



FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION



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**Transit Asset Management  
MPO Coordination Webinar Transcript**

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*Presented by*

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## Introduction

**Mshadoni Smith:** Good afternoon, everyone and welcome to our TAM webinar series, coordinating with MPOs on TAM plans and activities. Thank you for joining us again today as an update or a new presentation from our Halloween version that just could not -- had way too many technical difficulties for us to surpass, so thank you again for joining us and I hope that we will be able to meet your needs.

While we're getting started here, why don't you guys go ahead and take a few minutes and answer some of these poll questions and we'll get started in a few minutes.

All right, folks, it looks like you guys have started to slow but I want you to continue to take your time in filling out how your region sets targets and share that information. Also for the MPO standing committee for transit, it looks like many of you do have a standing committee.

Let's see. Other please explain in chat pod. Barb said she's a state agency and there's several MPOs so they don't necessarily have a standing committee. Another state DOT has a steering committee for public transportation, and Keith has one not specifically for transit issues but there is a standard committee -- excuse me, a standing committee that covers that area. So it looks like there is a majority that do have standing committees for transit or some that are maybe not quite dedicated to transit but cover transit issues.

How would you describe your organization, it looks like we have a majority of MPOs and transit agencies here which is not surprising.

So I am looking forward to us getting started and I encourage you guys to continue answering that question in the chat pod and at any time during the presentation, if you have a question, feel free to add it into the chat pod and we'll come back to it at end of the presentation but I'm going to go ahead and get started.

I am Mshadoni Smith. You may recognize my voice. I am the transit asset management program manager. We just did the poll questions. And joining me today is Dwayne Weeks, and he is the FTA planning director. We are featuring two presenters today, both from Georgia, Shayna Pollock is the principal planner at Atlanta regional commission and Karen Wigner is the transit division director at Gwinnett county transit. Dwayne and I are going to do a really brief kind of intro to set the stage on what's going on on our respective programs and then we'll turn it over to Shayna and Karen.

Once we finish up, we'll take some Q & A from the chat pod and anything we can't get to in an hour, we will get back with you with answers.

So I'm going to turn it over to Dwayne for some planning updates.

## Dwayne Weeks

**Dwayne Weeks:** Thank you. Again, this is Dwayne Weeks, I'm the director of the office of planning at the Federal Transit Administration's office of planning and environment.

We've been trying to make a lot of technical assistance and training available. A lot of folks are implementing performance-based planning for the first time. We also have experienced a huge turnover in staffing, a lot of transit providers and MPOs and state DOTs so we've been offering specialized webinars for inexperienced MPOs, transit providers, or folks, MPO boards who are new to metropolitan planning and performance-based planning.

If you feel like you need some specialized training or technical assistance, feel free to contact me on your FTA regional office. We can organize a webinar for you or your MPO board or other planning partners.

We've also updated our national transit institute courses. We made them all available on performance-based planning and programming. The transportation planning process, metropolitan and statewide planning and programming.

We recently updated the financial planning for transportation, as well as our simplified tips on project software. So all of these courses are actively being offered.

We also have a course on public involvement and transportation and land use that we're going to be doing updates to in the next six months to a year. But all of these courses are free for transit agency, MPO, government staff and I highly encourage you to sign up for those courses when they're offered in your area or reach out to NTI and request an offering.

We've also been doing continual updates for our transportation planning website. We have new frequently asked questions on performance-based planning. We developed a new web page on rural transportation planning and coordinated human service transportation plans and rural transportation planning organizations. We updated our circular on section 5303 and 5305 planning funding. That was published last August and it's basically directions and instructions on how to apply for PL funds.

And then in the coming year, we're going to continually update our web pages. We're doing a performance-based planning roundtable peer exchanges jointly with FHWA. We hope to get that effort going March of next year. Keep your eyes and ears out on our web pages and gov delivery announcements on a new and improved website update in guidance and training.

I'll turn it back over to Mish. Thank you.

**Mshadoni Smith:** Thanks, Dwayne. That sounds like a lot on offer there for the training program and I would encourage everyone to take advantage of the training opportunities.

For the TAM updates, I just have a couple of things. Some resources that are available on our webpage. In your upper left-hand of the slide, you will see that we have a new video. It's on a YouTube page for FTA. And it is a 2 1/2-minute video featuring two transit agencies that kind of

goes over a very high level of what TAM entails and what some of the benefits that you could get from TAM are. So it's a nice awareness and educational tool for maybe some of your C-suite folks or any type of awareness program that your agency may want to undertake.

