Contact Information

We ask for your information so that we can contact you for clarification, if needed.

First Name: Oona

Last Name: Smith

Title: Senior Planner

Organization: HCAOG

Address: 611 I St, suite B

City: Eureka Zip Code: 95501

Telephone Number: 707 444 8208

Email address: oona.smith@hcaog.net

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To: Priscilla Martinez-Velez, Division of Transportation Planning, Caltrans
c/o RTP.Guidelines.Update@dot.ca.gov

From: Oona Smith, Senior Planner, Humboldt County Association of Governments (HCAOG)

Re: Comments on *September 2016 Draft RTP Guidelines for Regional Transportation Planning Agencies*

Overall general comment:

- Where the *RTP Guidelines for RTPAs* will keep language about MPOs, make it obvious how it relates to RTPAs. This should keep readers from wondering if it's an "MPO" that was mistakenly not changed to "RTPA," or if it merely does not apply and should have been struck.

  One example: (pg 6) To further reach this end, MAP-21/FAST Acts require States and MPOs to implement a performance-based approach in the scope of the statewide and nonmetropolitan *and* metropolitan transportation planning process. The legislation does not require RTPAs to implement this approach.

Chapter 1. Introduction

- Comment (question): Are these two directives consistent?

  (pg. 4, end of first ¶) **1.0 Applicability of the Regional Transportation Plan Guidelines**
  All RTP updates started after the 2016 RTP Guidelines are adopted by the CTC must use the new RTP Guidelines.

  (pg.16) **1.7 MAP-21/FAST Act Items Impacting the Development of RTPs**
  As specified in 23 CFR 450.340(a), prior to May 27, 2018, an RTPA may adopt an RTP that has been developed using the SAFETEA-LU requirements or the provisions and requirements of 23 CFR 450. On or after May 27, 2018, an ~~MPO~~ RTPA? may not adopt an RTP that has not been developed according to the provisions of 23 CFR 450.

Chapter 3. RTP Analysis and Modeling *(RTPAs Only)*

(p. 47) **3.3 Requirements for RTP Analysis**

Travel Demand Model (TDM) – Travel demand modeling is utilized by transportation planners and engineers to evaluate alternative strategies as part of a regional transportation plan.

- Comment (question): I am curious about how many (if many) RTPAs evaluate alternative strategies in their RTPs. While we evaluate different travel forecasts for the Environmental Impact Report (CEQA), we do not have alternative strategies in our RTP. Am wondering if this language is a carryover from the MPO and Sustainable Communities Strategy context.

The following are typos (or awkward syntax) I noticed in Chapter 3, indicated in green text.

(p. 45) **3.1** RTPAs are "encouraged" to follow the travel demand modeling guidelines (Gov. Code 14522.2(b)).

- What do the quotation marks around *encouraged* mean? Are you quoting the Gov. Code? I suggest deleting the quotation marks—the intent is unclear.

(p. 46) **3.2 Technical Tools:**
• Provide an understanding of the sensitivity of the forecast results… For example, they ~~provide~~ estimate~~s of~~ the elasticities…

- Awkward: you can't provide understanding.

(p. 47) State law requires transportation agencies identified under California Government Code sections 29532 or 29532.1 to develop RTPs~~,~~.

(p. 48) **3.3** The inputs to a TDM include but ~~is~~ are not limited to, population, employment, and land use, and the transportation network. ~~to~~ The outputs are used to assist decision-makers in developing polices and strategies that~~,~~ inform the public~~,~~ in NEPA and CEQA processes, and for many other purposes.

(p. 49) **3.4 TDM Quality Control and Consistency**
Furthermore, it is essential that RTPAs, State Agencies, and technical experts, have a voice…

(p. 49) **Data** (3rd sentence in first paragraph)
If travel survey samples are limited for a given region, other available sources of data can be used including the National Household Travel Survey, American Community Survey, and trip rates associated with a region that is similar in size (such as demographic and~~,~~ socioeconomic characteristics) ~~can be used~~.

- the "such as" examples don't match "similar in size"

(p.53) **Model Calibration and Validation**
Calibration is used to adjust the model parameters until the model matches observed regional travel patterns and demand.

~~Since~~Because emission estimates are sensitive to vehicle speed changes, US EPA and US DOT suggest~~s~~ {it's not "since" because it has always been so; i.e., it didn't change some time ago)

US EPA and US DOT also suggest~~s~~ that every component of a model ~~must~~ be validated, as well as the entire model system[7].

