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**TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD  
MEETING MINUTES**

January 21, 2021

**VIRTUAL MEETING**

**MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES PRESENT**

Charles Allen, TPB Chair – DC Council  
Lezlie Rupert – DDOT  
Mark Rawlings – DDOT  
Kristin Calkins - DC Office of Planning  
Brooke Pinto – DC Council  
Ella Hanson – DC Council  
R. Earl Lewis, Jr. – Maryland DOT  
Jeff Hirsch – Maryland DOT  
Jason Groff – Charles County  
Reuben Collins – Charles County  
Patrick Wojahn – College Park  
Denise Mitchell – College Park  
Kai Hagen – Frederick County  
Kelly Russell – City of Frederick  
Neil Harris – Gaithersburg  
Dennis Enslinger – Gaithersburg  
Emmet V. Jordan – Greenbelt  
Craig Moe - Laurel  
Bill Goddard - Laurel  
Gary Erenrich – Montgomery County Executive Office  
Evan Glass – Montgomery County  
Victor Weissberg – Prince George’s County Executive Office  
Deni Taveras – Prince George’s County Legislative  
Bridget Donnell Newton – Rockville  
Kacy Kostiuk – Takoma Park  
Mark Korman – Maryland House of Delegates  
Mark Sinner – Virginia DOT  
Norman Whitaker – Virginia DOT  
Canek Aguirre - Alexandria  
Christian Dorsey – Arlington County  
Dan Malouff – Arlington county  
David Meyer – City of Fairfax  
Walter Alcorn – Fairfax County  
James Walkinshaw – Fairfax County  
David Snyder – Falls Church  
Robert Brown – Loudoun County  
Kristin Umstattd – Loudoun County  
Pamela J. Sebesky – Manassas  
Jeannette Rishell – Manassas Park  
Ann B. Wheeler – Prince William County  
Victor Angry – Prince William County  
Mark Phillips - WMATA

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**MWCOG STAFF AND OTHERS PRESENT**

Kanti Srikanth  
Chuck Bean  
Lyn Erickson  
Mark Moran  
Tim Canan  
Paul DesJardin  
Tom Gates  
Bryan Hayes  
Sergio Ritacco  
John Swanson  
Abigail Zenner  
Deborah Etheridge  
Ken Joh  
Charlene Howard  
Abdul Mohammad  
Dusan Vuksan

Dan Koenig - FTA  
Nancy Abeles – CAC  
Sally Kidalov – Fairfax County  
Christopher Laskowski – DC Council

**Materials referenced in the minutes can be found here:**  
[mwcog.org/events/2021/1/21/transportation-planning-board/](http://mwcog.org/events/2021/1/21/transportation-planning-board/)

**1. VIRTUAL PARTICIPATION PROCEDURES, MEMBER ROLL CALL, AND VIRTUAL PUBLIC COMMENT OPPORTUNITY**

Chair Allen said that the meeting was being recorded and broadcast and that the process for asking questions and voting would be the same as past meetings. After each item members would be asked to comment or vote by jurisdiction.

Ms. Erickson conducted a roll call. Members that were present are listed on the first page of the minutes.

Ms. Erickson said that two public comments were received. She said that the Coalition for Smarter growth suggested that there are critical gaps in the proposed Visualize 2045 planning assumptions and analysis. They recommended that two land-use scenarios be modeled, and that the climate change mitigation study should be completed sooner than planned. She said that another letter was received from the Northern Virginia Transportation Alliance. This letter shared their transportation priorities statement, including the transportation priorities of 24 regional business and civic organizations. The complete text for both comments can be found with the meeting materials.

**2. APPROVAL OF THE DECEMBER 16, 2020 MEETING MINUTES**

Ms. Sebesky made a motion to approve the December 2020 TPB meeting minutes.

Mr. Angry seconded the motion.

The minutes were approved by the board.

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### **3. TECHNICAL COMMITTEE REPORT**

Mr. Groth said that the Technical Committee met on January 8 and reviewed several items including the UPWP presentation that was on the board agenda. He said the committee also discussed the many elements in Visualize 2045. He said that the committee was briefed on the Transportation Land-Use Connections Program. He said that this program is incredibly beneficial. He said that the committee also received the comments from the Coalition for Smarter Growth. The complete summary can be found with the meeting materials.

Ms. Kostiuk asked for staff to respond to the comments from the Coalition for Smarter Growth.

Mr. Srikanth said that the work has begun to start the planned detailed technical analysis examining the levels of outcomes in various strategies that will be needed to realize the region's greenhouse gas reduction goals – both for 2030 and 2050; that staff plans to complete the analysis by December 2021, noting that this is quite an expedited schedule, since the last time we worked on something like this it took about 18 months. The conformity analysis of the Visualize 2045 update will begin later this year with results being shared with the board around April of 2022. By that time the board will have the findings of both – the greenhouse gas technical analysis identifying the levels of outcomes needed to achieve greenhouse gas reduction goals and the analysis of the updated Visualize 2045 Plan showing the levels of outcomes it would provide. This comparative analysis will help identify the gap and inform continued planning and programming decisions.

