I-93 Corridor</u>

Bill Cass presented a general overview of the various projects going on through the corridor, including ongoing and planned construction to improve the infrastructure (highway and bridges) at Exits 1, 2, 3 and 5, as well as commenting on park and ride lots that are operating at Exits 2, 4 and 5 with additional park and ride plans at Exit 3 still to be determined.

There was general discussion regarding the Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) efforts that were conducted due to the concern that there could be additional growth spurred by the proposed widening that was not included in the original Environmental Impact Statement. As a result of the environmental reviews, a number of recommendations were developed and identified, including:

- There is the need to balance transportation and land use needs.
- There are three impaired watershed locations that must be addressed as part of permitting for the project.
- Salt reduction plans are being developed and implemented to achieve reductions of salt and environmental impacts to the Corridor.
- The Department is taking an incremental approach to completing the project by developing a four-lane footprint for the entire project, but paving and operating only three lanes.
- Through demand management, the Department hopes to be able to delay paving the fourth lane.

A number of other general question and answer topics were presented:

- In response to questions on bonding, Bill Cass indicated that, through the Ten Year Plan process, the Legislature increased bonding authority throughout the state by \$250M to a total bonding authority of \$445M.
- Bus service along the I-93 Corridor as represented by the fare box is about 85-90% of total funding for the service.
- DOT staff are able to produce incident management and performance reports based on ITS, traffic and other real time data collection efforts along the I-93 Corridor.

## **Beginning the Dialogue on Potential Future TDM Strategies**

Tony Komornick, with the Merrimack Valley Planning Commission (MVPC), noted that one of the tasks scheduled for FY 2013 is development of a High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) concept document for HOV lanes north of Boston along the I-93 Corridor. He provided a copy of the scope of services for work to be completed. He thought that NH awareness of this effort is valuable as there may be a potential for expansion of this along the proposed Wilmington/Andover line.

David Preece, with Southern NH Planning Commission, advocated for additional funding for Community Technical Assistance Program (CTAP) funds for Phase 3 work. NHDOT staff indicated that we were still working to measure the accomplishments of activities and the effectiveness of those activities before committing to additional work.

It was noted that in the Transportation Section of the NH Climate Action Plan there was a lot of discussion about transit, bus on shoulder, park and ride/ridesharing/carpooling, and HOV opportunities. It was suggested that more specific information from this plan be brought forward for discussion at the next meeting. It was also noted by both NHDOT and NHDES staff that there are ongoing efforts through the Transportation and Climate Initiative (TCI), a northeast to mid-Atlantic group of states and other interested stakeholders who are starting to develop procedures to measure performance in addressing climate needs. It was clearly recognized that realistic goals need to be established.

All of the Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) along the I-93 Corridor, both in NH and Mass should coordinate the development of capital projects.

Rideshare/carpooling/vanpooling coordination could be strengthened between NH and MA in the future through the coordination of rideshare matching services, as many commuters are traveling to/from Boston and NH.

There was inquiry into and subsequent discussion of Transportation Management Associations (TMA), how they have been formed in MA and how they are sustained. Recognition was given to the substantial investment necessary to successfully manage the TMA. A number of recommended actions came from this discussion, including:

- Look at I-93 Corridor to identify major employers.
- Look at existing data available that shows where people are going to/from.
- Instead of just looking at I-93, there would be value in looking at the larger I-495, Route 128 Corridors as well.

Alternative work schedules are also being utilized to assist in demand management.

### **Steps for Next Meeting**

It was unclear to some what the end product of the group was, but it was clear that there may not be a clear ending, other than promoting ongoing communication and coordination to ensure that all that can be done for the I-93 Corridor is being done. A number of specific recommended actions were proposed to be acted upon/discussed further at follow-up meetings:

- Are the local/regional/state policy impediments to doing more for the I-93 Corridor?
- Provide sample reports from data currently collected by NHDOT along the I-93 Corridor.
- Review NH Climate Action Plan and any defined measures that TCI has developed.
- Review MPO and State Long Range Plans to identify current projects that should be prioritized in an I-93 Corridor context.
- Review viability of using travel demand models (regional and State) for projecting travel patterns.

It was also recommended that involvement from other groups should be considered, including MassDOT, Boston MPO, and Federal Transit Authority (FTA).