(p. 54) • Volume-to-count ratio – is computed by dividing the volume assigned by the model ~~and~~ by the actual traffic count for individual roadways model-wide. It provides a general context for the relationship (~~i.e.~~e.g., high or low)…

Recommended Transit Assignment Validation

Validation Metric	
Difference between actual counts to model results for a given year by route group (~~i.e.~~e.g., ~~L~~local ~~B~~bus, ~~E~~express ~~B~~bus, etc.)	To be reviewed
Difference between actual counts to model results for a given year by ~~T~~ransit ~~M~~ode (~~i.e.~~ e.g., ~~L~~light ~~R~~rail, ~~B~~bus, etc.)	To be reviewed

(p. 57) Similar capitalization typos in bullets Demand Management and Transit. (And bottom of page 56: "Land Use.")

(p. 59) **Model Peer Review / Peer Advisory Committee**
(2nd paragraph) In addition to the committee, transportation modeling agencies are also encouraged to participate in statewide, regional, and local modeling forums and user~~s~~ groups…

last sentence on page: and ~~date~~ data development and acquisition.

(p. 65) **3.6 RTP Travel Analysis Groupings**
last sentence before map: … that are not required under federal or state law to conduct~~ed~~ modeling as part of their RTP development.

Chapter 7 Performance Measures

(p. 154) 1. Reduction in vehicle occupant, freight and goods travel time or delay;

- "Reduction in vehicle occupant"? Awkward. Is this meant to mean: Reduction in travel time or delay for vehicle occupant, freight, or goods"? (What is the difference between freight and goods?)

(p. 155) **7.1 Goals & Performance Measures**
Regions should consider the following criteria for measuring cost-effectiveness of specific projects in their RTP:

1. Decrease in vehicle occupancy travel, freight and goods time per thousand dollars invested;

- Is this a typo?

4. Improved multimodal access to jobs, markets and commerce per thousand dollars invested;

- Would "improved multimodal access" mean you would only measure investments in multiple modes? For example, if you invested in port improvements, would you also have to have invested in highway or airport improvements to be deemed as having improved multimodal access? If you invested in one alternative/active mode, would that count?

8. Increase in destinations accessible by walking, bicycling, and taking public transportation per thousand dollars invested; and, …

- Any suggested metrics or criteria for measuring (or defining) "accessible"?

7.2 Performance-Based Approach (Need to tailor for RTPAs – please provide feedback)

- A good place to at least start (i.e. continue) the discussion would be the recommendations in the report, *Performance Monitoring Indicators for Rural and Small Urban Transportation Planning* (prepared for the Nevada County Transportation Commission on behalf of the California Rural Counties Task Force, September, 2015). Attached is a table from the Executive Summary.

Table 1-1– Summary of recommended performance monitoring performance measures

Performance measures	Data sources	Estimated resource requirements
I. Congestion/Delay/Vehicle Miles of Travel		
VMT: • Per capita • By locality (city) • By facility ownership • Local vs. tourist	• HPMS • Caltrans Vehicle Volumes • Dept. of Finance annual population estimates	Minimal. Less than one person-day of staff time to look up published data.
Peak V/C ratio or thresholds	• Caltrans Vehicle volumes (average, peak traffic; K & D factors) • HCM 2010 threshold volumes • Highway geometrics (number of lanes, lane widths)	Moderate. Depends on number of state highway segments.
II. Mode Share/Split		
• Journey to work mode share	• Triennial American Community Survey estimates of work mode shares by county	Minimal. Less than one person-day to look up data.
III. Safety		
Total accident cost: • Per VMT • Per capita	• SWITRS/TIMS (accidents by type) • Same data as for VMT • NHTSA data on cost by accident type	Minimal. Less than one person-day to look up data and compute measures.
IV. Transit		
Transit: operating cost per revenue mile	• Annual transit agency reports	Minimal. Less than one person-day to look up data and compute measures.
V. Transportation System Investment/Preservation/Service/Fuel Use		
Distressed lane miles • Total and % of total • By jurisdiction • By facility type	• Regional or local pavement management system	Depends on size of road system in county.
Pavement condition index (PCI) for local roads	• Regional or local pavement management system	Minimal additional effort assuming done in coordination with local roadway needs report.
VII. Land Use		
Land use efficiency	• Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) • DOF Annual population estimates	Minimal. Less than one person-day to look up data and record measures.