We also have a case study from the Iowa DOT facility assessment tool which highlights some of the technical advancements in innovations that our partners are doing in order to help the TAM planning process go more smoothly.

We also have a September TAM newsletter with a letter from Bob Tuccillo. That letter from Bob Tuccillo covered what is expected in terms of programmatic implementation of TAM, and I would encourage you to go and take a look at that. If you have any concerns about what it means to be in compliance with TAM or noncompliance with TAM.

And then we also have a couple of resources that might be of use for you guys. To the left is a visual of our tribal reporting tool. It's in the beta testing form right now, but it is a very simplified version of the small system TAM template. I know, that's a tongue-twister there. But the tribal version is intended for very small fleets, and it is a much simplified version, so it doesn't have all of the macros and the algorithms in there, so if you understand Excel, you should be able to understand and customize this tool. It's still in the beta version so it's not fully debugged. In fact, I just found a bug today, which I fixed and it will be available but you can take a look at that online.

Lastly, our TAM executive training slides which we piloted at the July San Diego TRB meeting, asset management conference, are now available online, fully customizable for your executives to educate them, they could be used for new board member orientation, if you want to update your GM or CEO on where you stand with regards to TAM compliance, there are some tables in there that could be useful and just in general to explain what the intentions are behind the regulation and how your agency is moving forward. So those are just some tools and some resources that are available from the TAM side.

Next I'm going to turn it over to our partners at ARC. I believe that Shayna Pollock is going to be the first presenter and Shayna. I'll turn it over to you.

### Shayna Pollock

**Shayna Pollock:** Thank you so much. Good afternoon, this is Shayna Pollock. I'm a planner at the Atlanta Regional Commission and I work on a variety of transit work but specifically for this webinar I work a lot on transit asset management and coordination of transit operators within that space.

### Karen Winger

**Karen Winger:** My name is Karen Winger; I'm the Transit Division Director in Gwinnett County, one of the many transit directors and one of the partners on the project.

**Shayna Pollock:** I just wanted to start by giving a brief overview of the Atlanta region. We're a pretty sizable region. 20-county metro area, population around 5.7 million. 2.2 million jobs. We are an air quality nonattainment area. Most critically for this presentation we have a large network of transit operators. We have 12 transit operators in the region, that's 2 tier-one operators and 10 tier-two operators. A lot needs to go into coordinating across all the operators and make sure we're on the same page to provide the best possible service.

**Karen Winger:** To give you a little bit of an idea of Gwinnett County, we are northeast of the Atlanta and Fulton county area. Our 2018 population is heading towards a million or so and we're projected to be the largest county in Georgia by 2040.

Our structure for the transit program is the transit division is part of Gwinnett County DOT so we have roads and operation and maintenance and program delivery, division within the transit program but it's not a similar transit authority. Next slide, please.

Just to give you an idea of where Gwinnett County is within the metro Atlanta area, this slide is planning efforts we recently did for the comprehensive transit development plan but you can see in the maroon shaped area where Gwinnett County is located and the ring road and where all interstates are heading, to that's Atlanta so that's an idea where we're at. And the challenge not just for TAM but regional planning in general because everybody is trying to go everywhere, usually at the same time.

And our system itself, we started in 2001. We have a mix of commuter bus, local bus and paratransit service. The county staff itself is pretty lean. When I started three years ago, I had one employee. Now we're up to five total.

And a we have a third-party contractor that provides most of our service, operations maintenance and customer service so the county staff is responsible for oversight, planning, administrative, all that. Grants management, all that fun stuff so we were very happy to partner with ARC on this project and we have direct connections to Marta service and the Georgia regional transit authority as well.

**Shayna Pollock:** Just before we really get into the meat of it, we wanted to just do a little refresher on the TAM rule and the regulations surrounding the MPO. Generally it states an MPO must coordinate on the selection of their performance targets and MPOs should provide their target and performance reports to the state DOT. It has to be tracked in the RTP and all MPOs need to update their metropolitan planning agreement in order to define the approach we're taking overall in terms of performance-based planning.

For ARC and our role and transit assessment management, I want to cover two things. The first is complying with these regs around MPOs. But why Karen is on the phone as well, we want to talk about how ARC was also the sponsor of a tier two group plan for a few of the smaller transit operators in the Atlanta region.

So basically, the last slide down, the four things we really focused on in this process were facilitating the establishment of regional targets, tracking the progress on those regional targets,

and doing that with the participation of a regional operator to ensure everyone was on the same page throughout. Working to reflect the performance measures and targets and the tests and the RTPs and then -- this is a really big one for us, and it's doubling down on the last bullet which is linking the performance-based planning and programming so ensure that what we're investing in across the region is also committing to what we've invested in and the goals outlined in the RTPs and it really connects what the transit operators want and need.

