
**TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD
MEETING MINUTES**

March 16, 2015

MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES PRESENT

Charles Allen, DC Council
James Davenport, Prince William County
Allison Davis, WMATA
Marc Elrich, Montgomery County
Lyn Erickson, MDOT
Jay Fisette, Arlington County
Charles Glass, MDOT
Jason Groth, Charles County
Rene'e Hamilton, VDOT
John Jenkins, Prince William County
Shyam Kannan, WMATA
R. Earl Lewis, Jr. MDOT
Tim Lovain, City of Alexandria
Dan Malouff, Arlington County
Phil Mendelson, DC Council
Ron Meyer, Loudoun County
Martin Nohe, Prince William County
Mark Rawlings, DC DOT
Eric Shaw, DC Office of Planning
Elissa Silverman, DC Council
Victor Weissberg, Prince George's County/DPW&T
David Whitaker, Frederick County
Sam Zimbabwe, DDOT

MWCOG STAFF AND OTHERS PRESENT

Nicholas Ramfos
John Swanson
Andrew Meese
Ron Milone
Rich Roisman
Michael Farrell
Dusan Vuksan
Eric Randall
Jane Posey
Wendy Klancher
Charlene Howard
William Bacon
Jon Schermann
Wenjing Pu
Ben Hampton
Abigail Zenner
Sergio Ritacco
Lamont Cobb
Debbie Leigh
Deborah Etheridge

Chuck Bean	COG/EO
Stuart Freudberg	COG/EO
Paul DesJardin	COG/DCPS
Douglas Stewart	CAC
Bill Orleans	Resident
Pierre Holloman	Alexandria
Bob Chase	Northern Virginia Transportation Alliance
Eric Sutton	Transurban
Debbie Spielberg	Office of Councilmember Marc Elrich
Gregory M. Billing	Washington Area Bicyclist Association
Libby Garvey	Arlington County Board
Apostle S. Green	United House of Prayer
Norman Whitaker	VDOT
Maria Sinner	VDOT
Mike Lake	Fairfax County
Monica Backmon	Northern Virginia Authority
Sree Nampoothrin	Northern Virginia Authority
Patrick Durany	Supervisor Jenkins' Office
Frank Wiggins	ANC Commissioner 6E-03
Christine Hoeffner	VRE
Kari Snyder	MDOT
Arlen Herrell	District of Columbia
Tom Calcagni	AAA Mid-Atlantic
John B. Townsend	AAA Mid-Atlantic
Richard Price	Coalition for Smarter Growth

1. PUBLIC COMMENT ON TPB PROCEDURES AND ACTIVITIES

Several members of the public commented on the projects submitted for inclusion in the 2016 amendment to the Constrained Long-Range Transportation Plan (CLRP). The projects were up for board approval at the meeting under Item 7.

Greg Billing, of the Washington Area Bicyclist Association (WABA), expressed the enthusiastic support of his organization and its 5,800 members for the District of Columbia's proposal to expand its network of dedicated bicycle lanes at several locations throughout the city. He said the projects are a critical step in providing affordable, sustainable, and safe transportation opportunities for both District residents and commuters from surrounding jurisdictions. He highlighted two of the proposed projects—one on 6th Street NW and the other on Blair Road NW—both of which, he said, are very much needed and have undergone extensive study to find designs that serve the needs of bicyclists while minimizing the impact on automobile traffic and parking.

Apostle Green, speaking on behalf of the United House of Prayer in the District, expressed opposition to the District's bike-lane proposals and urged the TPB to remove them from consideration for inclusion in the CLRP. He said that the portion of the proposal on the 1200 block of 6th Street NW would take away parking for his church, something he said could be seen as infringing on his parishioners' constitutional right to freely assemble and worship. He reminded the TPB of its particular obligation in the regional transportation planning process to consider the concerns of underserved communities, including low-income and minority communities.

Frank Wiggins, an Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner from the neighborhood near the United House of Prayer, echoed Mr. Green's opposition to the District's bike-lane proposal. He said that while he and his constituents are not against bike lanes generally, they are against bike lanes on 6th Street NW, mainly because there are five churches in the corridor that will experience severe impacts on parking for their parishioners. He cited examples of many other churches in the city that have had to close because of limited parking. He also expressed concern about the increased congestion on 6th Street and nearby roads that could be caused by removing automobile travel lanes to make room for dedicated bike lanes.

