

ECONWORKS EXPERT TASK GROUP MEETING 2016 Quarter 2 Update: Summary & Next Steps

GoToMeeting

Thursday, 06/30/16 (2 P.M. to 3 P.M. EST)

ATTENDEES (in Bold):

<u>Members</u>	<u>Liaisons & Others</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alan Dybing, North Dakota State University • Darnell Grisby, American Public Transportation Association • Ben Gruswitz, Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission • Kelly Gwin, Georgia DOT • Jeff Harris, Utah DOT • Bill Keyrouze, Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations • Michael Kies, Arizona DOT • Subrat Mahapatra, Maryland State Highway Administration • Sebastian Montagne, North Carolina DOT • Ben Orsbon, South Dakota DOT • Steve Polzin, University of South Florida • Eric Randall, Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments • Joseph Schofer, Northwestern University • David Schwartz, Kansas DOT • Jeff Sudmeier, Colorado DOT • Kevin Verre, Nevada DOT 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ryan Endorf, Federal Highway Administration • Steve Fitzroy, Economic Development Research Group, Inc. • Brian Gardner, Federal Highway Administration • Matthew Hardy, AASHTO • Bryan Hong, AASHTO • Kristin Hull, CH2M • Stefan Natzke, Federal Highway Administration • Amanda Rutherford, Federal Highway Administration • Valentin Vulov, Federal Highway Administration • Karen White, Bureau of Transportation Statistics

NEXT STEPS

- Bryan Hong will distribute the EconWorks Case Studies 1-pager to the ETG.
- Minutes from this quarterly update will be sent out to the ETG.
- AASHTO and FHWA will ask the ETG which of its members are members of TRB committees.
- ETG members will spread the word about EconWorks and contribute case study candidates.

SUMMARY

1. Welcome and Roll Call

On June 30, 2016 at 2:03 P.M. (EST), Bryan Hong welcomed the EconWorks Expert Task Group (ETG), and began the meeting by taking attendance and describing the GoToMeeting platform. The attendees were asked to mute their phones if they were not speaking to the group. ETG Chairman Jeff Sudmeier shared opening remarks and outlined the agenda for the afternoon.

2. Review Agenda

The ETG began by reviewing the Vision and Goals that were determined during its first meeting in December, 2015. There were no objections or comments to these items. Bryan Hong added that the minutes and PowerPoint slides from this meeting would be sent afterwards.

3. 2016 Quarter 1 Action Item Review

After thanking Jeff Sudmeier, Bryan Hong mentioned the progress of several action items from the ETG's last meeting in March.

- First, the latest version of the EconWorks **marketing plan** was sent to the ETG before the call. The coordinating team reviewed it over the past quarter with other AASHTO staff, and received feedback to focus on government affairs and communications officials, given their access to both practitioners and those in the local community (i.e. cities, chambers of commerce). A marketing working session for further development and strategy with FHWA and the Volpe Center is scheduled for 14 July. The intent is to add to the document and have opportunities for involvement by all.
- Second, the **selection committee** that will review the applicants for the Request for Proposals (RFP) was finalized.¹ After the committee's work is concluded, the full ETG will be apprised of the final decision.
- Lastly, Brian Gardner shared an update about **TIGER grant applications**. Access to these materials and benefit-cost analyses would have to come from the proposing agencies themselves rather than the Office of the Secretary of Transportation because of concerns over sensitive and proprietary content. However, FHWA has compiled a database of the publicly available TIGER data and reviewed them to identify potential projects for case studies. The first round of review is complete and now the second level review for complex entries and general QA/QC has begun.