So how did we do that? A big one is that we used the existing coordination channels. I'm going to go into a minute what exactly we have in place now and how we use those. We set data standards collaboratively in those channels so we could all be on the same page and we are setting attainable goals in terms of the type of data that we would have, and then like I said before, this was a really major point, which is why I keep reiterating it, we linked planning and programming in the way that we're doing right now is through institutionalizing project prioritization and that also carries down into the tier two plan.

In terms of the ongoing regional coordination, we really have two committees through this, one that's staff level and one that's policy level.

The staff level is called a transit operator subcommittee. We meet every other month. We have staff from basically all of the operator counties that receive 5307 funds. Everyone is invited. We have a pretty good turnout every time and the agenda covers a whole slew of issues. We talk about suballocation policies, we talk about projects requiring regional coordination, for instance, we've been working on a regional bus stop signage project. We share information. We recently talked about a microtransit pilot that two of our different operators, two of them are definitely exploring microtransit, one has it, that's Karen's, just wanted to give her a shout-out. And we talked about that.

And then the second is the regional transit committee. That's more of a policy level issue and that's where we discuss these issues of regional importance. As we were beginning the TAM journey, we were able to go to the policy level officials and kind of have a conversation about where our goals needed to be pointing in terms of the RTP so they could recognize the importance it played in our long-term budgeting and the security of our region moving forward.

And then to note on the RTC, the regional transit committee, the membership funds for that committee support projects with regional significance so again, like I mentioned before, that's bus stop signage, that's funding improvement of GTSS feeds in the region, projects like that. I do want to note that these committees were in place at the time of the transit asset management rule and while the Atlanta region is developing a new transit governance structure after a state bill passed last year, the region's commitment of coordinating at the staff and policy level is unwavering. We are just still figuring out the exact structure of those new committees.

So I want to talk a little bit about regional targets. You see them up here across the four categories. There was a lot of conversation about how we wanted to set our targets Ridgely. We talked about it quite a few times. Ultimately by ended up setting them kind of a lowest common denominator approach. We just felt that that was the best way to cater to some of

the smaller operators in the region that didn't necessarily have a program previously that involved a lot of transit assessment management work and kind of getting their footing in terms of a state of good repair.

But in that process we did talk about lowest common denominator and weighted average so obviously weighing the targets based on the number of assets each operator has. So for now we have gone with the lowest common denominator approach but throughout this Preece, we continue to reiterate that these targets can change. And as we track how we're going as a region, which I'll talk about on the next slide, I think we will revisit them probably annually and discuss where we're sitting and what our goals are and how we can use our limited funds to get there.

So this regional target setting and tracking. You see on your screen a tableau dashboard. This is a tool that we developed in-house at ARC because we needed the data to support target settings and we thought it would be useful to have a dashboard that all the operators could use to import their data into. So before I mentioned it, we worked together to set common data standards. You see that here because we asked for the same attributes for all of the data points. We were able to develop this common warehouse of transit data. And so it will also really help us track our progress over time, and to show areas where we might have possible pinch points in future RTC budgets, in the year 2022, we may have an outside number of cutaways that will need replacement in the region so we can start thinking about that before it is time to authorize that money and we can also use that critically I think to start thinking about and highlighting economies of scale on our region in terms of replacing assets so that we can all try to get on the same page.

So we know our goals and we know the state of our assets but how do we prioritize the best regional projects when dealing with the reality that we all know to be a financial constraint? At ARC, it really aligns how we do our tip project prioritization. It really goes back to linking, performance based planning and programming.

On the screen is kind of an overview of how ARC handles its tip prioritization. And to us transit management is a big part of that. Just kind of running from the top, we place a universal tip project call. When you do that, you slot your project into a bucket, that might be roadways, signalization, transit expansion, bike ped and we have a specific category for transit assessment management.

So once it's in there, we go to a key decision point where we consider if it aligns with our overarching regional goal. If it makes it past that it seasons have into KDP2, the project evaluation criteria that help us bring the top performing projects to the top and make sure we're focusing our assets and funds on the assets that need to be replaced most urgently. And then from that we get a ranked list of regional transportation projects. In this KDP3, we use things that are more or less quantitatively quantifiable and kind of things like balancing regional equity and then we bucket them out based on the funding that ARC dedicates. I want to talk a



lot more about that KDP2 project evaluation and specifically what we do for transit assessment management.

