

**METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD**

777 North Capitol Street, NE
Washington, D.C. 20002-4226
(202) 962-3200

**MINUTES OF THE
TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD
May 15, 2013**

Members and Alternates Present

Monica Backmon, Prince William County
Melissa Barlow, FTA
Eulois Cleckley, DDOT
Helen Cuervo, VDOT
Emad Elshafei, City of Rockville
Marc Elrich, Montgomery County
Gary Erenrich, Montgomery County
Lyn Erickson, MDOT
Jason Groth, Charles County
Rene'e Hamilton, VDOT
Sandra Jackson, FHWA
John D. Jenkins, Prince William County
Shyam Kannan, WMATA
Julia Koster, NCPC
Carol Krimm, City of Frederick
William Lebegern, MWAA
Tim Lovain, City of Alexandria
Eric Olson, Prince George's County
Mark Rawlings, DC-DOT
Paul Smith, Frederick County
David Snyder, City of Falls Church
Kanathur Srikanth, VDOT
Harriet Tregoning, DC Office of Planning
Todd M. Turner, City of Bowie
Jonathan Way, Manassas City
Patrick Wojahn, City of College Park
Scott K. York, Loudoun County
Sam Zimbabwe, DDOT
Chris Zimmerman, Arlington County

MWCOG Staff and Others Present

Ron Kirby
Gerald Miller
Robert Griffiths
Nicholas Ramfos
Andrew Meese
Eric Randall
Rich Roisman
Jane Posey
Andrew Austin
Deborah Kerson Bilek
Sarah Crawford
Karin Foster
Ben Hampton
Bryan Hayes
Debbie Leigh
Deborah Etheridge
Michael Farrell
Mark Moran
Dusan Vuksan
Chuck Bean COG/EO
Bill Orleans HACK
Judi Gold Councilmember Bowser's Office
Patrick Durany Prince William County
George Phillips Prince William County/Transportation
Christine Green Safe Routes to School Nat'l Partnership
Katrina Tucker Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland
Nick Alexandrow PRTC
Pierre Holloman City of Alexandria
Nikia Turner CTV News
Crispus Gordon III DC Council/Chairman Phil Mendelson
Carroll George Private Citizen
Katherine Lizotte Arlington, VA (CLI Trainee)
Monte Edwards DC – The Committee of 100 on the Federal City
Cherian Eapen Montgomery County/Individual
Stephen Brimer City of College Park
Randy Carroll MDE
Cindy Pefleac USRC
Jeanette Tejede deGomez AAA Mid-Atlantic
John B. Townsend AAA Mid-Atlantic
Alex Verzosa City of Fairfax
Wendy Block Sanford City of Fairfax
Mike Lambert Kimcey-Horn Assoc.
Mike Lake Fairfax County DOT

1. Public Comment on TPB Procedures and Activities

Mr. Edwards of the Committee of 100 on the Federal City spoke about the importance of commuter rail in decreasing traffic congestion in the District of Columbia and around the region. He stated that two-thirds of automobiles in D.C. during rush hour are from out of state, and that D.C. has the highest percentage increase in daytime population due to commuters. Compared to similar cities, he said, D.C. has the highest percentage of commuters that drive, and the lowest percentage of workers that use commuter rail.

Mr. Edwards identified the Long Bridge as an example of an obstacle to expanding commuter rail capacity. He said that CSX rail lines that operate south of the bridge use diesel power, and that rails in the north use electric. He suggested that by removing constraints on commuter rail the region could accommodate more commuters. He asked that the Long Bridge study be included on a future TPB agenda. Copies of his remarks were submitted for the record.

Mr. George, a mechanical and design engineer, spoke about driving practices that cause slowdowns during peak traffic, specifically drivers that stop in acceleration lanes when entering highways. He advised replacing acceleration lanes with through lanes that extend so that drivers can get up to speed before merging. Copies of his remarks were submitted for the record.

Chairman York told Mr. Edwards that he will work with staff regarding the Long Bridge Study as an agenda item for a future Board meeting.

Mr. Zimmerman agreed on the importance of discussing the Long Bridge Study further. He stated that he believes that it is the right time to discuss increasing commuter rail capacity to the level seen in other cities.

Mr. Zimbabwe commented that DDOT is conducting the Long Bridge Study, and that DDOT would be able to present at a future meeting.

2. Approval of Minutes of April 17 Meeting

A motion was made to approve the minutes of the April 17 TPB Meeting, which was seconded and passed unanimously.