Mike Forehand, of the Northern Virginia Chamber of Commerce, spoke in support of the proposed roadway projects in Virginia, especially the planned improvements to I-66 and I-395. He said that the projects would provide much-needed highway and transit capacity in heavily traveled corridors and connect key housing and employment centers. He said they are vital to supporting the region's economy and maintaining its position as a top business destination. He urged the TPB to include the projects in the air quality conformity analysis for the 2016 CLRP Amendment.

Tom Calcagni, of AAA Mid-Atlantic, also spoke in strong support of the projects proposed for inclusion in the CLRP. He said that AAA is supportive of a multimodal approach to transportation that combines additional road capacity with phased transit enhancements and expansion. He expressed his support for the District's bike-lane proposal, but said that modifications should be made to the project on 6th Street NW to avoid having adverse impacts on church parking. He also expressed support for a recently struck deal to widen a four-mile section of I-66 inside the Capital Beltway as part of Virginia's plans to add express toll lanes to the route. He noted a recent AAA survey that found that a majority of Virginia and District drivers oppose new tolling on I-66 without adding capacity to ease congestion.

Bob Chase, of the Northern Virginia Transportation Alliance, spoke in strong support of Virginia's proposals for I-66 and I-395 and urged the TPB to approve them to be included in the air quality conformity analysis. The projects, he said, were huge for the region, and he said that the state had

spent a lot of time and effort developing the projects. He said it would be a mistake not to allow them to move forward.

Bill Orleans, speaking as a member of the public, sought help from the TPB in advocating for expanding a planned March 30 summit on the future of Metro to include members of the public. He said that elected leaders should want to rally the enthusiasm of the rider base and others, not just a limited group of officials, many of whom, he said, were responsible for the decisions that have caused Metro to be in the degraded state it is today. He urged the Council of Governments, one of the main organizers of the summit, to consider allowing members of the public and others to attend the March 30 event.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 20 MEETING

A motion was made to approve the minutes of the February 17 meeting. The motion was seconded and approved.

3. REPORT OF THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

Tim Roseboom said the Technical Committee met on March 4. They discussed the following agenda items: updates to the list of major CLRP projects; the draft scope of work for the air quality conformity analysis; the FY 2017 Unified Planning Work Program; and the FY 2017 Commuter Connections Work Program.

The committee recommended approval for three items: the air quality conformity draft scope of work, the FY 2017 Unified Planning Work Program, and the FY 2017 Commuter Connections Work Program.

The committee discussed the following informational items: policy language updates for the National Capital Freight Plan; Round 9 of the COG Cooperative Forecasts; and updates on the Unfunded Capital Needs Working Group.

The committee recommended briefings to the Board on both the National Capital Freight Plan and the Round 9 Cooperative Forecasts.

The committee also discussed the following items: MAP-21 performance measures; the combination of the Access for All committee and the Human Services Transportation Task Force into a new committee; a Virginia resource document related to air quality conformity compliance; a survey from the Multi-Sector Working Group for Greenhouse Gas Emissions to jurisdiction staff; the process for selecting projects in the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program Set Aside; and the Street Smarts program.

4. REPORT OF THE CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Mr. Stewart said that the CAC was glad that TPB Chairman Lovain was able to brief the committee during the March meeting about his priorities for the year, which include working on the regional unfunded project list, addressing structural issues at WMATA, and continuing to embed the Regional Transportation Priorities Plan in the planning process.

Mr. Stewart said that members of the CAC come from throughout the region and have varying levels of knowledge about transportation issues. He added that all committee members share a passion for transportation issues and connecting communities. He said that the CAC could support the TPB with outreach to local communities to help them understand the regional transportation planning process. He said that the committee discussed setting priorities to help focus committee work for the year. He said that the committee wants to focus on improving outreach at the TPB and staying involved in the unfunded capital needs working group.

Mr. Lovain said that it was a pleasure to meet the committee, and the he would appreciate any assistance the group might offer.