So it is important to note here that every criteria measure in metrics that we have assigned in our tip project prioritization is assigned to an overarching vision adopted in our last RTP and those are kind of the overarching goals that drive our regional plan. So for those three, we have world-class infrastructure, healthy livable communities and competitive economy. So you have multiple criteria running down, we have mobility and congestion, we measure that with effective passenger trips, metrics would be number of passenger trips and the share of annual trips so you're ensuring you're replacing the vehicles that serve the most passengers a year if you are in a money crunch.

We have asset management and resiliency. We have asset condition and vulnerability. Term rating. In terms of siting of asset, that basically means is it sitting on something that is vulnerable to climate change. Healthy livable communities, we talk about improving safety, project emissions, environmental improvement component.

In terms of social equity, we ask if that asset will serve an equitable target area community. That's kind of how ARC handles environmental justice measures. And then under competitive economy, we're looking at if it connects to regional employment centers. So that's all I'm really saying that we're really focused here on connecting that performance-based planning and programming so when we do our long-range planning, we're taking that high level and we're trying to get to our goal.

We're developing just a handful of measures that we think can drive us over the next 40 years. They're reflective of our strategic goals and we want to make sure that we maintain an accountable implementation focus which we can then implement through our tip where we kind of figure out how to close that gap between our needs and the money we have in the best way possible where we can use those measures to track how we're performing and use them as predictive tools moving forward and we can bridge that gap between the project and strategic level to ensure that we're really aligning the recent priorities throughout all the programming and planning that we do.

So I'm going to switch it over to the second part of ARC's role here, which is that we did the group plan development for our tier two operators. The whole reason this really started is because ARC acts as a direct recipient on behalf of the center for pan Asian community services, CPAC. They receive what used to be jar funding and ARC has agreed to act as their direct recipient and because they were going to be a TAM plan, we decided we should just open it up to all of the tier-two operators in the region and three other operators took us up on it. Douglas County, Henry County and of course Gwinnett County Transit.

And why for Gwinnett County's Transit perspective, what the advantage of us joining us the group plan. The first is that the already has familiarity with the MPO staff subcommittee working on many different issues. As a tier-two provider we had options of joining GDOT group plans but as a designated recipient we don't act directly with GDOT frequently but we

interact directly a lot with ARC so it made a lot of sense for us to join the group offer. The plan would align with the tip prioritization framework Shayna just covered. So we knew whatever plan we came up with, it would already be in line with the targets. We are leveraging with the already existing projects. We were able to continue that momentum forward. We were able to leverage the existing internal asset management for the county.

The vehicles submitted for the group plan, we had to do some adventures in figuring out how to do the facilities. And yeah, most of the data we already had a baseline format. And the county had just recently switched to using transtrack for our data. All our data is now coming into one source and the report on the screen is just a screenshot of what our vehicle data is.

As a smaller tier-two operator, really at the end of the day most of our assets are vehicles and then a couple of facilities. For us to accept the plan, again, I think a lot has to be said about the already existing committees and the transit committees and the fact that the relationships were already existing. It was pretty easy for us to go through a similar process of everyone working through the paying points in the plan, trying to figure out what the narrative was going to be, existing useful life benchmarks. Everyone that had agreed to be part of the plan was part of each decision point along the way so it was really easy at end of the plan to accept that yes, this is a consensus planning document and it was very easy to move forward from there.

So just a little on what we did for this tier two plan. Karen mentioned it a moment ago about ensuring that by joining the plan, projects would be performing well across both the tier-two plan and the tip prioritization criteria in terms of getting funding. Basically what we did was try to apply regional policies and tools when possible. There's no need to recreate the wheel here when we already have different processes that our stakeholders have bought into. So we integrated the goals from the RTP. You see them again on the side there. We used the same tableau asset repository for just the tier two plan as well as for the region. And then we used the same for prioritization scheme. We did talk internally with the group of public plans about adding other variables to consider and I still think down the line that may happen.

For instance we introduced the consideration for miles between road calls to try to figure out where the bad limits were in the buses and ensure we could replace those first. When we scaled that up regionally, we haven't arrived in the metric that would work really well for us and would fairly differentiate. But again, that's something we're going to work out and that's a way that we're continuing to think about new ways to implement these measurements and to make that cut across both the tier two plan and the work that the MPO does in terms of project prioritization for the test.

In terms of opportunities and challenges we saw that in terms of setting the performance target, this really helps with project selection so that when we go to our policy committees, we're ability to say that this is the target that we want to meet and so transit assessment management needs to become a priority.

It's helpful from a budgeting perspective knowing how much money we may need in any given year. But there were some challenges because the performance targets were so different.