Mr. Srikanth said that regarding incorporating the regional housing targets into the Visualize 2045 update, especially the additional number of housing units being called for by 2030 and 2045, that the Planning Directors of the TPB member jurisdictions are currently engaged in examining how this can be accommodated in the local housing plans consistent with their planning and zoning framework. Staff expects that as the Planning Directors complete this assessment, they will reflect the changes in future updates to the forecasts they provide TPB for our use. We are obliged to use the official forecasts from the Planning Directors. We are expecting Planning Directors to provide us with an updated round of forecasts, round 9.2, which we believe reflects changes compared to round 9.1, but does not fully reflect the housing goals. Work on fully integrating the housing goal continues and we expect there to be a major update once the 2020 Census results become available. Mr. Snyder asked if Mr. Srikanth could summarize his comments and send them to the board members.

Mr. Srikanth said he would do that.

Mr. Phillips said that WMATA wants to see the greenhouse gas emissions and VMT targets. He suggested that one of the scenarios be a direct set of targets for VMT reductions.

### **4. COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT**

Ms. Abeles said that the CAC met 10 times in 2020 to fulfill its mission. She thanked staff for their help. She said that the committee provided substantive input into three products approved by the TPB. These include the safety resolution, the Participation Plan, and the CAC update. She said that the CAC encourages the TPB chair to meet regularly and establish a strong working relationship with the CAC chair and the board, to keep each group invested and engaged with each other. The committee also encouraged staff to produce more sharable information material. The committee also expressed an interest in learning more about what is going on in each of the member jurisdictions. Finally, the committee feels there is a lack of commitment from the TPB members to support implementation of the Aspirational Initiatives. The complete CAC annual report can be found with the meeting materials.

Ms. Taveras asked for more specificity about the issues that needed more support.

Ms. Abeles described her experience living in Montgomery County and said that the support for the Aspirational Initiatives varies by jurisdiction.

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## 5. STEERING COMMITTEE ACTIONS AND DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Srikanth said that his written report can be found with the meeting materials. He said that the Steering Committee approved three TIP amendments, two from Maryland and one from the District of Columbia. He said the Steering Committee allocated additional money to fund a Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside project that needed additional funding. He said that the TPB is currently accepting applications for the Transportation Land-Use Connections Program. He said that the TPB is also soliciting applications for improving roadway safety in the region.

Mr. Srikanth said that a memo, on page 59 of his report, documents that three northeastern and mid-Atlantic states – Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island – have joined the District of Columbia to sign a memorandum of understanding committing their jurisdictions to the transportation and climate initiative program, once the program is developed. This program caps the amount of greenhouse gas and CO2 emissions that can be released from fossil fuels used by on-road vehicles. Once the cap has been established, fuel suppliers will have to purchase permits to sell gasoline. Revenue generated from those permits will be used for implementing projects and programs to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. He said Maryland and Virginia are working with the other states developing the program details, and have not yet signed the memorandum of understanding.

Mr. Srikanth said that as part of Visualize 2045 staff is conducting focus group sessions as part of the qualitative public opinion research.

Mr. Srikanth said that the latest round of federal funding to help mitigate the economic impact of COVID-19 pandemic provides \$50 million nationwide for the enhanced mobility program. He said this program assists seniors and individuals with disabilities. He said the TPB administers this program in the region and will be receiving \$590,000. Staff will develop a proposal for how to distribute this funding in the region.

Mr. Srikanth encouraged board members to share information about Visualize 2045 with their constituents. He also announced the retirement of Mr. Mohammed who worked at COG for 32 years.

The board applauded Mr. Mohammad for his service.

Mr. Allen asked if there was a timeline for the new enhanced mobility funding.

Mr. Srikanth said the process should be the same as in the past. He said that exemptions have been made to distribute the funds as expeditiously as possible. He said he would be sharing the plan for distributing these funds with the board next month.

Mr. Lewis said that work on the transportation climate initiative is moving forward in Maryland.

## 6. CHAIR'S REMARKS

Chair Allen said that this is his second time serving as TPB chair. He said that he has been tasked with more fully integrating considerations of equity, diversity, and inclusivity into the transportation planning and programming activities of the board. He said that in 2021 the board and staff will be working on the 2022 update to the TPB long-range transportation plan, Visualize 2045.

Chair Allen said that recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic has put members of the board in a position to do their best to aid in the recovery from disruptions and setbacks caused by the pandemic, not just as representatives of individual jurisdictions but also as representatives of the region as a whole. Reflecting on the last year, he shared two observations related to the pandemic. First, is how a reduction in peak period demand can significantly reduce congestion, reduce energy consumption, and improve air quality. Second, is how precarious the state of public transportation is. He said he anticipates that 2021 will have two distinct phases. In the first, personal and public health issues are put on a path of recovery. Next is work recovery. For that second part, the TPB needs to focus on recovery actions that address the inequities that have been highlighted and exposed in the last year.