5. REPORT OF STEERING COMMITTEE

Kanti Srikanth reported that the Steering Committee met on March 4. The committee approved a TIP amendment from VDOT to add \$10 million to widen Route 1 in Prince William County in the US 1/123 interchange project; add \$55 million for preliminary engineering, right-of-way and construction of tolling structures on I-66 inside the Beltway; and add \$17 million for study and preliminary engineering for I-66 eastbound direction widening. The committee also approved a staff proposal to combine the Access for All committee with the Human Services Transportation Task Force.

Mr. Srikanth reviewed the letters sent and received in the mailout packet: a letter from Virginia Senator Mark Warner acknowledging the TPB's thank you letter for his role in enacting the FAST Act and describing his initiative to pursue an independent infrastructure financing authority for infrastructure at the federal level.

Mr. Srikanth provided the Board with the following updates and announcements: the status of TIGER projects and funding draw down; activities related to the Metrorail safety following the January 15, 2015 L'Enfant Station smoke incident; and a memo on the Street Smart campaign, to run April 11 to May 8.

Mr. Srikanth, referring to additional letters sent and received distributed during the meeting, noted a letter from the Maryland Transit Administration regarding their addition of \$25,000 to the Guaranteed Ride Home Program in the Baltimore area. The TPB's Commuter Connections program manages the Guaranteed Ride Home Program for the Baltimore region.

6. CHAIR'S REMARKS

Chairman Lovain stated his support for combining the Access for All committee and the Human Services Transportation Task Force. He noted that as the former chair of both committees, he had frequently asked why the Committees could not be combined given the large overlap of members and the synergy between the work of the two Committees. Mr. Lovain said that while at the beginning there may have been reasons why they were separate, he thought that it makes eminent sense for them to be combined. Mr. Lovain also said that he is pleased that Mr. Charles Allen, vice-chair of the Board, has graciously agreed to serve as the chair of reconstituted committee. Noting that Mr. Allen certainly has an interest and good background on this issue that will really be helpful he thanked Mr. Allen.

Chairman Lovain said that the Unfunded Capital Needs Working Group meeting had been postponed to April. He encouraged changing the name of the group to the Long Range Planning Task Force and invited TPB members to participate.

Mr. Lovain acknowledged the opening of the DC Streetcar to passenger service on February 27. He noted the streetcar had eight thousand riders on its first day and two to three thousand in daily ridership.

Mr. Lovain noted that the Metropolitan Area Transportation Operations Coordination Committee would host a technical session on incident response on April 20, with a regional forum for a broader audience on April 27.

Mr. Lovain also commented on the March 30 forum on WMATA. He acknowledged that the forum, hosted by COG and the Board of Trade, would be closed to public attendance. He said the agency has two issues, short-term challenges, referred to as "nuts and bolts" by WMATA CEO Paul Wiedefeld, and long-term issues related to governance and funding. The forum would allow elected officials to convene and discuss these issues.

ACTION ITEMS

7. REVIEW OF COMMENTS RECEIVED AND APPROVAL OF PROJECT SUBMISSIONS FOR THE AIR QUALITY CONFORMITY ANALYSIS FOR THE 2016 CLRP AMENDMENT AND THE FY 2017-2022 TIP

Mr. Srikanth briefed the board, referring to two memos provided to board members. The memos include summary descriptions of the projects submitted for inclusion in the 2016 CLRP amendment, details about technical corrections made to some of the projects submissions, the formal resolution to approve the projects for inclusion in the air quality analysis, and a summary of comments received on the projects during a recent 30-day comment period. He also said that a complete record of all comments received was available on the TPB website.

Mr. Srikanth referred to his presentation and summarized the main comments received on the project submissions. He said the complete packet of each comment received, totaling approximately 140 pages, was available on the TPB website. He said his memo grouped the comments into 24 separate points and included responses to each of those points. He reviewed the 24 grouped comments and responses including response to comments made both in support of and in opposition to the District of Columbia's bicycle-lane network projects, especially a segment in the 1200 block of 6th Street NW, and Virginia's I-395 express toll lane projects. Reviewing the comments on the I-395 Express Lanes extension project he noted a resolution that the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission had adopted urging the TPB to seek a commitment from VDOT for a reasonable guaranteed annual transit payment from the toll project sufficient to implement the transit and TDM projects to be implemented in this corridor will be identified. He said that VDOT had worked with the Northern Virginia jurisdiction representatives to provide this commitment, and the resolution for this Board action that was mailed out had been revised to include language speaking to VDOT's commitment on funds for the transit and TDM improvements in the I-395 corridor. He said that the revised resolution on a blue sheet had been distributed earlier during the meeting for the Board's consideration. He noted that VDOT and other members could speak to this when acting on the resolution.