Mostly between some of the larger operators and some of the smaller ones which kind of feeds back into that lowest common denominator approach. In terms of budgeting, it's really helpful for long-range budgeting.

We have the challenges we're still dealing with is tracking transit spending. We are still trying to figure out the best way to track transit spending year to year so that we really have are a good capture of repair costs. In terms of data collection and technology implementation, it's great that we can work with local operators and provide tools and technical assistance for the smaller operators. Personally that's one of my favorite parts of my job and it's great to be able to work so closely with the operators throughout the region.

A challenge of course, I'm sure, everyone knows is a lack of data completion and like Karen said limited staff to try to rectify those issues. It's also great that through detailed asset data, we could potentially use communal procurement to achieve economies of scale. A challenge is that some of our operators were not comfortable with the tableau dashboard becoming open data. They were concerned that citizens may not understand the realities of transit asset management and there would be some concerns there. So right now it's really just an internal dashboard use for policymakers and decision-making at committee meetings and not necessarily for the public.

And from Gwinnett County's perspective, some of the challenges on providing the data to ARC, we had a hard time figuring out how to do facility rating at first. We ended up using a tool GDOT, but that took us a while to figure out what sort of tool to use to get those facility ratings. I feel like vehicle ratings are pretty straightforward.

And then to piggyback on what Shayna mentioned to ensuring that we provided ARC the accurate data to go into that group plan. We're small staff compared to most of the other providers in the group plan, we're the big dog, we had ourselves some staff turnover as well so someone had to pick the ball up running that had maybe 30 seconds of TAM knowledge going into this and took it head-on but took us a little while. Sometimes it's hard to be as responsive to ARC as we would have liked to, make sure that the project is going forward.

Some lessons learned from ARC's side. It's really important to develop an architecture for asset reporting early. We leaned heavily on NTD reporting to figure out what we needed and weren't being overly onerous on the operators. We did ask for some data that's not in there. It is important to acknowledge the targets may change over time. We may not be ultimately where we want to go in terms of how we set targets but we can change that.

And then it sounds cliché but we love to partner early and often, we love meetings here at the Atlanta regional commission so we like to get around the table and talk about these issues so that we can be prepared.

In terms of next steps, I'm really excited that we are working on a joint regional procurement for an enterprise asset management system. Right now it's express bus system that Karen mentioned before, cob and ARC acting on behalf of a few of the smaller agencies, not just in

the tier two plan. Our hope here is that there's a regional solution that can help us to manage our assets and then everything would be in one place. Again, I don't think this would be possible if not for our committee structure. Karen can speak to this a little bit better but her agency is growing and she may become a tier-one agency in the near future.

Gwinnett County has a referendum on the books for March of 2019. If that referendum is successful, it will actually become part of Marta so there will be a planning exercise to actually phase us out entirely of the group plan, but at the time, even beforehand, we had a plan on the books to grow us to be a tier one. So that's to be determined but as any good planning exercise, it's always rewrite and continue updating.

And then this will be the first time we're working on an RTP update currently and we're going to have another tip project call in the next year or so. So this will really be the first time that we're kind of testing what we've done here and seeing how successful it is. So that's a big next step for us.

And then of course lastly, we all know update, update, update, because I already have a number of agencies who have procured new bus since I finished the plan. So that is always a fun challenge. That kind of concludes what we have today. Obviously there are going to be questions next but we appreciate this opportunity and the contact information is on the slide so if you have any questions or wanted to try to get some information from us, we'll do the best we can to answer.

## Questions & Answers

**Mshadoni Smith:** Thank you, Shayna and Karen. I appreciate you guys presenting today and we're going to go ahead and move on to the Q&A section of the presentation but I'm guessing that your key takeaway is start talking early and often and update, update, update. That's all I heard. I heard the rest of it too.

But I'm going to go through and see what questions we have on this list. These questions appear to be mostly dealing with the presentation information. So there's a question from Uday. I'm not sure for whom, but how do we keep track of regional targets? Can you please share the templates that I can develop. I'm not sure if he's asking you guys but this is a question maybe you guys can respond to about formatting and maintaining your regional target. I'll go ahead and let you guys decide who should answer first.

**Shayna Pollock:** Yeah, this is Shayna. I mean, it's in Excel. It's nothing crazy, I would say. We just ask the operators, we gave them a deadline to report their targets to us, we collected in it an Excel spreadsheet and presented it at the transit subcommittee. We set a month of the year when everyone will have to let us know if their targets have changed and then we'll update that spreadsheet and reconvene to figure out if we want to change the regional target.

