



FHWA/AMPO TPCB Peer Exchange

GIS and Equity

June 22 – 23, 2021

Speaker Biographies

Opening Remarks

Spencer Stevens – FHWA Office of Planning

Mr. Stevens leads the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) office of Planning, Capacity Building Team in Washington DC. The team is responsible for information and resource sharing through Peer Learning, training, workshops and highlighting noteworthy practices through the recently updated Transportation Planning Capacity Building website www.planning.dot.gov. Mr. Stevens has been with FHWA for 31 years since graduating from the University of New Hampshire with a BS in Civil Engineering, and has worked in various FHWA offices throughout the country. Prior to returning to the Office of Planning in early 2021, Mr. Stevens was the Director of Planning, Environment and Finance in FHWA's Pennsylvania Division office in Harrisburg, PA.

Caitlin Cook – AMPO

Caitlin is the Director of Technical Programs for AMPO and joined us in December from the Mid-America Regional Council (MARC), a bi-state TMA in Kansas City, MO/KS. In her role at MARC, Caitlin spearheaded the development of a 2020 Data Business Plan to strategically assess and plan for the next three years of data, technology, and training needs within the organization. Her efforts led to the incorporation of recommendations into the UPWP to ensure that needed resources and support were in place to provide ongoing implementation. Among many other accomplishments while at MARC, Caitlin served as the project manager for the Heartland Freight Technology Plan. This effort received funding through the FHWA National Economic Partnerships grant program. Prior to joining MARC, Caitlin served as the MPO Planning Manager for the St. Joseph Area Transportation Study Organization, a bi-state small-urbanized MPO in St. Joseph, MO/KS. In this capacity, she oversaw all aspects of the MPO, including the development of the UPWP, TIP, and MTP. Caitlin holds a BA from Park University in English Literature and Spanish Language and a Masters from the University of Kansas in Urban Planning.

Tableau Presentation

Cecilio Martinez – Alamo Area MPO

Cecilio Martinez has over 25 years of experience in GIS and currently manages the Alamo Area MPO (AAMPO) GIS Section in San Antonio, Texas. In his 18 years of working at the AAMPO, he has provided expertise in mapping, spatial analysis and web applications. Before joining the AAMPO, he worked for the United States Geologic Survey (USGS) as a GIS specialist.

Panel 1: Defining Equity

Mara Kaminowitz - Baltimore Metropolitan Council

Mara Kaminowitz, GISP is the GIS Coordinator for the Baltimore Metropolitan Council. She has been with BMC for twelve years and has been working professionally in GIS for fifteen years. Mara is active in both the local and national data communities including AMPO, the Transportation Research Board, and the Maryland State Geospatial Information Committee. Before coming to the BMC, Mara worked for the Family League of Baltimore City applying GIS and data analysis towards understanding social issues that affect families and children. She later worked for an environmental and cultural resources consulting firm specializing in transportation projects. Mara has an MA in geography from the University of Connecticut and a BA from Tufts University.

Craig Caspar – Corpus Christi MPO

Craig Casper started his career 29 years ago as a transportation economist for Wilbur Smith Associates. His role evolved and he gained 10 years of experience doing socio-economic impact analyses for NEPA documents, where he discovered that many of the issues in NEPA evolved out of long-range planning. Always up for a challenge, he now has 15 years of experience working for MPOs in Colorado, Florida, Tennessee and now at the MPO in Corpus Christi Texas.

Grégory Gabriel – Palm Beach Transportation Planning Agency

Grég Gabriel works as a Transportation Planner at the Palm Beach Transportation Planning Agency in West Palm Beach, Florida. His current role involves supporting the Long-Range Plan, Transportation Improvement Program, Travel Demand Model, and Geographic Information Systems. Annually, Grég develops the traditionally underserved population indicators for the Palm Beach TPA's competitive grants, the Local Initiatives, and Transportation Alternatives Programs.

Betsy Harvey – Boston Region MPO

Betsy Harvey is the Transportation Equity Program Manager for the Boston Region MPO. She has nine years of experience in transportation planning, with a focus on improving transportation outcomes for vulnerable and underserved populations through Title VI and Environmental Justice analysis and compliance, inclusive public engagement, and multi-modal transportation research. She ensures that the MPO complies with nondiscrimination regulations, and collaborates with staff across the agency to analyze the impacts of transportation projects on vulnerable populations and prioritize investments that address these impacts.