Mr. Srikanth added that at the February board meeting, WMATA had suggested that the documentation requirements regarding project funding availability should be clarified in the CLRP project submission process. Mr. Srikanth said that staff would make changes to the CLRP Call for Projects document before the next amendment to the CLRP to enhance the documentation requirements regarding anticipated funding availability.

A motion was made to approve the revised Resolution R8-2018. The motion was seconded.

Chairman Lovain thanked the representatives from VDOT, Arlington County, and others who worked on the language in the resolution. He noted the final resolve clause, which provided the assurance that the Commonwealth will complete the financial analysis for the I-395 project by October 1—based on estimated toll revenues in order to identify sufficient funding to expand transit and transportation demand management projects in this corridor—and report the outcome of that analysis to the TPB prior to its November 2016 meeting, when the CLRP amendment approval is scheduled.

Ms. Hamilton called attention to the fourth whereas clause on the second page of the revised resolution draft that was distributed at the meeting. The clause noted that the 2015 CLRP Amendment resolution had stipulated that the widening of I-66 inside the Beltway would not happen until an evaluation of multimodal options had been conducted. However, because the governor and General Assembly had reached an agreement to move forward with the project faster than previously anticipated, the resolution stated that the project would move forward without the evaluation.

Regarding the I-395 project, Ms. Hamilton noted that the new draft resolution included several new commitments from VDOT. She said the "be it resolved clause" notes that a study on transit and transportation demand management will be conducted by the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation. It should be concluded by December of 2016. She noted that the second point in the "resolved" clause commits to a financial analysis, which should be concluded by October 1, 2016. Ms.

Hamilton said the third point in the “resolved” clause addresses a concern that was expressed in a resolution approved by the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission (NVTC), which called for an annual guaranteed transit payment for this multimodal corridor. She requested a friendly amendment to that clause that would add the words "by October 1st, 2016," at the end of that third point.

Without objection, Chairman Lovain accepted the amendment.

Mr. Fisetete noted that due to the Metrorail shutdown, he had bicycled to the meeting and the trip took him five minutes longer than normal.

Mr. Fisetete thanked the VDOT and VDRPT representatives for their agencies’ healthy relationship with the local jurisdictions in Northern Virginia. He said he was disappointed that the I-66 project would move forward, as Ms. Hamilton noted, without the evaluation of multimodal options. However, he said the bulk of the plan for I-66 remains intact, which he felt was very positive.

Mr. Fisetete said he wanted to share some of the ideas behind the NVTC resolution that was referenced earlier. He said that in 2008, the Commonwealth proposed a public/private partnership that would have created HOT lanes to connect Spotsylvania to the District of Columbia. He said the local jurisdictions were led to believe that there would be quite a bit of money to help build the multimodal structures through the corridor, but that funding never materialized. He said that this experience was why the NVTC wanted to bring this issue to the forefront. He read from the NVTC resolution, which asked that the TPB, as a condition for including the I-395 express lanes northern extension in the CLRP, require a reasonable guaranteed annual transit payment sufficient to expand transit and other travel options in the corridor. He said that he thought the current resolution, as amended, effectively addressed NVTC’s concerns. He said that by providing information to the TPB in advance of the final vote on the CLRP amendment in November, board members would not be put in the position of having to debate whether to pull this project from the final CLRP amendment. He said he would be supporting the resolution.

Ms. Hamilton said she appreciated Mr. Fisetete’s comments. With regard to the comment from many northern Virginia jurisdictions that a reasonable, guaranteed, annual transit payment, sufficient to expand transit and other travel options in the corridor be as represented by the NVTC’s resolution TPB reflected this understanding in its resolution approving the projects for use in the regional air quality conformity analysis. Responding to the situation back in 2007/2008 Board member Rene’e Hamilton, from VDOT, noted that the 2008 project was cancelled and pulled out of the TPB’s CLRP. Ms. Hamilton also pointed out that some transit improvements were still ultimately made in the I-95 corridor. “Even though the transit funding did not come from the [private operator of the toll facility], the state has made significant transit investments in the corridor,” she said. “It wasn’t like the state walked away from transit commitment. There were park-and-ride lots that were done, there were still other things that the state took on and actually implemented during that time,” she said.