**Karen Winger:** We have another challenge I want to throw out there. Throughout the region, I think we have three different fiscal years for all of the providers too so that can be fun

to navigate to figure out when do you say the end of the year is to figure out when to make those changes too.

**Shayna Pollock:** That's a really good point. I think we were told that the MPO needs to report on it at the end of our fiscal year. That's kind of what it is.

**Karen Winger:** If anybody else runs into that, I throw that out there.

**Shayna Pollock:** That's an interesting point. That's one of those kind of alignment things that we don't necessarily think of right off the top of our heads, but that can become an issue, so thank you for addressing that. I'm going to go to the next question from Bo. One of the slides shows regional targets for facilities is 50%. He wants to know what that means. I want to remind everyone that the facility performance measure is percentage of the total facilities that are at a 3.0 or below on the term scale or below a 3.0 on the term scale.

**Karen Winger:** I don't have anything to add. That's exactly what it means.

**Mshadoni Smith:** So I think Bo might be asking, have you done a condition assessment for all of the facilities in the ARC regional area, or have you done for the 25% that's required for the first year reporting to the NTD, is that 50% related to the total or the 25% total?

**Shayna Pollock:** So in terms of -- I will be honest, I never asked the larger pool of operators if they did just the 25% of hundred, I would say for the tier two operators in our plan, that was 100%. We gave them a form courtesy of GDOT, the same form that they used for their facilities, and they filled that out and then reported back to me. And we included that. Like I said, I really didn't ask. That's really what is left there is Cherokee County, they're within the GDOT plan and they would have done theirs and I don't know about Marta and Cobb definitively or Seta. But they all had contract so I think they're working on it.

**Mshadoni Smith:** Okay. As far as Gwinnett, you guys provided your condition assessments for the 25% or the 100%?

**Karen Winger:** We did the 100%. We didn't have that many. Once we figured out how to raise facilities, we just did all of them.

**Shayna Pollock:** Our group plan does not have many facilities in it at all.

**Mshadoni Smith:** How many is not many?

**Shayna Pollock:** Off the top of my head, I couldn't tell you the exact number but I would say no more than 15. Ten.

**Karen Winger:** I had five. But four of them are parking lots.

**Shayna Pollock:** We have like one other parking lot and three actual admin or maintenance facilities so that's it.

**Mshadoni Smith:** Okay. Great. That actually gives us a better sense of kind of the scope of the plan.

I think I'm going to move on to next question if that's okay.

Anthony wants to know what is the name of the software you procured or are procuring for the regional TAM software procurement? I heard you guys talk about tableau. But is that what you guys are using? So ARC is not an operator agency. You guys are the regional MPO, and Gwinnett is an operator agency, but you are not the TAM plan author. So this question may be a little challenging for you guys because I'm not sure if he's asking what your actual asset management software is. Anthony, if you are still on, can you please clarify the type of software and ladies, if you happen to know or if you think you can answer this question without that clarity, please feel free to. Otherwise I'm going to move on to the next question.

**Shayna Pollock:** I can add a little bit more to that.

So we're both part of the project. So Georgia regional transit authority which runs both commuter bus and operators the toll express lanes, any toll lanes in Georgia, they're the lead agency on procuring the transit asset management software partly because they need to find one that does both transit assets and tolling assets as well and then they offer to conclude ARC any of the tier two, any other folks in the region that participated either to buy in or from Gwinnett's perspective, we're just going to be able to export out our data to feed in so that way ARC has the tools they need, Greta has the tools they need and anybody else, we can use one procurement and one tool for the region. Hopefully that covers the question. I think it does.

**Karen Winger:** And we have not selected or released our RFA. It should be going out within the next couple months, if not by the end of the year, very early next year.

**Mshadoni Smith:** Okay. Great. Thanks, ladies.

The next question from Carl, as a tier-two agency, they're part of their state's plan and the state coordinates with the MPO. He wants to know are there any requirements on the operator to provide more information than what is submitted to the MPO by the state. I'm going to ask Dwayne to chime in on this one and then open it up to you ladies.

**Dwayne Weeks:** What we asked our transit providers and MPOs and the state DOTs to do is develop their own written provisions and their own agreement on what type of data they're going to share, how they're going to set performance targets, how often they'll update their targets and their plans and their information. We have a lot of tier-two providers that are also located in the urbanized area and the MPO boundaries, some of them receive funding from the MPOs. Others are purely outside of the MPO planning boundaries and are within the state DOT. And we see funding solely from the state DOT.

