



June 30, 2010

To: Metropolitan Policy Committee
From: Susan Payne
Subject: Item 5.d: Oregon Travel and Activity Survey Status Report

Action Recommended: None. Information only.

Issue Statement

The Central Lane MPO, along with other MPOs, maintains and operates a regional travel model in order to assess the long term impacts of the interaction of land use patterns, travel infrastructure and traveler behavior. One of the most important components used in the development of the current model was a data base describing the travel behavior of persons within households in the MPO and surrounding area. Since this data base was constructed from a survey conducted throughout Oregon in 1996-1997, it was deemed at least prudent, if not urgent, to re-survey households and reassess their travel behavior in 2010. This is particularly important in light of the many challenges that are now confronting planners and policy makers in the areas of transportation, public health and climate change.

Background



The Oregon Travel and Activity Survey (OTAS) project is an integrated collaborative multi-agency effort by the Oregon MPOs, Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council (Clark Co.), and the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT). The project began with planning for the survey in 2007. The data collection phase is currently ongoing and is scheduled to be completed in 2012.

The project aims to collect data that will be used for travel model development and for analysis at both statewide and regional levels. In particular, the survey was designed to collect data suitable for estimating the new generation of tour and activity-based travel models.

With data collection spanning the State of Oregon and SW Washington, models will be able to analyze long distance travel behavior in addition to local travel patterns. For example, data collection in ODOT Region 2, the Salem-Keizer MPO and the Corvallis MPO will provide information on long distance commuting into and from Eugene-Springfield.

Each participating agency has contributed funds to the project. In 2007, MPC approved the programming of \$225,000 of STP-U funds to support the data collection within the MPO area. Through a subsequent agreement with ODOT, ODOT funds were used to fund the Central Lane survey (mainly to satisfy the local match requirements associated with use of STP-U funds), while the MPO's STP-U funds will be used to support modeling work for the development of the three local Transportation System Plans (TSP) and the Regional TSP. ODOT also funded the transit-enhancement phase of the survey. Direct costs associated with the survey for the Central Lane MPO have totaled \$280,000. For several years, MPO staff time has been programmed within the Unified Planning Work Program for coordination with ODOT and the consultants, and for follow-on analyses and reporting tasks.

Data collection in the Central Lane MPO area occurred in Fall 2009 and is now complete. 1,786 households participated and provided demographic and socio-economic data and detailed travel information for each person within the household. Attachment 1 shows the location of these households. Attachment 2 is the travel diary that was filled out by each household for the day on which they reported their travel. The consultant has processed the data, and MPO staff is working with the consultant to complete the data report.

Data collection is underway in the Salem-Keizer MPO; the Portland MPO will survey in 2011. Clark County and most ODOT regions have also completed their surveys. A total of 17,550 households will be surveyed in the OTAS project.

The completion of the data collection phase marks the point at which investigation and analysis of travel behavior can begin. MPO staff will work with others at ODOT and particularly with members of the Oregon Model Steering Committee to develop analysis techniques that result in statistically valid conclusions. These results will feed into the update of the travel modeling tools available to the MPO.

A draft copy of the data report will be available shortly and will be posted to the MPO's web site.

Discussion

NuStats, a professional transportation survey firm, was contracted by ODOT to manage the project, including designing and executing the survey. Dr. Stacey Bricka, Vice-President of NuStats and the project manager of the OTAS, will give a presentation to MPC describing the project and presenting some initial results.

Attachment

1. Map of households participating in the Central Lane MPO Travel and Activity Survey
2. Travel Diary