Bill Swiatek - Wilmington Area Planning Council (WILMAPCO)

A principal planner with the Wilmington Area Planning Council (WILMAPCO), Bill leads the agency's environmental planning efforts. He has completed transportation studies concerning social equity, regional connectivity and accessibility, climate change, and community planning. Recently, Bill served as project manager of WILMAPCO's 2019 Transportation Justice Plan. This sweeping regional study makes recommendations to overcome the racial and class inequities it uncovered in the transportation system and ways to achieve more inclusive public engagement. Bill holds a Master of Arts in Geography from the University of Delaware.

Kate Zielke - North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG)

Kate Zielke joined NCTCOG in 2014. She has served as the agency's Title VI coordinator and EJ specialist since 2016. She earned a master's degree in environmental science from the University of North Texas. She has served as the agency's Title VI and environmental justice specialist since 2016. She earned a bachelor's degree in journalism with a minor emphasis in African-American studies from the University of Maryland.

Panel 2: Data-Driven Decisionmaking

Jenny Wallace - Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG)

Jenny Wallace is the GIS Manager for the Denver Regional Council of Governments. She administers DRCOG's geospatial enterprise software and databases, performs data development and spatial analysis, and develops web maps alongside her team of GIS professionals. Jenny is passionate about advancing her technical proficiencies and building collaborative relationships with peers in regional transportation and urban planning.

Jared Austin – Forward Pinellas

Jared Austin is a Program Planner for Forward Pinellas who manages the Transportation Improvement Program and Planning Analytics and Visualization team. Jared is also the primary person of contact for the GIS Analysis for the Forward Pinellas 2021 Equity Assessment. He received his Master's in Geography from the University of South Florida, as well as a Graduate Certificate in Geographic Information Systems. In his spare time, he is an avid skateboarder and heavy metal enthusiast.

Angela Ryan – Forward Pinellas

Angela Ryan is a Principal Planner for Forward Pinellas focusing on Active Transportation and Health Equity. Angela is driven to help create equitable and sustainable communities. Angela is a Midwesterner at heart who loves subtropical climates and outdoor sports. She moved to Florida to obtain her degree in Environmental Studies from Florida Gulf Coast University and subsequently spent 12-years working with environmental science, planning and policy for the Department of Defense. She departed from the federal government to work locally and spend more time with her husband and two children. In her spare time, she is finishing her Masters in Science from the University of Florida and is currently Vice President of the Florida Bicycle Association.

Caroline Daigle - Chattanooga-Hamilton County Regional Planning Agency

Caroline Daigle is a Senior Planner at the Chattanooga-Hamilton County Regional Planning Agency & Chattanooga-Hamilton County/North GA Transportation Planning Organization. As a planner, Caroline is particularly concerned with issues of equity, social inclusion, and access for all, whether at the neighborhood, community, or regional scale. She also has a keen interest in leveraging innovative forms of community engagement and data visualization to make planning projects more approachable and relevant for diverse audiences. Caroline is currently leading the public engagement efforts for the TPO's 2050 Regional Transportation Plan.

Andrea Napoli – Bend MPO (presenting on behalf of Rogue Valley MPO)

Andrea Napoli is a transportation and land use planner with 15 years' experience in both the public and private sectors. Although she currently works as the senior planner for the Bend MPO in central Oregon,

she will be presenting on the equity-related assessment she had completed in 2016 in her prior position at the Rogue Valley MPO in southern Oregon.

Closing Remarks (Day 1)

Mark Sarmiento – FHWA Office of Planning

Mark is a Community Planner in the FHWA Office of Planning with over 25 years of experience using GIS, working with geospatial data, and enabling transportation agencies to become more effective through these technologies. He has concentrated on providing capacity-building resources that highlight the noteworthy efforts by transportation agencies to apply GIS and use geospatial data in the work that they do. He has a Bachelor's of Science in Civil Engineering from Worcester Polytechnic Institute and a Master's of Engineering in Civil Engineering from the University of Virginia.

