

AP000 (3)/ABJ00
Joint Subcommittee on Transformative Trends in Transit Data
MM, Mount Vernon (M3)
January 14, 2019
8:00 AM – 9:45 AM

- I. **Welcome and Introductions:** Dr. Lawson, Chair of the Joint Subcommittee on Transformative Trends in Transit Data (AP000(3)) opened the Subcommittee meeting with a welcome to attendees, then invited Velvet Basemera-Fitzpatrick from the TRB staff to present a quick summary of all the opportunities and deadlines for Transit Cooperative Research Program (TCRP) in 2019. Attendees were then invited to introduce themselves, including the area of transit data that was of most interest to them. Of the 38 persons attending the meeting, 11 were members.

- II. **Approval of the Minutes:** Dr. Lawson called for approval of the previous meeting's minutes, which had been distributed by email in advance of the meeting. Minutes were approved by a unanimous voice vote.

- III. **Reports**
 - a. **Chair's Report:** The Chair shared the Subcommittee Status with a Powerpoint. She noted that AP000(3)) is a subcommittee "with superpowers" covering both transit and data, with a call for papers as well as poster and lectern sessions.
 - i. The Chair introduced the Michael Eichler, WMATA, as the newly minted subcommittee secretary, and Raymond Chan, CTA, as the webmaster. She noted that the "Young Members Group Leader" position of the subcommittee is currently vacant. Ruth Miller of Lyft was nominated and accepted the position on the spot. The chair noted that the subcommittee had approximately 25 members and 16 friends, and that she would follow up with current members in February about continuing membership into the next year.
 - ii. The Chair discussed the new paper review process that included using a new publisher (SAGE) and in order to reduce challenges for the review process, no formal Call for Papers for the subcommittee was issued. Despite no formal call, the subcommittee received 49 submissions. Current features in the review software prevented the chair from sharing the paper review assignment process with others. All in all, 18 papers were accepted, 4 for a lectern session and 14 for poster sessions.

Publication decisions are due at the end of January. Now that the software has been modified to include more than one reviewer to assign papers, a task team will be created for paper review.

- iii. The chair noted a few new aspects of the paper review process, including: average presentation score and requirement for camera-readiness; no fatal flaws; choice of best fit with respect to lectern session vs poster session.
- iv. Other updates: the Github website has been established for the subcommittee by the webmaster, allowing easier sharing of documents as well as code for processing and analyzing data; the subcommittee needs liaisons to standing committees and external groups to keep up with current trends in transit agencies, transit data, research needs.

IV. Updates on Transitland Open Data Platform

- a. Drew Darra-Abrams of Interline technologies provided an update on the Transitland (transit.land) open GTFS data platform. Transitland provides a single data platform for GTFS data sharing. Benefits of such a platform include the generation of universally unique stop and route IDs to more easily allow apps and tools to provide data from multiple agencies on one user interface. He noted that work on TransitLand began before the work on National Transit Map was initiated. He also mentioned the IDEA Project, which was established to help transit agencies share and validate GTFS-Realtime data feeds.

V. TCRP Work on the Value of Data

- a. Cecilia Viggiano from EDR Group provided an update on a TCRP research effort to understand the monetary value of transit data, and provide guidance for buying, selling, and trading data. The project group is surveying agencies as well as data buyers, hoping to identify the value of and barriers to such data sharing/vending, as well as understanding public perceptions, and identifying existing or desired tools to make the process easier. Contact Cecilia at cviggiano@edrgroup.com.

VI. Update on Transit ITS Data Exchange Specifications (TIDES):

- a. John Levin, Metro Transit, provided an overview of the TIDES framework with a Powerpoint presentation, including data structures, APIs, and processes. He noted that TIDES was selected for \$350k in funding from TCRP to move this project forward.
- b. He noted the current spec for TIDES was single-agency, not as an aggregator across agencies like Transitland. It was noted that software/service vendors may be interested in supporting a common platform for data storage, from both data generation and data analysis perspectives. He replied that the architecture and specs would come first and the vendors will follow suit.

- c. It was noted that the national congestion database requires people caught in congestion, including people on buses, which could provide a good motivational basis for TIDES.

VII. IPATH Transport & Health Performance Metric Guidebook - Steve Yaffe

- a. Mr. Yaffe presented an update on the IPATH Transport & Health Performance Metric Guidebook, which aims to create a common set of metrics including a shared lexicon across health and transportation industries. There are 35 measures on the mobility side.
- b. The project is currently soliciting authors and peer-reviewers, with a target completion date of June 28, 2019.
- c. Those interested in volunteering for this important effort should contact Mr. Yaffe at yaffe@ymobility.info.

VIII. 2019 TRB Innovations in Transit Performance Measurement Challenge - Yvonne Carney, WMATA:

- a. Ms. Carney extended a personal invitation to the subcommittee meeting attendees to also attend the first “Innovations in Transit Performance Measurement Challenge”, a competition to encourage innovation in performance metrics to encourage agencies to make better decisions; and visualization and encourage participation in TRB by younger practitioners and emerging leaders.
- b. Eight finalists were selected, with one final winner to be awarded at the session.
- c. Ms. Carney noted this was the first year of this challenge but it would likely continue if successful at meeting its goals

IX. New Business:

- a. Brendon Hemily shared his experience with a series of sessions of TransitData Workshop focusing on using transit smart card usage data used for planning. The workshops are generally academics with low participation by transit professionals. Upcoming workshops include Paris in 2019 and Toronto Summer 2020. The group started with smart card datasets, then began incorporating other operational (APC/AVL) and passive (bluetooth) data sources. Many meeting attendees were unaware of this seemingly parallel effort to dig into and understand transit data. It was noted that the workshops are encouraging greater participation by transit agencies, which have traditionally not been data- nor research-focused.

The group then engaged in a conversation on how to merge research and practice. How to facilitate agencies looking at their data and turning it into gold. Ideas generated include:

- i. YouTube videos, task force, github
- ii. Repeatable research, more in-depth than papers and posters
- iii. Transit toolbox,
- iv. APTA big data initiative
- v. Additional conferences and workshops; TRB, APTA, or otherwise

- vi. One attendee noted the Northwest Transit Exchange as good example of agencies working to help each other
 - vii. Online tools to exchange transit knowledge, best practices.
 - viii. Regular webinars hosted by the subcommittee where agencies can provide current processes and practices, works in progress, pressing challenges, and provide opportunity for conversation and knowledge exchange.
- b. TRB staff update: Claire Randall, TRB staffer of standing committees, presented an update on publication of the TRR, SAGE Publication. Moving publication to a third-party will greatly increase the publication speed. SAGE offers a free trial to online archives. She also noted the upcoming 100th anniversary of TRB. The celebration will span the 2020 and 2021 conferences, with 2020 looking back and 2021 looking forward. Committees are offered the opportunity to submit a "centennial paper", showcasing their accomplishments and future directions, among other ways to participate in the celebration.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 AM.