**Domestic Scan Proposal Form**

AASHTO is now soliciting proposals for a **Calendar Year 2017 US Domestic Scan Program** (NCHRP Panel 20-68A).

Selected scan topics will be investigated by one of three ways: (type 1) site visits to three to six locations for approximately a two week period or less, by webinar; (type 2) peer exchange; or (type 3) conducted by a group of eight to 12 transportation professionals with expertise in the selected topic area. Proposed topics should meet the following criteria:

* Address an important and timely need for information by transportation agencies;
* Are of interest to a broad national spectrum of people and agencies;
* Are complex and also “hands-on,” meaning they lend themselves particularly well to exploration through on-site visits; and
* Are sufficiently focused that the tour participants are able to investigate and understand key issues in the limited time available on the tour.

Before submitting your proposal it is highly recommended that you read [**What Makes a Good Scan Topic Proposal**](http://www.domesticscan.org/what-makes-a-good-scan-topic-proposal)[**http://www.domesticscan.org/what-makes-a-good-scan-topic-proposal**](http://www.domesticscan.org/what-makes-a-good-scan-topic-proposal)

This form is designed to collect the full length of your proposal. Sections requiring essays have unlimited space for you to use. Contact information has some limited text. ***Use your TAB🡪 key to advance to the area where you need to complete information.***

**Proposals should be returned no later than OCTOBER 15, 2016.**

**IMPORTANT NOTE on How to save your document**: ***LastNameFirst Initial, underscore\_Organization Acronym \_CY2017.***

***Saved Document Name Example: VitaleM\_AASHTO\_CY2017***

***If you have more than one, add a number after first initial: VitaleM1\_AASHTO\_CY2017***

**Domestic Scan Proposal Contact Information**

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| AASHTO Committee | Standing Committee on Public Transportation and MultiModal Surface Transportation Task Force of the Standing Committee on Planning | Date of submission | 10/14/2016 |

**Title of Proposed Scan****:** Accommodating Additional Modes In Existing Right Of Way

**Problem Statement** (What topic is to be examined? What drives the need for the scan? Why now?)

State DOTs are increasingly being called upon to “expand” the use of existing right of way to accommodate a variety of modes. DOTs may be asked to dedicate (in whole or part) existing lanes or right of way to bus rapid transit, express bus, high occupancy vehicles, bike lanes, bike pathway or enhanced pedestrian access. The decisions to accommodate the additional modes requires a variety of site and community specific trade-offs for which there may not be a single standard or guidance document nor a pre-set institutional structure that can steer the agency. Some of the trade-offs State DOTs are being asked to consider include:

• Increasing total throughput but reducing capacity for single occupancy vehicles

• Improving transit performance with reduced performance for SOVs or trucks

• Popular additions for pedestrian and bicycle access with unpopular changes for vehicular access (such as reduced on street parking or left turn lanes)

• Improvements in safety infrastructure (such as medians, timed crosswalks) but increased opportunity for user conflict

In addition to design considerations in evaluating these accomodations, there are operational and maintenance issues, such as once a highway lane becomes a transit lane, which agency (and funding sources) pays for maintenance.

Complicating these decisions, is that the project may be sponsored by an independent local transit authority, and as such there are state vs local jurisdictional issues. In addition, if the sponsor is a transit authority, they may be approaching the State DOT as well as local road agencies to seek their accommodations at the same time the transit authority is building local consensus and support for the project within one or more communities. The project may be dependent on a local vote to raise operating or capital revenues. Making project development decisions in that “political” environment can have unique characteristics. The transit authority may also be navigating the FTA Capital Improvements Grant (CIG) process. The iterative (and competitive) nature of the FTA CIG process and the strategic nature of developing a project that is dependent on a public vote can make it difficult for a DOT to determine when and how to get involved in the project.

The AASHTO Standing Committee on Planning/Subcommittee on Policy recently formed a Multimodal Surface Transportation Task Force (MMTF) which has as part of its charter to provide a forum for communications, guidance, and resources focused on planning, policy, and performance management for multimodal issues. The MMTF steering committee would make use of this scan results to advance the multi-modalism within AASHTO and its member states and supports this proposal.

**Scan Scope** (What specific subject areas are to be examined? Which cities and states might be visited? Which agencies/organizations (including specific departments or types of staff if applicable)?

Subject areas:

The design, operational and policy/procedural decisions that State DOTs have been faced with in response to a proposal from an external agency or entity to accommodate additional modes within existing ROW, with a particular focus on the dedication of existing lanes to transit as part of an FTA CIG project. The scan should include both projects that made it all the way through the FTA CIG process (i.e., were funded by FTA) as well as those for which project planning was discontinued for any number of reasons.