Mr. Mendelson asked Mr. Zimbabwe to what extent DDOT or VDOT has analyzed the potential impacts of the widening of I-66 on the District of Columbia.

Ms. Hamilton said the VDOT staff have met on several occasions with DDOT staff to discuss tolling provisions for the projects proposed for the CLRP amendment. She said planning for the I-66 widening project had not yet started.

Mr. Zimbabwe said DDOT would be participating in discussions related to both I-66 and I-395 to understand the impacts of those projects on the District.

Mr. Mendelson noted that the I-395 project would add toll lanes, but the I-66 project is a widening project, both inside the Beltway and outside the Beltway.

Mr. Zimbabwe noted that the widening would stop at Ballston, so he thought the District could

anticipate minimal impacts from the widening component of it, but potential benefits from the management aspects and the transit investments within the corridor.

Mr. Mendelson asked if DDOT had evaluated the potential impacts of the I-66 project.

Mr. Zimbabwe said no.

Mr. Mendelson asked if Mr. Zimbabwe's assessment about the project was essentially an educated guess because DDOT had not yet conducted an analysis.

Mr. Zimbabwe said that was correct.

Mr. Mendelson asked if the District had demanded any mitigation measures to address potential impacts.

Mr. Zimbabwe said that such demands had not been made at this point for the I-66 project.

Chairman Lovain emphasized that it would be important for the two DOTs to work closely on both these projects as they move forward.

Mr. Zimbabwe said he wanted to respond regarding the DDOT bicycle projects. He said the statements from the public comment period all reflect important viewpoints. However, he said the inclusion of these projects in the CLRP would not preclude any of the potential project-level decisions about parking or how to manage and mitigate congestion impacts. He said there is a commitment from DDOT to continue the dialogue at the project level on all of the projects that are included as part of this submission.

Mr. Elrich said he was concerned because the VDOT projects focused on major corridors, but cars do not stay in such major corridors. Rather, he said, cars will cross into the District and enter already congested parts of Northern Virginia. He said it was important to realize that the point of building these projects was not to have less traffic; it was to accommodate more vehicles. Therefore, he said Mr. Mendelson's questions were very appropriate.

Mr. Nohe said that the bulk of the job growth that is driving the population growth, is taking place in other parts of Northern Virginia, not the inner jurisdictions or the District. He said he did not want to dismiss the notion that the projects will have an impact on the District of Columbia, but he said that in aggregate, the congestion relief of these projects makes them necessary. He said these projects are not about whether or not we want cars; rather they are about what do we do with the cars that are going to come whether we want them to or not.

Mr. Meyer said that it good for the District of Columbia's economy to have a strong employment base and the people who commute into D.C. for jobs need convenient ways to get there. He said it was essential to provide road capacity because not everyone can use transit. He said the region has already had success with HOT lanes and with continuing financial limitations, private sector partners must be found to implement creative solutions. He said the region should be celebrating these projects and taking pride in them. He added that in the context of the CLRP, significant reform is needed in Metro, both on a short- and long-term basis.

Mr. Fisette said there was validity in all the board member comments. He said it is important to focus on moving more people, not moving more cars. He said that carpooling and transit were efficient means for achieving that goal. He said he understood that not all areas of the region are yet accessible to transit, but he said that efforts should be taken to provide more options, which is why he was disappointed that the original I-66 plan fell apart. He noted that some people believe that the road would have been widened regardless, but he believed it would have been beneficial to see if investment in multimodal options would have been able to move more people without creating more congestion.

The motion to adopt Resolution R8-2018 to approve the project submissions for inclusion in the air

quality conformity analysis for the 2016 CLRP Amendment and the FY 2017-2022 TIP, as amended, was approved in a voice vote.

Mr. Mendelson asked that he be recorded as a “no” vote and that his remarks be included in the record.