3. Report of Technical Committee

Ms. Erickson said that the Technical Committee met on May 3 and reviewed three TPB agenda items, including: data describing changes in regional commuting patterns and mode-shifts; an update on the Regional Transportation Priorities Plan; and a summary of the Green Streets policy

workshop. She said that the committee also discussed traffic signal timing and optimization; the status of TIP and CLRP amendment inputs; VDOT's road functional classification update process and status; DDOT's commercial curbside loading zone program; and an update on the TPB's new web-based clearinghouse called the Transportation Planning Information Hub for the National Capital Region.

4. Report of the Citizens Advisory Committee

Mr. Epps, who serves as the Vice Chair for Maryland for the CAC, provided the CAC report. He said the CAC held a productive meeting on May 9th, and that the agenda included a briefing and discussion about the regional transportation priorities plan, a spirited discussion of a letter that was submitted to WMATA regarding the Momentum strategic plan, a briefing and discussion on a potential regional green streets policy, and an update on the TPB transportation plan information hub website.

With regard to the regional transportation priorities plan, Mr. Epps said that the CAC remains extremely interested in the progress of the regional transportation priorities plan. He added that the CAC would like some more clarity on how the plan's final priorities will be selected, and that the CAC would like to determine how to offer comprehensive feedback into the plan before the plan is finalized. He said that the CAC believes it can serve a critical role in providing additional input beyond the planned public opinion survey. He added that the CAC appreciates that it may be given the opportunity to take the survey after the desired sample information is collected, and that the CAC would like to know how this survey feedback would be used to finalize the plan's priorities. He mentioned that if it is determined that taking the survey is not the best mechanism for CAC participation, then the CAC would like to work with the TPB to identify an appropriate and specific avenue for how the committee's input might be incorporated.

Mr. Epps also summarized a letter that the CAC submitted to WMATA detailing its collective comments regarding WMATA's strategic plan, Momentum, and mentioned that the CAC received a briefing and update on a potential regional green streets policy as well as an update on the regional transportation information hub website that is under development.

Chair York thanked Mr. Epps, and said that he would work with TPB staff and follow up with CAC Chair Still to determine ways that the CAC can advise the TPB as the Regional Transportation Priorities Plan nears completion.

5. Report of Steering Committee

Mr. Kirby said that the Steering Committee met on May 3 and approved three resolutions. The Virginia Department of Transportation requested the first resolution to add funds for interchange improvements at Rolling Road and the Franconia-Springfield Parkway. The second resolution, requested by the Maryland Department of Transportation, added funding for construction to the Urban Reconstruction Project. The Maryland Department of Transportation requested a revision

to the Urban Area boundary for the Federal Functional Classification System in the Maryland counties of the Washington Region.

Mr. Kirby distributed a packet of letters sent/received, including one letter that the TPB sent to the Maryland state leadership that expressed the TPB's appreciation for passing new legislation that increases transportation funding. A second letter sent to Secretary LaHood of the U.S. Department of Transportation by the TPB commented on the new performance-based planning and programming process mandated under MAP-21. He said that the letter encouraged USDOT to build on existing performance requirements instead of creating new requirements. The letter also suggested that USDOT keep traffic congestion measures on a broad and simple level, while allowing regional agencies to do the work of disaggregated performance measurement and target-setting. He said that the final item in the packet was the agenda for the Community Leadership Institute that occurred earlier in the month.

Mr. Turner stated that he expected Maryland's Governor O'Malley to sign the transportation-funding bill into law the next day.

6. Chair's Remarks

Chairman York welcomed Ms. Cuervo, the Virginia Department of Transportation's new representative on the TPB. He said that Ms. Cuervo is the administrator for the Northern Virginia District Office. Chair York also recognized recent participants in the TPB's Community Leadership Institute (CLI), and asked Stephen Brimmer to speak on behalf of the participants.

Mr. Brimmer said that the CLI provided a great opportunity to meet and learn with citizen leaders from around the region. He added that the CLI helped him and his classmates to understand the level of planning and collaboration that is necessary in order to plan for the region's transportation needs. He thanked the TPB for the hosting the CLI, TPB staff for facilitating the course, and Kathy Porter for moderating.

Chair York called forward the CLI participants who were present – Stephen Brimer, Cherian Eapen, and Katherine Lizotte – and presented them with certificates.

ACTION ITEM

7. Approval of Amendment to Update Projects and Funding in the District of Columbia Section of the FY 2013-2018 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Mr. Zimbabwe said the resolution put forward makes the TIP consistent with the District's six-year plan. He said the resolution would update the TIP with project information and additional funding to reflect SAFETEA-LU and MAP-21 funding sources. He said DDOT developed the six-year plan in consultation with federal partners, and noted that there may still be some minor administrative modifications in the future. He added that the federal share for the current

program remains relatively flat, but that the proposed program includes a significant increase in local funding.