Where to Visit:

Sites involving State DOT owned ROW would be preferred, but could also include a site where it was local ROW.

There are a number of State DOTs actively involved in accomodating transit projects - including light rail and BRT - in their ROW. Several of the States represented on the SCOP's MMTF have projects that would be excellent sites to visit.

Also at this link are the annual reports of FTA approved capital investment grant projects. With further research this list can be used to identify projects that are within existing State ROW

https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grant-programs/capital-investments/annual-report-funding-recommendations

Additionally, contact can be made with FTA regional offices to find projects that entered into the CIG project development phase but were discontinued. Some of these projects might also be excellent sites to visit, since one or more obstacles prevented them from moving forward and those lessons are equally important. FTA Regional offices would also be a source of information on projects that are in the midst of project development as the research is being conducted. For example, at this time within the Lansing Michigan area, the Capital Area Transportation Authority is in the Small Starts project development phase for BRT on Grand/Michigan Avenues, which includes both MDOT and local ROW. By the time this scan takes place, this project may have advanced to getting an FTA Small Starts Construction Grant, may still be in project development or may have been terminated or postponed. Regardless of its status at that time, the issues the transit authority and state and local road owners have dealt with would still be excellent lessons learned for others facing the same decisions. Including projects that are in the midst of project development or engineering should be a focus area of this scan, since one of the significant benefits of the scan process is that it provides real time technology transfer of developing practices and can have immediate benefit for the scanned agencies.

Which agencies/organizations:

The State DOT and if applicable local road agency, the transit agency, the metropolitan planning agency, local community officials, modal advocacy groups (such as the “friends” group organized around passing a transit millage campaign) , FHWA and FTA officials regional and HQ officials.

**Anticipated Scan Results** (What key information is to be gained? What information is to be shared after the scan? Who would the audience be for this information?)

Key Information to be gained and shared:

The scan can look at technical issues associated with design, construction and operations/maintenance, but will also be strongly focuses on organizational, policy, procedural and “relationship” issues. Examples of key Information to be gathered and shared:

• What (and when) were the various decision points for evaluating and approving the use of existing ROW for additional modes? Were there interim as well as a final decision points? What was the instrument for the final approval from the DOT (such as a permit)?

• What methods and criteria were used by State DOTs to make decisions regarding the impacts of and need for balancing of road uses, including decisions regarding traffic impacts, level of service and safety? What modeling was done and who was involved in developing the model and evaluating the results?

• What were the organizational challenges within the State DOT to participate in the process? Did the State DOT form a team to work with the transit authority and what personnel was involved? Were existing decision-making venues used or new venues created?

• What decisions (how and why) were made regarding sharing between the State DOT and the transit authority in maintenance and operational costs when lanes are dedicated to transit?

• What role did the State DOT play in evaluating impacts of modes other than road or transit (i.e., a BRT project will have bike and pedestrian implications, did the State DOT participate in those decisions?)

• How and when did the State DOT get involved? (such as during alternatives analysis? Before or after a locally preferred alternative was selected?) Should they have been involved earlier?

• Did the State DOT recoup their staff costs during the development phase? (there can be significant resource demands on a State DOT during project development but no funding available for these costs)

• What was the State DOT’s participation in the NEPA process?

• What was the State DOT’s participation in the community outreach/local consensus building process?

• What was the State DOT’s participation in construction oversight for work within their ROW?

• Coordination between federal modal agencies, such as FTA and FHWA – how was it approached, who took the lead? Was it successful? How could it have been done better?

• What formal and informal agreements were entered into between the State DOT and the agency sponsoring the project (such as the local transit authority)?

• To a lesser extent, what were the specific design and construction challenges and how they were resolved?

Audience: State DOTs and government/transportation agencies that are sponsoring or proposing additional uses of a roadway (such as local transit authorities). Also the MMTF of the AASHTO Standing Committee on Planning will be a key audience for the scan results and hopes to assit the scan team in disseminating scan results within AASHTO membership.

**Benefits Expected** (Including potential impacts on current technology or procedures)

Advance the institutional capacity of State DOTs to participate/partner in projects proposed by others to “add” modes to existing ROW, in particular Bus Rapid Transit under the FTA Capital Investment Grants program and provide informal “roadmaps” to road, transit and other modal agencies as they approach these projects.

Assist the MMTF of AASHTO's Standing Committee on Planning advance the dialogue and capacity of AASHTO members to achieve their multi-modal goals.