National Accessibility Evaluation
Technical Advisory Panel Meeting
Notes

May 29, 2019
2:00 - 3:30 CST via webex

Participants:

University of Minnesota: Kristin Carlson, Claire Johnson, Laurie McGinnis, Brendan Murphy, Andrew Owen

Arkansas - Sunny Farmahan
FHWA - Brian Gardner, Jeremy Raw
Florida - Monica Zhong
Iowa - Cameron Mason
Maryland - Meredith Hill
Massachusetts - Derek Krevat, Liz Williams
Minnesota - Deanna Belden, Michael Iacono
Metropolitan Council - Jonathan Ehrlich
Tennessee - David Lee, Chris McPhilamy, Marshall Wilson
Virginia - Peter Ohlms

*Action items are denoted in bold.

<u>Welcome from MnDOT & Introductions</u>
Deanna welcomed the group to the TAP meeting. Claire led the group in introductions.

<u>Project Updates</u> — Andrew Owen

Andrew shared some updates on data and reporting. The Bike 2017 data was delivered to the partners, and reports will be available over the next two weeks. Timing of the national report release will be discussed later in the meeting. For Transit 2018 and Auto 2018, the network data is ready, and originally the data release was scheduling for June based off the LEHD data availability. However, there have been some delays to that data release that will be discussed later on the agenda.

The Accessibility Observatory carried out several scenario evaluations and shared some results The I-94 Managed Lanes scenario evaluation was done with MnDOT, and looked at the impacts

of managed lanes on auto and transit access to jobs. AO will be presenting this at the Midwestern District ITE meeting on June 19-20th. Andrew encouraged members to reach out for more details or questions on this study.

AO is also currently working on a scenario evaluation for Metropolitan Council on Arterial BRT plans. They have received transit schedule scenarios from Metro Transit, and completed impact evaluation for C line - C line is focused on upgrading highest ridership routes. The limited stop route may mean losing accessibility, which is a key question of this study. The answer for C line is that the costs are offset almost completely. Additional questions about this study can be directed to the AO Team.

Michael Iacono (MnDOT) asked about station access. Andrew answered that they have not changed anything from standard analysis - it includes walk time in calculations (from nearest part of pedestrian network to transit stations).

<u>Bike Data & Report Discussion</u> — Brendan Murphy

Brendan gave an update on the bike data and reporting. The Bike Accessibility and bike LTS network data have been completed and distributed to partners. The National Bike report is being finalized, and drafts will be sent to partners mid next week. State partner bike reports are in progress and will be delivered to partners by the end of next week. The National bike methodology report will be delivered to partners by June 14th. Walking has been excluded from bike reports, but the data is completed and will be distributed to partners early next week.

Brendan noted that the underlying network data is a new addition - due to process of stress levels for bike routes. This can be used for local data sets (which are done nationwide). In the national bike report, there is new language around traffic stress framework and new language around metrics.

Michael (MnDOT) mentioned that they have had problems displaying bike accessibility data in ArcMap. Liz (MassDOT) said that interpreting different levels of traffic stress has been confusing. Brendan responded that we will be working on issues on joining up data properly. The difference this year in process is due to increase in data fields - we dropped shapefiles since it is unwieldy to have shapefiles with large amounts of data fields. But we could look at providing shapefiles directly again.

Chris McPhilamy mentioned that they ran into similar issue with GUID getting messed up in ESRI. They developed Python script to join up the data easily, they can send it out again to AO.

Brendan addressed LTS files, levels 1, 2, 3, 4. LTS 1 is very low stress for people to bike. LTS 2 is slightly higher (includes 1 too), an example is bike lanes that are protected. LTS 3 has bike

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lines that are not protected, and have mixed traffic. LTS 4 has no bike lanes, and high traffic. They then use these levels to limit route by what levels people will take. People could cross barriers across LTS 4 by foot. We would like to aim for LTS 2 across cities, but we can seek to upgrade LTS 3, which exists more broadly. Open streets access refers to LTS 4 in the condition that if cars did not exist what would biking routes be like.

Brendan talked over some examples from the national report. Several changes made to data page include rankings are on low stress and medium stress. There is also a ratio of access at lower stress networks versus open streets. The higher LTS 3 is, the better the bike network is. The lower LTS 1 is, the lower performing the bike network is.