Mr. Zimbabwe made a motion to adopt Resolution R17-2013. Mr. Tregoning seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

INFORMATION ITEMS

8. Briefing on Changes in Regional Commuter Patterns since 2007

Mr. Griffiths provided a presentation on recent changes in regional commuter patterns and trends, particularly as it relates to the TPB goals of increasing transit use, reducing reliance on single occupancy vehicles for commuting, and having more workers live near their jobs. He described the data sets used in the analysis and provided an overview of caveats in using certain data. He summarized the main findings of the analysis. He said there was a big increase in the number of workers who lived outside of the region in the early part of the decade. He said that by 2011, that growth had flattened, in part due to the increase in housing opportunities within the region and close to employment centers.

Mr. Griffiths presented information on the number of workers added to the region since 2000, and provided information about the jurisdictions in which those workers chose to live. He summarized the change in mode share, noting that there was a reduction in single-occupancy vehicle commuting, a decrease in carpooling, and a significant increase in transit commuting throughout the region. He said transit mode share has increased in every jurisdiction since 2000. He said there were minimal overall changes in walking and biking, but that bike commuting significantly increased in the District of Columbia. He also provided information about how those trends changed within each jurisdiction.

Chair York asked how an individual would be counted if that person drives alone from Loudoun County to take Metrorail in Fairfax County.

Mr. Griffiths responded that the individual would be a transit user for the purposes of this analysis. He said the Census Bureau would count whatever portion of the trip is the longest distance, which would be up to the Census interviewers.

Chair York said it would be interesting to see the results of this analysis in ten years to understand the impacts of rail serving Loudoun County and the changing pattern of development there. He added that Loudoun County cannot currently meet the demand for its commuter buses.

Mr. Way said he does not see that the use of single-occupancy vehicles has changed much according to the analysis. He asked if that fact might raise the priority of congestion mitigation in the Regional Transportation Priorities Plan, because history suggests it is going to continue to be a major problem even with the efforts of transit.

Mr. Erenrich said it is important to remember that keeping the same transit mode share is a tremendously successful goal, as it means the transportation facilities are carrying many more thousands of workers at the same capacities. He said that the region has not made very many supply side transit improvements, but that we are getting more efficiency out of the current system. He asked if there is any statistical validity to breaking down data in any of the jurisdictions into sub-areas.

Mr. Griffiths said it would not be advisable to divide the jurisdictions with this dataset because the sample size is not large enough.

Mr. Zimmerman said that the ability to disaggregate the analysis would be important to understanding trends within jurisdictions, which is important when looking at trends at the regional level. He said it is interesting to see this fundamental change in the way people are getting around, which parallels the changes in the real estate market. He said the trend in the analysis for single-occupancy vehicles demonstrates a shift in commuting trends. He said the increase in transit mode share is striking because of the investments the region has not made in transit. He said he suspects that if the results were disaggregated, we would see that the biggest impact is in areas there the few investments were made. He said he wondered what the impact would be if the region made significant transit investments.

Mr. Zimmerman referred to Chair York's comment about not having enough buses and said that if Loudoun doubled the number of commuter buses, the buses would likely be full. He said it is interesting that people choose to fill those buses, because it likely takes them longer than driving a single-occupancy vehicle, as the buses sit in the same traffic as everyone else.

Mr. Zimmerman said it is impressive that the region has held its transit mode share, but that fact is not impressive compared to other countries, where the number of people taking transit, walking, and biking is growing. He said it is unclear what people would choose to do in the future: do they really want to be in their car, or do they have no other choice than to drive their car? He said he wondered if the small investments show great potential to further shift mode share away from single-occupancy vehicles because people will have a choice when commuting.

Mr. Griffiths said that the Census Bureau would release a data set later in the summer that should allow analysis at the Transportation Analysis Zone (TAZ) level over a five-year period.

Mr. Kannan said he appreciates the work that went into this analysis. He encouraged staff to bring more information on this topic to the Board in the future for discussion. He said his first reaction was that it is fantastic to have increased transit usage. He said, as a steward of the system, he is concerned that WMATA be able to accommodate all of the growth in ridership. He said this analysis demonstrates that the region needs to look at this from the perspective of "what do we need to do about growth in transit ridership," rather than "what if ridership grows."

