

MPO Reaction to TRB Special Report 288: Metropolitan Travel Forecasting

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First...

- There are 5 recommendations specifically assigned to MPOs – these will be the focus of my comments
- AMPO has not taken a formal position on these recommendations – the comments are mine, as an MPO representative, and there has been discussion among MPOs on the recommendations



MPOs would benefit from establishing a national metropolitan cooperative research program

- This is true – MPOs would benefit, as would our metropolitan planning partners, states, local agencies and transit agencies – this program should not just be owned by MPOs.
- Funding this program is an issue –
 - Not enough PL funds to meet current planning requirements
 - Smaller MPOs may not benefit as much as larger MPOs
 - MPOs are open to working on this.
- Specific proposals for funding are probably premature – we need to determine the scope and need first, then figure out how to fund it.



MPOs should conduct formal peer reviews of their modeling practice

- The report recognizes that this has been an ongoing activity with many MPOs
- It's good professional practice
- Several years ago, PSRC conducted a peer review to assess it's model, and has made improvements recommended by the peer review



Individual MPOs and universities could form partnerships to foster research on travel modeling and the implementation of best practice

- Another good recommendation.
- An example: PSRC is working with the University of Washington on UrbanSim, and in establishing a traffic simulation modeling center



MPOs and other planning agencies should conduct reasonableness checks of demand and cost forecasts for major projects

- These tools and procedures for reasonableness checks are critical – this is not just an MPO issue.
- Project sponsors often are responsible, under the metropolitan planning partnership, for cost estimates and demand forecasts for individual projects.
- There should be one set of tools and procedures within metropolitan areas.



MPOs experimenting with or fully implementing advanced modeling practices should document their experiences, including costs, advantages, drawbacks, and any transferable data or model components

- This is a recommendation that MPOs could proceed with immediately
- MPOs, through AMPO, are talking about proceeding with a pooled fund project to, first, inventory and assess advanced modeling practices, and then to create the documentation of advantages, drawbacks and transferable items. AASHTO should be a partner.
- To get this jump-started, larger MPOs could contribute immediately to start the inventory and assessment process.



Questions?

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