4. 2016 Quarter 2 Updates¹

- From May 2015 to early April 2016 there were 6,064 first-time visits to the EconWorks website. The estimated average number of repeat visitors was 3,741, with 37 direct visits to pages in the forum section with questions and answers.
- Work has continued on updating the [Economic Analysis Training module](#) located on the website. Bryan Hong played a demonstration of the module slides provided by the contractor as an example of the change in graphics. Jeff Sudmeier asked what the timeline is for the revisions. Bryan answered he was not sure of the exact date, but that it would be before the next quarterly progress meeting.²
- The EconWorks program was discussed when Matt Hardy made a trip to California from June 6 to 8 where he discussed SHRP2 products with Caltrans officials.
- An AASHTO meeting for State environment, planning, and performance management officials in San Antonio, Texas featured a conversation about how to engage USDOT on other ways to look at economic impacts over a long period of time.
- In addition to the Maryland State Highway Administration's recent use of EconWorks, other states have been utilizing the product. Valentin Vulov explained how twelve states and MPOs are working to implement the case studies and tools. Three case study projects are done with

¹ For further details, please refer to the "EconWorks Expert Task Group Q2 Meeting Quarterly Status Update" document below.

² **Update:** The agreed final release date is July 25, 2016, after which the module will be tested in a focus group.

reports including wider economic benefits, and are either in final form or being finalized. FHWA will be working with AASHTO to make the final reports available to the grant recipients.

5. Case Studies Development Discussion

The scope-of-work was completed for EDR Group to develop the RFP. This will ultimately enable and challenge one recipient to both do the work in constructing these studies and help brainstorm other ways to outreach about EconWorks. It is currently in development and will be released soon.

Bryan Hong asked the ETG if it knew of any channels we should be aware of for distributing the RFP. There was discussion about whether to engage companies. Sebastian Montagne suggested going back to EDR Group's slides to draw on what types of projects it considered useful. He also said that using private data and partnering with private industry may help develop case studies. Valentin Vulov reiterated the importance of adding transit and freight cases. Lastly, the ETG was reminded that its feedback on proposing projects for consideration as potential case study candidates was needed. Bryan will send members the 1-pager developed to provide guidance on how to identify such projects.

6. Marketing and Outreach Updates & Discussion

ETG members were asked if there are ways they could assist in advocating EconWorks from a marketing perspective.

- Jeff Sudmeier said it could help to share with local MPOs in order to generate interest in using the tools.
- Stefan Natzke mentioned an opportunity exists to reach out to academic programs focused on economic development, or other agencies that are involved in that issue.
- Sebastian Montagne shared that engaging thought leaders (stakeholders in different areas) would be beneficial. He also advocated for providing material to push out in a strategic way through different platforms by multiple people, and then observing the surges of interest to measure what is working.
- Steve Polzin thought that the 2016 presidential campaign provided a unique opportunity given the candidates' mentions of infrastructure. He also said differentiating EconWorks by communicating the variation in economic impact among projects with different costs.

7. ETG Involvement

The group then brainstormed ways the ETG can be more involved.

- Jeff Sudmeier said that outreaching through TRB would be useful in generating interest among committees and their members. ETG members will be surveyed to see what committees are represented in the group.
- Alan Dybing mentioned that he will be participating in a REMI conference meeting this July in Ann Arbor, Michigan. He will include EconWorks as part of his presentation.

8. Final Questions/Topics As-Needed

Karen White asked if there had been any further consideration on branding EconWorks, including active promotion of the EconWorks website. It was acknowledged that doing so would help with recognition, even as the website continues to appear at or near the top of search queries. There were no further questions or miscellaneous topics from the ETG.

9. Review Next Steps and Adjourn

Bryan Hong thanked participants for their time and effort in joining the meeting. The ETG was advised that the next quarterly update meeting would take place in September 2016 either by phone or webinar. With no further business the meeting adjourned at 2:50 P.M.