Mr. Kannan said he has several comments for further discussion. He said the region needs to consider the size of the transit infrastructure that would be necessary to actually hold all of these trips and be able to accommodate projected transit ridership assuming this trend continues. He

said the region also needs to examine the fundamental relationship between where jobs are locating and transit infrastructure investment. He said that the trends are showing that real estate seems to be moving to where the transit is, and wondered how the Board accounts for that in its local and regional plans and investments. He also said he wondered to what extent this analysis feeds back into the forecasts and alternatives scenarios, and would those results look different from the region the Board has currently projected.

Ms. Tregoning thanked Mr. Griffiths for his presentation. She said that one of the most interesting statistics was that 90 percent of recently added workers in the District both live and work in the District. She said many of these transit real estate investments are about changing the economy and tax base for the city. She said the analysis reflects a changing trend in workers insisting on living in a place where they can have transportation choices.

9. Update on the Development of the TPB Regional Transportation Priorities Plan

Mr. Kirby, referring to a PowerPoint Presentation, provided an update of the progress of the Regional Transportation Priorities Plan (RTPP). He summarized the project's historical timeframe and interim milestones, and discussed the administration of a web-based public opinion survey, which is underway and seeks to get reactions from a random sampling of 600 citizens on the importance of key challenges and strategies. He reviewed the content of the web-based survey, which has been developed in conjunction with an organization called MetroQuest. He provided information about key survey parameters, the survey's emphasis on RTPP strategies, survey administration including timeframe and desired sample size, visual content, and the survey's structure. He mentioned that the survey underwent beta tests with small groups of people before going live, and he showed some screen shots to illustrate how the survey appears to the user. He also reviewed the goals and challenges that have been identified as part of the RTPP development, as well as the strategies that have been developed to address these challenges. He said the strategies have been divided into three categories: near-term, ongoing, and long-term, and that people have the opportunity to suggest other strategies through the survey tool.

He summarized the next steps of the RTPP development schedule, which include a presentation of the draft outline of the Plan to the TPB at its June 19 meeting. After the survey results are compiled, he said there will be a TPB Work session in July, and that staff would present the draft Plan at the July 17 TPB meeting. He added that there would be a public comment period and additional engagement activities throughout the remainder of the summer, and that the final draft Priorities Plan would be presented at the September 18 TPB meeting.

He concluded his comments by stating the work of the RTPP is being integrated with the COG Region Forward Coalition's work on developing an Activity Center Strategic Investment Plan. He mentioned that he is also hoping to also establish a fairly formal link with Metro's Momentum strategic plan, since the strategies outlined in the RTPP are consistent with these other initiatives. He added that these efforts would benefit from mutual support as they move forward.

Mr. Way said that it would be interesting to ascertain if the TPB members' opinions reflect the opinions and priorities of the region's citizens, and suggested that TPB members also participate in the web-based survey.

Chair York acknowledged Mr. Way's suggestion, and said that participating in the survey could be entertaining.

Ms. Tregoning emphasized that the region enjoys steady growth, and said that changing land-use is the main contributor to the strategy that concentrates growth with more transit capacity. She advocated for re-designating this strategy as a short-term, rather than a long-term strategy. She also suggested developing a strategy that is solely focused on land-use in order to see an end product that is not conflated with other investments.

Mr. Kirby replied that the regional land use scenario is comprehensive and ambitious, and depends on transit capacity to support mixed-use land use.

Ms. Tregoning responded by stating that in the District, land-use strategies that bring jobs and housing together have resulted in increases in non-transit trips, such as walking and biking. She said that although it may take time to affect the entire region, places with high density could see the results of land-use changes very quickly.

Mr. Elrich said that there is general distrust in government, and that the cost of transit investment only represents a fraction of the broader expenses associated with providing quality of life improvements, such as schools and recreation opportunities. He added that the near-term strategies that were presented, such as improving access around bus stops and rail stations and alleviating bottlenecks, are heavily biased towards making investments in automobile-related transportation because of the relative costs associated with these strategies. He advocated for adding priority bus infrastructure as a near-term strategy, stating that it is probably as cheap – or cheaper – than the suggested road alternatives.

Mr. Kannan thanked Mr. Kirby, and said he was pleased to see the inclusion of a strategy that focuses on concentrated growth with more transit capacity, which he said seems like a logical next step from the Aspirations Scenario that was presented to the TPB in April. He added that three of the seven elements in Metro's Strategic Plan are included in the RTPP effort, including the eight-car trains, the Metrorail station enhancements, and the bus priority corridor network. He addressed Mr. Elrich's comment, and said that small investments that improve access around bus stops and rail stations are critical elements to progress. He pointed to the Forest Glen Metrorail station as an example, stating that 79 percent of the people who park at that station are coming from within a bikable or walkable distance, and that improvements to the physical infrastructure would help increase walking and biking trips.

