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MEETING SUMMARY
MARYLAND CLIMATE CHANGE ADVISORY GROUP
Transportation and Land Use Technical Work Group
(TLU TWG)

Teleconference Call #11, March 5, 2008

Attendance:

Technical Working Group: Nancy Floreen, Pam Parker, Michael Replogle

Maryland Department of Environment: Liz Entwisle, Brian Hug, Marcia Ways

Maryland Department of Transportation: Howard Simons

Center for Climate Strategies (CCS): Sean Mulligan, William Schroeer, Theresa Silla, Jim Wilson

Public Attendees: Megan Gould, Jeff King (MWCOCG), David O’Leary (Sierra Club – MD Chapter)

Background documents: (http://www.mdclimatechange.us/GHG_Transportation.cfm)

1. Meeting Notice and Agenda
2. PowerPoint for Teleconference
3. Summary of Call #10
4. Updated TLU Policy Options

Discussion items and key issues:

- Call to order and roll call
- Review and approve prior meeting summary
- Review progress on straw proposals
- Approve straw proposal quantification to date
- Address next steps for straw proposals
- Confirm agenda, time and date for next meeting & subsequent TWG meetings
- Public input and announcements

Meeting Summary

Will Schroeer and Liz Entwisle summarized key themes for the TLU TWG coming out of the February MWG meeting. One theme was that the TLU policy options did not produce a GHG emission reduction in proportion to the whole—so be more aggressive. Another was that the MDE wants TLU generated emission reductions like those provided via criteria pollutant programs. These could be modeled on the transportation conformity process. The MWG agreed with this type of structure.

Most of the meeting discussion was about the policy option quantification. There were comments on the summary table at the beginning of the policy option template. These were to (1) revise the title of TLU Area 1 to: Reduce VMTs contribution to emissions by 20% from 2020 baseline, (2) make the accounting for GHG emission reductions clearer—how do the numbers under TLU Area 1 affect the totals at the bottom of the table?, (3) improve the GHG emissions table on page 2 so that it provides useful information to the reader—show VMT estimates as well as GHG emission trends and forecasts.

Other comments about how summary information should be provided to the TWG and the MWG included suggestions that a good summary table is needed where all of the numbers provided for individual policy options add up to the total. This should be followed by good graphics that show the relationship between the BAU emissions path and how the measures being considered would be expected to influence that path. In addition, we need to be clear and consistent about what the baseline year is. Any place that we present cumulative emission reductions over multiple years this needs to be clearly labeled. The goal of our summaries (tables and graphs) should be that they be clear and understood by public officials. We also need a glossary and consistent accounting.

TLU-1: Carbon Tax via Fuel

How do we characterize savings to the MWG? Evaluate as rebated revenue that is used to reduce other taxes currently being paid by Maryland taxpayers. The TWG member s suggested that the money should be allocated to a trust fund that is impenetrable. Where do we put this language?

TLU-2: Land Use and Location Efficiency

The MWG asked us to consider a 2030 goal. The TWG supports having a 30% reduction in VMT per capita by 2030 as an aspirational goal. The goal needs to be evaluated and reset at 5 to 10 year intervals.

TLU-3: Transit

The \$917 per tonne savings estimate is too optimistic. A range should be provided instead. It was suggested that this be expressed as approximately several hundred dollars a tonne in net savings with a footnote explaining that the quantification is difficult and uncertain. In addition, more information about the \$1.14 per mile cost of vehicle ownership and use is needed. The current federal mileage reimbursement rate is 48.5 cents per mile.

TLU-4: Low Greenhouse Gas Fuel Standard

There was discussion about the need to be cautious about the uncertainties (ancillary effects) of biofuels. Unless biofuels are made from waste biomass or from biomass grown on abandoned agricultural lands, the needed benefits will not occur. The policy option analysis will be revised to include this information. We no longer have consensus within the TWG that this is a recommended option.

TLU-7: VMT Budgets

In a transportation conformity-like setting, what is the hammer if an area does not meet its target for a year? Cutoff their funding stream—this might include mandatory funding shifts to transit. The TWG envisions a state and MPO consultative process to establish rules and requirements, but with establishment and management at the state-level.

TLU-9: Commuter Choice and Other Programs

This cost analysis should be couched in the same way as the TLU-3 analysis.

TLU-10: Transportation Technologies

The wording in this policy option should be changed to say “design to simultaneously reduce congestion, curb traffic growth and expand travel choices”. Also, references should be made to other TLU options.

The through traffic issue should be addressed under a couple of the policy options.

Public Comments:

(Jeff King, MWCOG): He suggested that it would take Federal action in order for Maryland to be able to set carbon requirements via a transportation conformity process.

Next steps and agreements:

1. CCS will revise the policy options per direction from the TWG in this meeting and circulate those revisions to TWG members within a week for review and approval prior to the March 19, 2008 MWG Meeting
2. The TWG needs to agree on the next meeting after the March 19th MWG Meeting.