Caitlin Cook – AMPO

Caitlin is the Director of Technical Programs for AMPO and joined us in December from the Mid-America Regional Council (MARC), a bi-state TMA in Kansas City, MO/KS. In her role at MARC, Caitlin spearheaded the development of a 2020 Data Business Plan to strategically assess and plan for the next three years of data, technology, and training needs within the organization. Her efforts led to the incorporation of recommendations into the UPWP to ensure that needed resources and support were in place to provide ongoing implementation. Among many other accomplishments while at MARC, Caitlin served as the project manager for the Heartland Freight Technology Plan. This effort received funding through the FHWA National Economic Partnerships grant program. Prior to joining MARC, Caitlin served as the MPO Planning Manager for the St. Joseph Area Transportation Study Organization, a bi-state small-urbanized MPO in St. Joseph, MO/KS. In this capacity, she oversaw all aspects of the MPO, including the development of the UPWP, TIP, and MTP. Caitlin holds a BA from Park University in English Literature and Spanish Language and a Masters from the University of Kansas in Urban Planning.

Welcoming Remarks (Day 2)

Cheng Yan – FHWA Office of Planning

Cheng joined FHWA's Professional Development Program in 2013. He has worked in FHWA for more than 8 years. During his time in FHWA, he served as a Community Planner in the California Division; and then he took on additional responsibility in the Virginia Division as a Planning and Environment Specialist. Finally, he joined FHWA Headquarter Office of Planning in 2017 as Transportation Specialist. He had his undergraduate and graduate degree both from the University at Buffalo.

Panel 3 – Telling the Story

Ann Burns – Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SMCOG)

Ann is a certified geographic Information systems professional (GISP) and has 29 years of experience in acquiring, analyzing and managing geospatial data as well as coordinating projects within Southeast Michigan. Ann is responsible for SEMCOG's GIS database creation and acquisition, ortho-imagery acquisition projects and SEMCOG's open data efforts and online mapping and data visualization activities. Ann holds a bachelor's degree in geography from Central Michigan University and a master's degree in geography with a concentration in GIS from Eastern Michigan University. Ann became active in AMPO's GIS and data visualization group a couple years ago, and enjoys working with the group as well and hearing about the unique experiences of other MPOs.

Carson Cooper - Greater Nashville Regional Council (GNRC)

Carson Cooper has been a Research Analyst for the Greater Nashville Regional Council for 2 years. The majority of her time with GNRC has been devoted to various aspects of the MPO's transportation planning work. Carson's main data focuses at GNRC are demographics, land use and development, and projected growth patterns. These focuses are supported by her team members who analyze traffic congestion and roadway safety, travel demand models, and remote sensing information.

Kimberly Korejko - Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC)

Kim Korejko is the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission's (DVRPC's) Manager of Data Coordination where she is responsible for establishing and implementing planning data policies, standards, organization, and innovation of data at the enterprise level. Prior to this role, Kim worked in DVRPC's GIS department, where she focused on data management and cartography. In both of these roles, Kim has been part of the data team that develops tools and resources to help planners identify vulnerable populations, to ensure that equity and environmental justice is integrated in all of DVRPC's programs, plans, and public participation efforts.

Pramod Sambidi - Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC)

Dr. Pramod Sambidi is a Socioeconomic Modeling Manager at the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). Pramod leads H-GAC's efforts in developing long-range demographic, economic, and land use forecasts for the Greater Houston region. He also leads H-GAC's efforts in designing and developing interactive web mapping applications/tools to assist local governments, planners, researchers, and businesses in effective decision-making process. Pramod has more than 15 years of experience in modeling, regional and urban economics, and data management. Pramod holds a Ph.D. in Agricultural Economics from Louisiana State University (2007).

Sungmin Lee - Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC)

Sungmin Lee is a Principal Data Analyst for the Community & Environmental Planning Department with the Houston-Galveston Area Council. Mr. Lee joined H-GAC in 2014 and his experience includes H-GAC's regional growth forecast, data management of regional land use inventory, developing various interactive planning applications for land use, Census, transportation, and environment. Mr. Lee received his master's degrees in Community & Regional Planning from the University of Texas at Austin, Texas in 2007 and Public Administration from CNU, South Korea. Prior to his work at H-GAC, Mr. Lee worked as Senior Transportation Planner with Planning & Development Department, City of Houston and researcher with Seoul Institute, South Korea.

FHWA Resources

Fleming El-Amin – FHWA Office of Human Environment

Fleming is a Senior Community Planner with the Federal Highway Administration's Office of Human Environment and is the lead for environmental justice, context sensitive solutions/design, health in transportation, and public involvement. He provides training and technical assistances to State DOTs and MPOs on environmental justice analysis, engagement strategies, and context sensitive design. He holds a B.A. in Architecture from UNC Charlotte and a Master's degree in City and Regional Planning from Morgan State University.