Mr. Elrich emphasized that if significant funding is available to spend on investment, it should be used for things that truly mitigate the transit landscape, including the ability to provide quality transit service.

Chair York commented that jurisdictions such as Loudoun County would have to invest in road strategies such as alleviating bottlenecks in order to get people to use transit at all. He emphasized that each jurisdiction is going to view these strategies differently.

Mr. Kannan agreed that there are certain areas within the region that would need to make physical infrastructure changes on streets and sidewalks in order to make it easier and safer to access Metro stations and bus stops. He added that he is glad the survey asks respondents about costs, since it elevates issues of making tradeoffs.

Mr. Erenrich emphasized that the intent for the final product is to articulate regional priorities, including identifying the missing links in the regional plan, and the elements that require additional funding. He said there is value to building consensus on issues such as eight car trains and adding transit capacity, but that identifying missing regional links is also critically important.

Mr. Snyder asked if the survey inquires about individual mode choice. He wondered if knowing this would help inform decision-makers.

Mr. Kirby emphasized that the survey is being conducted on a random sample of 600 people. He added that he hopes that several priorities will come out of the RTPP exercise, and perhaps they will fall into high, medium, and low categories.

Mr. Turner acknowledged his past role in the RTPP Task Force, and said he would like to see the process completed. He added that he is impressed with the staff work that has gone into this effort. He said that, although there are different views of the RTPP at this point in the process compared with when it started, it will still be a useful tool to help inform decisions. He added that there will be additional discussion needed to inform decisions after the draft RTPP is released.

Chair York asked if there would be any way for Board members to take the web-based survey.

Mr. Kirby replied that Board members as well as other members of the public, including the CAC, would be welcome to take the survey after the desired 600 respondents have completed the survey.

Chair York acknowledged the importance of understanding the public's opinions before ascertaining TPB member's opinions.

10. Update on Next Steps for Considering a Regional Green Streets Policy for the Washington Region

Mr. Farrell, a member of TPB staff, presented findings from an April 8th workshop hosted by the TPB that discussed developing a regional Green Streets Policy. The workshop was a response to a letter sent by the Anacostia Watershed Restoration Partnership requesting that the TPB develop

a regional Green Streets Policy, similar to the TPB's adopted regional Complete Streets policy. He said that 90 agency staff and other interested parties participated in the workshop, where representatives from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and the Philadelphia Water Department presented alongside representatives of MDOT, VDOT, DDOT, Fairfax, Prince George's, and Arlington.

Mr. Farrell defined Green Streets as streets that involve the use of landscaping, trees, and design elements to capture and filter storm water runoff. He explained that as cities and suburbs continue to develop they create more impervious surfaces resulting in an increase to the amount of storm water contaminates runoff, which can increase the severity of flooding while also introducing more to water bodies.

He said that Philadelphia is responding to stormwater challenges using Green Streets approaches like rain gardens in conjunction with updating regulations and charging people and businesses according to the runoff that they create. He said that regionally, the District of Columbia has an active Green Streets program, and that Prince George's County implemented their Green Streets policy along with their Complete Streets policy in 2012. He said that other local agencies, like VDOT, are looking to encourage green approaches to address flooding and storm water issues in post-war developments that have no stormwater or sewer accommodation.

Mr. Farrell mentioned that the workshop participants found that storm water runoff needs to be reduced for environmental and legal reasons; in some instances green infrastructure is more cost-effective than traditional engineering solutions; and that external benefits of Green Streets include cleaner water supplies, beautification, reduced heat island effect, and improved property values. He said that challenges identified by the workshop include: agencies are still working out how to respond to new laws requiring green treatments; designing effective Green Streets is still a work in progress, especially as there is a need to adapt some designs to regional conditions; and that there was no consensus at present on a specific regional approach or policy. In order to make Green Streets work, a regional policy may make it easier for multiple agencies and developers to cooperate when implementing Green Streets.

Mr. Farrell said that TPB staff will compile current and best practices and develop options for regional approaches to a Green Street Policy, and will then bring this information before the TPB.

Chairman York said that he looks forward to studying Green Streets further. He acknowledged that Green Streets can be effective in creating a more attractive community, but he admitted that he is not sure how Green Streets can impact water filtration. He suggested that perhaps the future presentations could include more engineering detail. He also said that in Loudoun County, they are building water management ponds to help with filtration alongside road redevelopment.

11. Other Business

There was no other business brought before the TPB.

12. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 2:05 pm.