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Chair Allen named Mr. Aguirre to replace Ms. Kostiuik as chair of the Access for All Advisory Committee (AFA).

## **ACTION ITEM**

### **7. APPROVAL OF 2021 APPOINTMENTS TO THE TPB'S CAC**

Mr. Hayes described the recruitment process for the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) and said that 41 applications were received from 15 member jurisdictions. He said that 29 of the applicants had not served on the CAC; that 12 are returning members; and that 15 graduated from the TPB's Community Leadership Institute. He said that TPB officers made nominations with input from staff who used selection criteria. His presentation listed the nominated members. He encouraged the board to approve the officer nominations and said more detail can be found in his memo.

Ms. Newton made a motion to appoint members to the 2021-2022 CAC.

Ms. Sebesky seconded the motion.

The motion was approved.

Chair Allen named Ms. Walton from the District of Columbia to serve as CAC chair for 2021.

## **INFORMATION ITEMS**

### **8. TRANSPORTATION IMPACTS OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC IN THE NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION**

Mr. Canan presented a video and presentation to review impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic in the region. The information was from multiple sectors and from multiple departments of COG. The presentation highlighted analysis of transportation and economic impacts.

Mr. Allen noted the importance of this work for the recovery post pandemic. He asked for more information about the additional work that Mr. Canan described.

Mr. Canan said the additional work would include both adding to the dataset and revisiting the findings regarding impacts as the year goes on.

Mr. Philips noted that the transit impacts on ridership can be attributed to supply and demand. He explained that there were fewer riders but there were also some closures of routes and other schedule changes that would also result in fewer riders.

Mr. Snyder noted that when looking at this analysis there are positives and negatives. He gave an example of a positive being fewer vehicles on the roads but a negative being major job losses in hospitality. He noted the importance of understanding these observations for future transportation planning.

Ms. Taveras noted the severe inequities related to who has been most impacted by COVID-19. She asked about analysis related to health inequities in different zip codes across the region and particularly noted the higher rates of infection for Black and Latino residents.

Mr. Bean responded that the COG Board received a presentation from the American Public Health Association on that very topic. He spoke about COG's work with the region's health officials and other ongoing work on health equity. He said the health officials committee could follow up with Ms. Taveras.

Mr. Glass followed up on Ms. Taveras' comment noting that there has been press reports about inequities during the pandemic and especially for workers who cannot work from home. He noted the importance of having bus and other transit service for these groups. He asked if there was a way to

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extrapolate data about the workforce that is not federal and might be continuing to ride transit during the pandemic. He said this could be helpful for budgeting purposes.

Mr. Canan said this was something he could look into as more data become available about the economic indicators and demographic data. He noted these data tend to become available later but could be useful for finding out more about these workers.

Mr. Meyer shared that his jurisdiction opened two new electric vehicle charging stations. He also said that during the pandemic, Fairfax made its buses free and that the number of people riding those buses was significant and they were commuting to jobs. He noted the significant cost savings to the rider and noted that it would not cost very much to provide free transit. He wondered if this could be something to consider after the pandemic.

Ms. Kostiuk also noted the importance about collecting data about race and ethnicity for equity analysis. She also noted that many people have changed their behavior during the pandemic, and she wondered how much of that change would continue as we recover. She also asked if staff knew what other MPOs were analyzing.

Mr. Canan noted that his team has looked into what other MPOs are doing and that the upcoming TRB conference would be a further opportunity to learn more.

Mr. Wojahn said that people are turning to biking and walking during the pandemic has been a missing piece in this analysis. He also noted that rising fatalities on the region's roads showed that it continues to be unsafe for people biking and walking. He said there needs to be more information about people increasingly biking and walking.

## **9. REGIONAL TRAVEL SURVEY BRIEFING: CHANGE IN OBSERVED TRIPS SINCE 2007/2008**

Due to technical difficulties this topic was delayed until after the Unified Planning Work Program presentation. Since that item took more time, the presentation on the Regional Travel Survey was moved to next month's meeting to give the board enough time to hear the presentation.

## **10. THE UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM, SIMPLIFIED**

Ms. Erickson said that as an MPO, the TPB does three main things: meets federal regulations, provides a forum for regional transportation planning and coordination, and provides data to decision makers. She explained that the UPWP is a budget document that describes how staff carry out the metropolitan transportation planning process. She said that next month she would highlight proposed revenues and expenditures for FY 2022, which begins on July 1, 2021.

Ms. Erickson described annual elements of the draft work program in detail. It takes a lot of resources to staff the many committees that carry out the planning process. She said the program is expected to go to the board for approval in March.

Mr. Snyder asked how the board can ensure that local and state planning priorities align with the MPO's regional priorities.

Mr. Srikanth said that TPB staff is sharing the TPB's policy documents with local decision makers to create more awareness about regional priorities and to ask them to consider regional priorities in their project selection process.

## **OTHER ITEMS**

## **11. ADJOURN**

No other business was brought to the board. The meeting adjourned at 1:59 p.m.