MEETING ATTACHMENTS (2)

- ETG Meeting 3 Agenda (Word)
- ETG Meeting 3 Status Update (Word)

Meetings

- FHWA and AASHTO continued to conduct weekly coordination meetings throughout the quarter to discuss budget planning, meeting preparations, and improvements to the product housing.
- “Connecting the DOTs” – the Joint Meeting of AASHTO’s Standing Committees on Environment (SCOE), Planning (SCOP), and Performance Management (SCOPM) from June 20 to 23 featured a discussion on how to access case study candidates for EconWorks during the SCOP Freight Planning Workgroup. The Case Studies 1-Pager document and The Works 3x5 informational card were available, as well.
- Caltrans: Matt Hardy traveled to California from June 6 to 8 to provide a presentation on overall SHRP2 capacity product efforts, including EconWorks.

Website

- Economic Analysis Training Module: AASHTO contracted with Patricia Thompson to update the website-based module. Efforts include re-recording the presentation material, redesigning the graphics and text, and placing strategic learning checks throughout that earn professional credit.
- Analytics: The following figures were tracked from May 2015 to early April of 2016.
 - Direct visits to pages in the EconWorks Forum: 37
 - First-time visits to the website: 6,064
 - Estimated average repeat visitors to the website: 3,741

Marketing and Outreach

- Met with AASHTO staff and plan to gain more input from the Volpe Center.
- A Figures & Facts 1-pager is in development for interested people or agencies.

Case Study Development

- It was determined that TIGER grant applications were infeasible to use as a source for candidates.
- The scope-of-work was completed for developing the RFP.
- The following ETG members and liaisons volunteered to serve on a selection committee to review the applicants from the Request for Proposals, which will be presented to the entire group.

First Name	Last Name	Affiliation	Email	Phone
Mara	Campbell	CH2M	mara.campbell@ch2m.com	
Steve	Fitzroy	EDR Group	sfitzroy@edrgroup.com	(617) 338-6775 (x207)
Brian	Gardner	FHWA	brian.gardner@dot.gov	(202) 366-4061
Darnell	Grisby	APTA	dgrisby@apta.com	(202) 496-4887
Matthew	Hardy	AASHTO	mhardy@aaashto.org	(202) 624-3625
Bryan	Hong	AASHTO	bhong@aaashto.org	(202) 624-7827
Sebastian	Montagne	NCDOT	smontagne1@ncdot.gov	(919) 707-0954
Jeff	Sudmeier	CDOT	jeffrey.sudmeier@state.co.us	(303) 757-9063
Valentin	Vulov	FHWA	valentin.vulov@dot.gov	(202) 493-0339

Other Updates

- The Maryland State Highway Administration released a new report ([Estimating Economic Impacts of Multimodal Transportation Improvements](#)) on March 22 documenting the first successful integration of the wider economic benefits analysis (C11) suite of tools with a statewide transportation model.

EconWorks Expert Task Group Q2 Meeting Agenda

June 30, 2016 • 2:00 – 3:00 PM Eastern

Webinar Link: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/8658473024308048388>

Webinar Number: 1 (877) 309-2071

Audio PIN: Shown after joining the webinar

THURSDAY – JUNE 30, 2016

Timing	Agenda Items
2:00 PM (5 min)	Welcome and Rollcall <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome & Overview Rollcall of members, liaisons, observers
2:05 PM (5 min)	Review Agenda
2:10 PM (5 min)	2016 Quarter 1 Action Item Review
2:15 PM (5 min)	2016 Quarter 2 Updates
2:20 PM (10 min)	Marketing and Outreach Updates & Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How can the ETG help AASHTO and FHWA implement these strategies and achieve these goals?
2:30 PM (10 min)	Case Studies Development Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do you know of any channels to distribute the request for proposals?
2:40 PM (15 min)	ETG Involvement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How/what can you as an ETG member do more effectively than FHWA and AASHTO? In what other items or areas of EconWorks do you want input?
2:55 PM (5 min)	Final Questions/Topics As-Needed
3:00 PM	Review Next Steps & Adjourn <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Save-the-date for the next phone/webinar meeting (tentatively September 2016)