



## TPB REGIONAL PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SUBCOMMITTEE

### Virtual Meeting Summary: October 26, 2021

#### ATTENDEES - Total: 16

Deanna Archey, MCDOT (Chair)  
Martin Barna, DASH  
Ronetta Zack-Williams, NVTC  
Patricia Happ, NVTC  
Nick Ruiz, VRE

Catherine Vanderwaart, WMATA  
Melissa Kim, WMATA  
Xavier Harmony, WMATA

Andy Meese, TPB  
Antonio Castañeda, TPB  
Brian Hayes, TPB  
Eric Randall, TPB  
James Li, TPB  
Lyn Erickson, TPB  
Mark, Moran, TPB  
Joe Davis, TPB

#### AGENDA

- 1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS, Deanna Archey, RPTS Chair**
  - The meeting was called to order at 12:05 PM along with a roll call of online attendees.
- 2. RIDE ON REIMAGINED STUDY SCOPE OF WORK, Deann Archey, Montgomery County**
  - Deanna provided an overview of the Scope of Work for the “Ride On Reimagined Study”. The bus network assessment will review travel patterns from OD analyses, integrating all of Ride On’s services, improving transit infrastructure, land-use development, technology improvement, operational and safety improvements and public engagement. The study will kick off in Fall 2021 and is estimated to last 18-24 months. Implementation of the study in anticipated for FY24.
  - Discussion: Will this be a full system redesign? Will other transit agencies / stakeholders be included? Yes to both, agencies will be invited to participate during the public engagement process.
- 3. BLUE/ORANGE/SILVER CORRIDOR CAPACITY & RELIABILITY STUDY, Melissa Kim, WMATA**
  - Melissa briefed the subcommittee on the BOS Study, stating that the third round of engagement will kick off this Fall. She provided an overview of the purpose of the study, corridor challenges, the identified range of alternatives and next steps. Melissa noted that forecasted housing and job growth is anticipated to increase crowding in trains and stations along the corridor and that the current system will not be able to meet expected growth. She noted that interlining (the process of running multiple lines through a single route or tunnel) exacerbates issues of delays and crowding. She also noted that the study aligns with needs for federal project planning requirements (pre-NEPA planning process), and that there is no commitment to build until a funding agreement is established. The study is on its final stage of selecting a preferred alternative (based on evaluation of alternatives, public engagement and cost-benefit analysis). The alternatives include: a no-build scenario, a lower capital cost

alternative (enhanced bus service, dynamic rail scheduling, improving rail capacity, etc.), new Metrorail line – blue to Greenbelt / blue to National Harbor / silver express with a new separated tunnel / silver to New Carrollton. Lastly, she noted that the Board’s selection of a locally-preferred alternative is anticipated in 2022.

- Discussion: How did has covid-19 impacted the analysis? We did not change the ridership impacts as we have yet to find a reliable model for covid-19 impacts. Who did the travel demand modeling for the study? Unsure, but will connect offline to send information. Would the study consider a blue line extension further down into Virginia as mentioned in the Springfield-Quantico study? The study won’t because it’s focus is on the previous goals established, but core capacity expansion is a priority that is being reviewed.

#### **4. HIGH COST OF LOW BUS SPEEDS, Catherine Vanderwaart, WMATA**

- Catherine updated the committee on the new research being conducted out of WMATA’s planning office and bus priority team. She highlighted that over 12% of jurisdictions’ annual subsidy goes to traffic delay, and that widespread bus priority could make buses 5-20% faster and save 11,000 tons of CO2 annually (equivalent to 2500 cars) and reduce regional expenses. She also noted that bus speeds are falling, and that Metrobus trips are about 1/3 as fast as Metrorail. Catherine highlighted that low-income riders experience disproportionate traffic delay compared to all Metrobus riders and that with enough time savings, Metro can run the same service with fewer vehicles, potentially saving up to 200 buses during peak hours.
- Discussion: Where do bus speeds come from? NTD data to analyze long term trends. How are you considering the implementation of ZEBs in this process? It hasn’t been closely linked yet; future work is needed to understand how fleet electrification will align with bus priority expansion moving forward. Will this presentation be available in a report? A technical appendix is available. Is this an action of the BTP? It is intended to support those action items. It also arose out of conversations around the operating costs of Metrobus (particularly slow buses and the need for bus priority).

#### **5. FTA CLIMATE CHALLENGE PLEDGE, Antonio Castañeda, TPB**

- Tony briefed the committee on the FTA’s Climate Challenge pledge available to all transit service providers in the US. He noted that the challenge calls on transit agencies to develop climate action strategies with measurable goals to achieve GHG emission targets and that FTA will provide technical assistance to support agencies in development of their plans or other strategies. Lastly, he noted the deadline to pledge is the upcoming Friday, Oct 29.

#### **6. PRIMARY TRANSIT CORRIDORS TRAFFIC TRENDS ANALYSIS, Antonio Castañeda, TPB**

- Tony updated the committee on the traffic trends analysis along primary transit corridors in the TPB region, first explaining the methodology for selecting the key routes and then highlighting key findings of improving and worsening congestion and travel times along corridors and across the day. He noted that increased travel times in September 2021 were seen primarily along routes MD-97, MD-193, MD-255, US-29, Pennsylvania Ave SE and I-395. He also highlighted that PM peak period travel times and congestion were higher than mornings and that Thursday and Friday throughout September showed the widest fluctuations of travel times. Lastly, he noted that travel times have increased along most corridors over the last 3 months, and in particular over the last year, but that travel times had not fully returned to pre-pandemic levels.



**7. OTHER BUSINESS / ADJOURN, Deanna Archey, Chair**

- Eric updated the committee on the PBPP transit safety targets discussions which were held at last month's RPTS and which were continued at the TPB Technical and Board committees.
- The meeting was adjourned at 1:20 PM.
- The next meeting is scheduled for November 23, 2021
- All meeting materials are available for download from the subcommittee's website:

<https://www.mwcog.org/events/2021/3/1/tpb-regional-public-transportation-subcommittee/>

