From: Ryan, James <FTA>
To: Fisher, Ronald <FTA>
Sent: 1/2/2008 7:58:20 AM
Subject: FW: Honolulu Cost Validation Spot Report
Attachments: Spot Report #1 - Honolulu Cost Validation - May 2007 - Draft.doc

I have read only the text of the e-mail, not the attachment, but fear that this is borderline useless. At the end of AA, a large question is whether the scope has large uncertainties in it. How does the application of "FTA's cost database model" get at project-specific problems with the scope definition? And how does it shed any light on the uncertainties that should be highlighted – and costed – before we evaluate and rate the project? Think about this sentence:

"Finally, the provisions for contingencies were found to be adequate and appropriate for a project in the pre-PE phase."

That's handwaving BS that has nothing to do with the Honolulu project.

From: Tahir, Nadeem <FTA>
Sent: Wednesday, January 02, 2008 12:51 PM
To: James, Aaron <FTA>; Fisher, Ronald <FTA>; Sinquefield, Robyn <FTA>; List-FTA-Everyone in TPE; List-FTA-Everyone in TPM-20; List-FTA-Regional Administrators and Deputies; Tuccillo, Robert <FTA>; Steinmann, Richard <FTA>; Steinitz, Timothy <FTA>; Pugh, Sharon <FTA>; Leiphart, Kristine <FTA>; Sledge, Kimberly <FTA>; Oliver, Cheryl <FTA>; Barnes, Linda <FTA>; Schruth, Susan <FTA>; Biehl, Scott <FTA>; Blakesley, Jayme <FTA>; Miller, Severn <FTA>; VanWyk, Christopher <FTA>; Day, John <FTA>; Butler, Peter <FTA>; Keamy, Matthew <FTA>; Danzig, Nancy <FTA>; Penner, Larry <FTA>; Destra, Michele <FTA>; Glenn, Brian <FTA>; Dittmeier, Tony <FTA>; Whyte, Dudley <FTA>; Wheeler, William <FTA>; Gatto, Dominick <FTA>; Crist, Peggy <FTA>; Lyssy, Gail <FTA>; Roeseler, Joan <FTA>; Beckhouse, David <FTA>; Cover, Don <FTA>; Sukys, Raymond <FTA>; Leighow, Dave <FTA>; Feldman, Kenneth <FTA>
Subject: RE: Honolulu Cost Validation Spot Report

This spot report is being forwarded to the PE checklist mailing only because it may be useful and of interest to those who are not directly involved. To those directly involved, the Honolulu project team, we are scheduling a conference call to discuss any clarifications or questions etc.

The report is a comprehensive review of the project at completion of AA and at the point when the grantee is getting ready to ask for entry into PE. It concludes:

In summary, the cost validation analysis has determined that the total project cost estimates are reasonable, falling marginally below (roughly $42 million or less than 2%) the expected cost estimated using FTA's cost database model. This amount is less then the $206 million included for unallocated contingencies or project reserves. However, this low overall project cost variance is also the product of offsetting positive and negative cost variances across the eight cost categories recognized by the database cost model. Specifically, when the variance analysis is limited to "hard asset" costs alone, including track and structures, facilities, systems, stations, and vehicles, project cost estimates are found to marginally exceed the database predicted costs by roughly $95 million (or roughly 4.5%), again quite reasonable for a pre-PE project. Moreover, much of this positive cost variance for these "hard" cost elements were determined to be reasonable based on the proposed design characteristics of the Honolulu project (e.g., higher aerial structures as compared to those found for LRT projects documented in the FTA cost database). In contrast, the combined project cost estimates for special conditions, ROW, and soft-costs were found to be roughly $135 million, or 10%, lower than expected based on prior project experience as represented in the FTA database. This level of variation suggests that those last three categories may benefit from further consideration by Honolulu project staff.

Finally, the provisions for contingencies were found to be adequate and appropriate for a project in the pre-PE phase. Also, the assumed inflation rates used to adjust project costs from $2007 to $YOE were found to be reasonable but not conservative, based on recent cost inflation for construction projects nationally and local Honolulu consumer cost inflation.

Thanks.