So it's ultimately going to depend upon your specific region and your area. If you are in a non-urbanized area and participating in a tier two group plan, with the state DOT, then no, you just

work directly with your state DOT. But if you are in a metropolitan planning area, urbanized area boundaries and you receive some allocation of funding from that MPO, then you should really coordinate with your MPO about tier two targets in that metropolitan planning area. I apologize there's not a black-and-white clear answer but it really depends upon your specific situation in your region. If in doubt, I would coordinate and communicate with your planning partners in your area.

**Mshadoni Smith:** Yeah. I echo that that as a transit operator, in a group plan, you want to have those lines of communication open with your group plan author which in this case would be your state DOT, just to find out what their process is in in order for communicating with the MPO, just so that you're in the know. You don't want to find out at some eleventh hour that the state DOT expected you to do some communication so it's always good to be kind of up front and make those inquiries early on.

I'm going to go ahead and jump to the next question. So Scott wants to know, speaking of fiscal years, is there a push for alignment. I'm not sure if he's asking you ladies specifically or asking FTA in general, and I'm going to answer for generally that for the TAM planning purpose, there is a desire to have an alignment of the fiscal years. However, we realize that this is a new process and there are existing procedures that are already in place in cycles and we would not want to disrupt or usurp any existing data collection or analysis methodologies that people have in place by requiring a fiscal alignment. However, we do anticipate that over time that these cycles are going to naturally merge where the TAM plan information is available and can be funneled into the planning process, kind of seamlessly. It may feel a little bit kind of hacky right now but as the program matures, it will hopefully, and this is our intention, naturally flow together. But ladies, I'm going go ahead and let you guys answer that as well as far as if there is a push from your level for aligning those fiscal years.

**Shayna Pollock:** There definitely isn't, and I would say that one of the -- the kind of tightrope that we try to walk here at ARC is that it is really important for us not to infringe upon what the systems the operators already have in place and we like to work kind of within what they have while also ensuring that we're providing technical assistance and making sure the region can act as cohesively as we can without impinging on their personal authority and autonomy as granted agencies so I don't see that as being something we push for in the future.

**Mshadoni Smith:** Okay, thank you.

The next question, should our keeping track of TAM regional targets be brought up in our TAM coordinated agreement such as the memorandum of understanding, must we mention deadlines or specific timelines in the agreement for transit to submit their targets for us to track? I'm assuming this is an MPO asking this question with regard to their transit operators in their region.

**Dwayne Weeks:** This is Dwayne Weeks with office of planning. Within those memorandum of agreements or metropolitan planning agreements or other written provisions, you should have provisions for how frequently you will update your performance targets, how often you



would share the data, what level of data would be shared between the transit providers and the MPO, and the frequency that you would revisit those targets. And if you have been having historic difficulty in opining the correct information or timely information from your planning partners in your region, I would push that issue within update to your written provisions or agreements. Once folks sign an agreement, it's really hard to get out of that. So I would highly recommend that if you historically have had issues with folks not stepping up to the plate, not being active participants in your metropolitan planning process, updating your agreements, and then obtaining those commitments, is the place to do it. FTA are not going to review and approve your metropolitan planning agreements. Those are your local agreements and we're not going to specify what level of detail should be in them. But I would recommend that you try to push what you need to push to help support your local planning process within those agreements and update them as needed.

**Mshadoni Smith:** I'll add on to that, that it should be clear the responsibilities, because the transit operators have certain responsibilities under the TAM rule whereas the MPOs have certain responsibilities under the planning rule, and it should be clear who the responsible party is for those data. So that it is not confusing who is basically on the hook for certain data points.

This next question from Margie, do bus stops/shelters count as individual facilities? No, they do not. Take a look at our TAM web page. We have several resources that can help you identify what is and is not considered an eligible asset for your TAM plan. And I'm assuming you're an MPO, because everybody else has finished their TAM plans and would already know that that is not included. So I'm just going to share with you -- do we have that web link somewhere in the presentation?

**Mshadoni Smith:** Under FTA intro is our web link, but I'll ask Ursula to put it in here as well so you guys can have it readily accessible.

Let me go to the next question. I think it's from Chase. Regarding the performance targets for facilities, you mentioned including parking lot. Is this required in the TAM plan? I'm from a tier two agency with only six buildings. Karen, do you want to address that question?

**Karen Winger:** Because we only had the five facilities in total, we ended up evaluating them all. For the park-and-ride lots with the commuter bus service, even though I said they're just park-and-ride are lots, they're critical to the service because if something happens to those lots, we have no -- half of the service is just gone. That's why we include it in the lots, it's just as important as our maintenance and operations facility.