Michael (MnDOT) asked about circuity and function. Brendan responded that yes this plays into it, but some cities do not have circuitous facilities, and there are not enough options. Data pages for state partner reports will look similar to what Brendan showed the group.

For maps, one map will show accessibility - it will show low and medium stress access. The scale is the same as it is in transit and auto maps. The second map will show ratio of access. The darker an area is, the lower the percentage is. The lighter colors are more accessible via bikes.

Peter (VDOT) asked if white areas 100% or no data? Brendan responded that white areas have limited data - farmland, park land, airport etc. They are out of consideration for biking data.

The plan for national publication release is for the week of July 8th. The partners agreed on this timing.

Monica asked will the bike report be produced annually? They are considering including this in one of Florida's mobility measures. They would need annual update or biannual update. Andrew responded that it depends on how much changes on a year over year basis.

Census LEHD data availability & 2018 data timeline

Andrew provided background on the data availability from LEHD. Census' Longitudinal Household-Employer Dynamics data program provides job and worker location datasets for our accessibility calculations. 2018 accessibility data & reports would be based on 2016 LEHD data. LEHD 2016 delayed due to data use negotiations with federal Office of Personnel Management. LEHD will go ahead with calculations without federal workers, and have said that they will be available sometime this summer.

There are several different approaches the team can take:

- Calculate accessibility now, using updated transportation data but last year's LEHD data
  - Year-over-year changes would reflect only transportation effects
  - Data available ~end of July
- Wait for new LEHD data
  - Year-over-year changes reflect both transportation and employment effects
  - Interpretation complicated by removal of federal employees
  - Data available ~August–October, depending on availability of LEHD update
- Wait for new LEHD data, then calculate accessibility using **both** LEHD data years
  - Opportunity to evaluate both sets of data before deciding what is most valuable to report
  - Might be able to use old data to adjust for federal worker difference in new data
  - Data available ~August–October, depending on availability of LEHD update

Andrew said that we are unsure about the percentage of federal workers, so we can seek this info from LEHD so that we can better understand the impact. He then asked the partners for their opinions on the path forward.

- Peter (VDOT) - mentioned from TAP meeting 2018 that someone said that LEHD data incorrectly coded federal employees.
- Michael (MnDOT) - supported option C, we need to insure data accurability
- Chris (TDOT) - between A & C. There is a desire to get data sooner, we have struggled with year to year comparisons before from TomTom data discrepancies. Supported Michael's comments on C.
- Monica (FDOT) - also between A & C. FDOT has two measures on job accessibility on mobility measure in annual report in sourcebook. If they go with option C, they will need the results by October for their reporting.
- Andrew - they don't know when input data will be available, so promising October is tough. He suggested we go with national option of C, but perhaps run approach A for specific partners that are interested. Cost would be less for a smaller region (or one state).
- Marshall (TDOT) - would it be possible to release data incrementally? Release transportation effects first?
  - Andrew - challenge comes back to cost, data sets would have to be re-run.

The next steps are to nationally proceed with approach C. On a case by case basis we can see if approach A is wanted too by individual states. We will approach partners on this question, including cost of implementation.

Partner Check-In Highlights — Andrew Owen

Andrew thanked the partners who had participated in the check in calls. He shared some common themes from the conversation, including:
- Current data formats are a barrier to use

- ○ We're evaluating alternative formats that are more GIS-ready, testing with partners soon
- Desire for assistance in helping other departments/divisions understand and use accessibility data
  - ○ We're beginning to outline summary documents and training webinars targeted at DOT staff beyond panel members
- Looking for guidance and examples of how accessibility can/should be integrated with planning processes
  - ○ We can help with scenario evaluations, including data preparation
  - ○ Continue sharing partner experiences
  - ○ Monitoring NCHRP 08-121 "Accessibility in Practice" - no news yet on who will be tackling this project

<u>Member Updates</u> – All

Chris (TDOT) shared that congestion data was used in public outreach planning, and there was also coverage in ArcUser magazine.

Monica (FDOT) mentioned that in March, management had wanted to discontinue being part of Pooled Fund. They have received a response from district, positive support from Bike/Ped staff. Thanked team for their work.

AO Team will decide next TAP timing based of LEHD data scheduling.

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