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Sent: Monday, December 31, 2007 2:52 PM
To: Tahir, Nadeem <FTA>; Fisher, Ronald <FTA>; Sinquefield, Robyn <FTA>; List-FTA-Everyone in TPE; List-FTA-Everyone in TPM-20; List-FTA-Regional Administrators and Deputies; Tuccillo, Robert <FTA>; Steinmann, Richard <FTA>; Steinitz, Timothy <FTA>; Pugh, Sharon <FTA>; Leiphart, Kristine <FTA>; Sledge, Kimberly <FTA>; Oliver, Cheryl <FTA>; Barnes, Linda <FTA>; Schruth, Susan <FTA>; Biehl, Scott <FTA>; Blakesley, Jayme <FTA>; Miller, Severn <FTA>; VanWyk, Christopher <FTA>; Day, John <FTA>; Butler, Peter <FTA>; Keamy, Matthew <FTA>; Danzig, Nancy <FTA>; Penner, Larry <FTA>; Destra, Michele <FTA>; Glenn, Brian <FTA>; Dittmeier, Tony <FTA>; Whyte, Dudley <FTA>; Wheeler, William <FTA>; Gatto, Dominick <FTA>; Crist, Peggy <FTA>; Lyssy, Gail <FTA>; Roeseler, Joan <FTA>; Beckhouse, David <FTA>; Cover, Don <FTA>; Sukys, Raymond <FTA>; Leighow, Dave <FTA>; Feldman, Kenneth <FTA>
Subject: RE: Ccomments RE: New Starts Checklists for FD/FFGA/LONP

Thanks Nadeem:

We will address your comments.

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Sent: Monday, December 31, 2007 5:49 PM
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Subject: Ccomments RE: New Starts Checklists for FD/FFGA/LONP

Aaron: Thanks for attaching the 2006 exit criteria. It is an excellent and very comprehensive document and is obvious that a lot of work went into it. However, I would suggest that the criteria could use some tweaking and updating. Some elements could use some clearer definition so that they don't mean different things to different folks, some elements called for may be too detailed for a PE level, others that could be less detailed. For example it requires several significant elements to be complete. The definition of complete could use some clarification. To me it means that drawings for those elements are 100% signed and sealed and standards and specifications for those elements are final and I would suggest that we add that clarification. Since the focus is on making sure we have a reasonably solid cost estimate at the completion of PE, the more detailed work should be called for in areas that are significant cost drivers. For example, the level of detailed called for on the type and design of the traction power system and the OCS system and the tension requirements of the OCS cable may not have a major bearing on the overall project cost and so that level of detail may not be critical in PE. Some areas of soft costs such as the cost of final design, design management, construction management, real estate costs which can in total range from 30 to 50 percent of the overall project cost should have more definition. They should also be included here with some grantee commitment to the proposed level of effort for these elements. The Project Management Plan addresses these elements but it needs a stronger tie in to project cost.

Some comments. Thanks.

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Sent: Monday, December 31, 2007 11:25 AM
To: Fisher, Ronald <FTA>; Tahir, Nadeem <FTA>; Sinquefield, Robyn <FTA>; List-FTA-Everyone in TPE; List-FTA-Everyone in TPM-20; List-FTA-Regional Administrators and Deputies; Tuccillo, Robert <FTA>; Steinmann, Richard <FTA>; Steinitz, Timothy <FTA>; Pugh, Sharon <FTA>; Leiphart, Kristine <FTA>; Sledge, Kimberly <FTA>; Oliver, Cheryl <FTA>; Barnes, Linda <FTA>; Schruth, Susan <FTA>; Biehl, Scott <FTA>; Blakesley, Jayme <FTA>; Miller, Severn <FTA>; VanWyk, Christopher <FTA>; Day, John <FTA>; Butler, Peter <FTA>; Keamy, Matthew <FTA>; Danzig, Nancy <FTA>; Penner, Larry <FTA>; Destra, Michele <FTA>; Glenn, Brian <FTA>; Dittmeier, Tony <FTA>; Whyte, Dudley <FTA>; Wheeler, William <FTA>; Gatto, Dominick <FTA>; Crist, Peggy <FTA>; Lyssy, Gail <FTA>; Roeseler, Joan <FTA>; Beckhouse, David <FTA>; Cover, Don <FTA>; Sukys, Raymond <FTA>; Leighow, Dave <FTA>; Feldman, Kenneth <FTA>
Subject: RE: See my comments RE: Please Review: New Starts Checklists for FD/FFGA/LONP