**Mshadoni Smith:** All right. Thank you. I'm going to kind of go out of order really quick here because we're losing Dwayne to another meeting. So I'm going to have him address Keith Miller's question. He wants to know, even though this may not be the correct form for this question, but he wants to know, do state DOTs have to develop separate statewide transit asset targets?



**Dwayne Weeks:** Hey, Keith.

You know, it depends upon the specific state, right? There are some states that are the owner/operator of all the transit asset management assets within the state. Like there's New Jersey transit and Maryland transit administration and Connecticut department of transportation, operates a lot of public transit. Those states may very well want to set statewide targets for all their assets because they're operating a statewide system.

There's other instances where the state is the tier two group plan sponsor, where they'll be developing a group plan for all the 5310, 5311 subrecipients. They very well should establish a performance target for all the subrecipients in consultation and coordination with the subrecipients throughout the state.

There may be different targets in a large urbanized area than there are in the rural areas but many of the rural vehicles tend to run up a lot more miles than the urbanized areas so they may agree to have separate targets in urbanized areas with the big MPOs versus the rural areas where you have got a different life cycle for many of those vehicles.

It's going to depend upon their specific circumstance and that area. There isn't a requirement that they have one statewide target per se.

But depending upon the specific needs, there are some states that Rhode Island, for example, where you would establish a statewide target because it's a relatively small state and Rhode Island divisional public transportation operates all the public transit in that state. It's going to vary within a specific circumstance, you know.

**Mshadoni Smith:** Dwayne, Keith added additional information to his question, New Jersey has assets outside of state boundaries and he's wondering about New Jersey required to set separate targets required only for assets within the state boundaries.

So Keith, I'm going to suggest you contact Dwayne or myself directly so that we can have a more specific conversation with you. But I also want you to consider are you talking about the TAM target, or are you talking about the planning target? Because that will also affect the answers that we can give you, because it is unclear when you're talking about the operating agency if you are talking about the TAM targets or if you are talking about the planning targets. I'm sure there are many different ways to skin that cat. But I'm going to go ahead and let Dwayne go to his other meeting and I'm going to continue to answer these questions with the ladies for another four minutes, and whatever we don't get to here, we will follow up with. Thank you, Dwayne.

**Dwayne Weeks:** Thank you

**Mshadoni Smith:** Laura asks, do you use asset management software? I'm looking at getting software. Ladies, I'm guessing she's asking what kind of software you guys use and I believe you already answered that question. Laurie, please add that to the chat pod. Maybe clarify what type of software you are talking about, wasn't already answered.

Jeanette, you caught me, I said that wrong in the discussion earlier. It is percentage of facilities under 3.0 on the term scale. I apologize I didn't have the performance measure in front of me. You are correct. Below 3.0. Not at 3.0. Below 3.0. Thank you.

Another question is clarifying the spelling error. I believe that Dwayne actually addressed these additional clarifications you provided as far as timelines and deadlines in your potential coordinated agreement. So hopefully that answers that question for you. If not, also please add that into the chat pod.

We talked to Keith already about that question. New Jersey transit. He's going to follow up with Dwayne and myself.

Uday wants to know, TAM group plan participants reporting on annual NDT reporting, what difficulties and challenges are we facing? As for this year, all transit program providers are required to report to NTD. I don't know if it's as of this year, but transit providers have been required to report to NTD for some time. If you are talking about your 5310, that may be a different scenario. So your group plan sponsor or participate, unclear. I think you are Utah DOT, is that right, Uday? And you're doing a group plan for your 5310s and 5311s, in which case some of your 5311 may already have been reporting directly to NTD and they would continue to do so, but as a participant in your group plan, you would report their targets. I would kind of need you to clarify this question a bit more to understand what question you are asking. I'm also going to suggest that this may not be the forum. I want to talk about the planning and town interaction. I know that the NTD can be daunting for those that have not had to report to it before. But let's talk offline a little bit and see if we could get some more clarification.

Some resources provided.

Uday again, some rural recipients will have challenges providing information with regard to annual reporting. Again, I think you're talking about N TD annual reporting.

Hope we can give them more time to understand the basics of TAM participation and compliance topics such as reporting. Uday, I want to suggest there's a resource, the TAM group plan sponsor workbook which provides some roles and responsibilities for the sponsor and the participants that I would suggest you take a look at to maybe that a little bit clearer with your participants, what type of data, what type of timeline, how you should handle that.

So with that, guys, I am going to sign off.

I want to thank our presenters again for their time today. And I want to thank you all for your time as well. Especially given the scenario we had last month. Shayna and Karen, thank you, and also to my counterpart, Dwayne, and to all of you for participating.

Please feel free to fill out this exit poll and hopefully we will talk again soon.

Thank you so much.