

Sunday – May 21, 2006

1:30pm to 5:00pm

Workshop 1 – Innovations in Practice workshop

In this workshop we will review a variety of innovations in travel demand forecasting that go beyond the activity-based approaches. The presentations demonstrate a concerted effort to move toward the most elementary decision making units and new modeling directions. One portion of this workshop is dedicated to an open discussion of next steps for the federal travel model improvement program

1:30pm to 3:00pm

Workshop 2 – Summit and other ways to explore and improve your model

3:30pm to 5:00pm

Workshop 3 – Data and Survey Ideas

6:00pm to 7:30pm

Reception

Monday, May 22, 2006

7:30am to 8:30am - Breakfast

8:30am to 8:45am

Welcome

8:45am to 10:00am

Plenary Session 1 – Overview of the Policy Issues

This session will explore two issues critical to the success of efforts to improve the practice of travel demand modeling: the education of modelers, and outreach to the public. How can we ensure that modelers receive the on-going training they need to understand, evaluate, and implement new innovations in modeling? How can we avoid exacerbating the “black box” problem and instead use new innovations to join modeling with public involvement in the planning process?

10:00am to 10:30am - Break

10:30am to 12:00 noon

Plenary Session 2 – Moving Innovative Models into Practice

This session sets the stage for the rest of the conference by asking a panel of experts (1) why should travel modeling practice move from current trip-based travel forecasting models to more innovative models; (2) what additional research is needed to make innovative models useful for transportation planning; and (3) how can we bridge the gap between current travel model practice and innovative model research?

12:00 noon to 1:30pm – Lunch – On Your Own

1:30pm to 3:00pm

Breakout session 1A – Tour Based Models

This session will begin with an overview of the tour based models developed in the United States. Then MPO and consultant staff will discuss tour based model development, data, staff, and financial requirements, lessons learned, and model implementation examples.

Breakout session 1B – Data and Synthetic Populations

Breakout session 1C – Land Use Forecast

A number of innovative land use-transport models have been developed and implemented in recent years. This session will couple the important lessons learned from recent research and development work with emerging implementations of these models. The speakers will focus on the practical steps necessary to implement and apply integrated land use-transport models, with particular emphasis on recent experiences in North America. The session will include time for discussion and extended questions for the presenters at the end.

3:00pm to 3:30pm - Break

3:30pm to 5:00pm

Breakout session 2A – Activity Based Models

Several US metropolitan planning organizations are experimenting with tour-based and synthetic schedule generating activity models. Contemporary policy analysis requires methods that use new and better data collection methods, data analysis techniques, and simulation applications at the level of micro-units. This session will expand our horizons and offer a sample of these newer and more advanced types of analyses.

Breakout session 2B – Survey Methods

The major goals of this session are to bring together modelers, practitioners, and survey researchers concerned with travel survey methodology and practice to present, discuss, and debate research papers that: (1) Address new data needs relative to innovative models; (2) Contribute to the science of measuring and/or reducing errors attributable to weaknesses in traditional travel survey design; and (3) Stimulate new ideas for further research and development in travel survey research methods.

Breakout session 2C – Assignment Advances

Tuesday, May 23, 2006

7:30am to 8:30am - Breakfast

8:30am to 10:00am

Breakout session 3A – Education and Outreach

This session will explore two issues critical to the success of efforts to improve the practice of travel demand modeling: the education of modelers, and outreach to the public. How can we ensure that modelers receive the on-going training they need to understand, evaluate, and implement new innovations in modeling? How can we avoid exacerbating the “black box” problem and instead use new innovations to join modeling with public involvement in the planning process?

Breakout session 3B – Emerging Modeling Considerations

This session will focus on the critical policy issues that current models do not adequately address. Participants will identify and discuss the critical policy issues as well as the model improvements needed to respond to these important questions. Examples of the critical policy issues include:

- Pricing and tolls,
- Joint household interactions,
- Environmental justice and equity, and
- Transit-oriented development and smart growth.

This session will also focus on model options for addressing particular problems in different regions. For example, in some areas, a good 4-step model may be all that is required to respond to questions within that region. In other areas, more advanced modeling systems must be developed to address questions posed by planners, decision makers, and the public.

Breakout session 3C – Validation

Validation is a critical component of any successful model development effort. Activity-based models should be held to validation standards at least as high as those for conventional travel models, including ability to match observed conditions, sensitivity analysis, validation of all model components, and validation of forecasts as well as existing conditions. Activity-based models need not do a better job than conventional models at replicating existing conditions, nor should they do significantly worse. But their superior analytical capabilities should be able to be shown through sensitivity tests. In this sense, comparisons between activity-based and conventional models would be extremely valuable.

10:00am to 10:30am - Break

Tuesday, May 23, 2006 (cont.)

10:30am to 12:00am

Breakout session 4A – Transition

Once the decision has been made to move into Tour/Activity Based Modeling, the transition can be challenging. Issues related to staffing and hardware constraints, policy decision needs, software development, model implementation and training can all become overwhelming to the project leaders at the MPO. In this session, representatives from MPOs at various stages of this transition will present some of their experiences with this important segue.

Breakout session 4B – Data and Future Travel Behavior

12:00pm to 2:30pm

Lunch and Plenary Session – Next Steps: Institutional Issues

A round table discussion by MPO model practitioners, who will comment on "so what will it take" for their agencies to move to more advanced land use and travel modeling procedures. Time will be allowed for an interactive audience discussion with the round table participants, as well as for audience discussions on what was learned from this Conference and the "next steps" for moving forward.