In August 2006, TPM-20 distributed the attached proposed PE Exit criteria to TPE, the Regions, and others. As spelled out in the document our recommendation was to have the necessary Circular (C5200) and the Project Construction and Management Guidelines revised to reflect the new criteria. Most important, we incorporated the exit criteria (now referred to as completion of AA/PE criteria based on feedback from TPM-1/2) into a preliminary working draft of the new Project Management Rule Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking to provide an opportunity for public review and comment. TCC is preparing the official ANPRM based on TPM's April 2007 draft submittal. Our policy on how the detailed exit criteria should be dealt with in the public domain has been discussed at several meetings. One position is that the criteria have been covered in a broad sense by an earlier version of the New Starts Guidance and no further public notice is warranted, not that I support this position. It had also been suggested that we prepare a Federal Register Notice to announce the changes, which seemed to be the most expeditious manner to achieve our goal but there was not consensus on this. Regarding the proposed circular changes, as I understand it, the Circular revisions were being held up until after the New Starts NRRM had been finalized but this month we were informed by TPE that it is ok to proceed with the circular revisions now. The bottom line is that the exit criteria is essentially complete but our policy on how to get it in the public domain is not.

If there are other questions or concerns regarding the exit criteria please let me or Tony Zakel know.

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Subject: RE: See my comments RE: Please Review: New Starts Checklists for FD/FFGA/LONP

In the last few years we have been emphasizing that the level of engineering necessary in PE should be determined by what outcome we want from PE. When our legislation (TEA-21) required us to evaluate and rate a project before it was admitted into FD, FTA had to define what constituted the completion of PE – something that we had not previously done because a clear distinction between PE and FD was not a program requirement. We defined that PE was completed when the environmental process was completed, i.e. when the ROD was signed. A few years afterwards it became obvious that many agencies felt the need to perform more engineering than that required for the ROD, because more effort was necessary to firm up the scope and

cost prior to FD. In May 2006, FTA issued its "Guidance on New Starts Policies and Procedures". That guidance provides a definition of FTA's expectations for PE stating definitions of PE such as completion of NEPA or 30% of design should be replaced "by an expectation that PE will result in project scope and cost estimates and financial plans that have little, if any, need for change after approval of the project into final design". That's a long way of saying that we should not be characterizing PE as generally 30% of design.

To further define what constitutes the completion of PE, we stated at the end of the section describing our expectations for PE: "FTA is developing 'exit criteria' which will define in greater detail the conditions that must be met at the completion of preliminary engineering". It strikes me that referencing criteria, if we have it, is needed. If we do not have it, do we know when it will be available?

From: Tahir, Nadeem <FTA>
Sent: Wednesday, December 26, 2007 5:25 PM
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Subject: See my comments RE: Please Review: New Starts Checklists for FD/FFGA/LONP

My suggestions for the Final Design Checklist are as follows:

1. Revise to say "PE level (generally considered 30%) Project Plans, Drawings, Design Criteria, Standards and Specifications with refined project definition for overall project, tracks or routes, stations, stops and other structures. Include 100% complete and signed final project alignment plan and profile drawings. (This is important because if they have not fixed the alignment in PE, they are not done with PE and should not be allowed to enter final design).
2. Final Geotechnical Baseline Report signed by a Certified Geologist or Registered Professional Engineer which includes all the soil properties and design parameters necessary to initiate Final Design.
3. Project Sponsor Staff Organization that will manage Final Design and Construction.
4. Documentation of Passenger Level Boarding. Documentation of level boarding design for all stations or determination of infeasibilities in each station area. Documentation of station sizing and station circulation facilities and systems in conformance with the ridership forecasts.

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Subject: Please Review: New Starts Checklists for FD/FFGA/LONP

Good afternoon,

As you know, FTA has been developing checklists that define project sponsor submittals for each stage of project development (Preliminary Engineering, Final Design, etc.) for New Starts projects. So far FTA has finalized the checklist for entry into Preliminary Engineering, which benefited from FTA staff feedback, especially from the regional offices. Now we would like to gather comments on the attached draft checklists for Final Design approval, Full Funding Grant Agreement approval, and Letter

of No Prejudice requests. (The Final Design checklist has been circulated before, but a few changes have been made, so we wanted to give everyone another chance to provide comments before it is finalized.)

Please share these with members of your staff, if applicable, and provide comments to Robyn Sinquefield and Kim Nguyen by January 9.

Thanks!

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