8. BRIEFING ON DRAFT SCOPE OF WORK FOR THE AIR QUALITY CONFORMITY ANALYSIS FOR THE 2016 CLRP AMENDMENT AND THE FY 2017-2022 TIP

Ms. Posey explained that the scope of work includes the work tasks and the policy assumptions to be used for the conformity analysis of the 2016 CLRP. She said that the scope of work did go out for public comment at the same time that the inputs did but that it did not receive any specific comments. She also noted that the one change since 2015 was the attainment year for the 2008 ozone standard but there is no requirement to conduct analysis for attainment years if they are in the past. She said the board was being asked to approve the scope of work.

The motion was moved and seconded, and was approved unanimously.

9. APPROVAL OF AMENDMENT TO THE FY 2016 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM (UPWP), AND APPROVAL OF FY 2016 UPWP CARRYOVER FUNDING TO FY 2017

Mr. Griffiths referenced the handout and said that the board is being asked to approve two resolutions as part of this item. He said that the first resolution, R9-2016, reduces the 2016 UPWP budget by \$2,164,537 and deletes specific work tasks related to that funding. Resolution R10-2016 adds \$2,164,537 to the 2017 UPWP. He said that these funds related to the household travel survey and technical assistance for the District, Maryland, and Virginia. He said that the household travel survey is planned for 2017 and 2018 and will cost \$3 million. He said that the carryover technical assistance money is carried over for ongoing projects that will not be completed before the end of the fiscal year.

A motion was made to approve the two resolutions. The motion was seconded.

The board unanimously approved the motion to adopt Resolutions R9-2016 and R10-2016 to approve the amendment to the FY 2016 UPWP and the FY 2016 carryover funding to FY 2017.

10. APPROVAL OF THE FY 2017 UPWP

Mr. Griffiths reviewed the FY 2017 UPWP. He said that this final FY 2017 UPWP document included \$381,000 in additional funds relative to the budget amount in the draft that was presented to the board in February. He said that this money reflected the allocations from DDOT, MDOT, VDOT, and VDRPT based on the recently passed FAST Act. He said that \$229,000 of these funds were added to the technical assistance budgets for the District, Maryland, Virginia, and WMATA. He said that the other \$158,000 was added to the core program for performance-based planning. He also noted that with this additional funding the Technical Assistance program that was partially funded in the February Draft was now fully funded. He said that with the carryover funding and additional Federal Aviation Administration CASP funding for the Comprehensive Airport System Plan, the TPB's FY 2017 budget is \$15,889,163. He added that this was a 3.9 percent increase over the 2016 budget.

Mr. Lovain said that this work program describes all work activities for TPB staff.

Mr. Shaw said that the DC Office of Planning is amending its comprehensive plan this year and his office looks forward to be able to collaborate with DDOT and staff on making sure we make the needed amendments to the plan. .

A motion was made and seconded. The board voted to adopt Resolution R11-2016 to approve the FY

2017 Unified Planning Work Program.

11. APPROVAL OF THE FY 2017 CCWP

Mr. Ramfos referred to the Commuter Connections Work Program and said that there was one change from the February draft. He said that Commuter Connections received additional money from the Maryland Transit Administration for marketing the Guaranteed Ride Home program in Baltimore.

A motion was made and seconded. The board voted to adopt Resolution R12-2016 to approve the FY 2017 Commuter Connections Work Program.

Mr. Ramfos said that there would be a presentation on Bike to Work Day at the April meeting. He said that he would be reaching out to some board members before that time to help increase awareness.

INFORMATION ITEMS

12. UPDATE ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF POLICY LANGUAGE FOR THE REGIONAL FREIGHT PLAN

Referring to the handout, Mr. Schermann presented the memo and preliminary draft of 16 regional freight policy statements and a handout showing how they relate to the Regional Transportation Priority Plan goals and the National Freight goals. He noted that relative to the Draft document from March the policy statement includes one additional statement relating to environmental justice. The preliminary draft includes information from a review of existing planning documents from Virginia, Maryland, and the District of Columbia, outreach to stakeholders and TPB work sessions. There will also be additional input on this from the Access for All Advisory Committee. After receiving public input, these policy statements will be included in the draft Regional Freight Plan and eventually come back to the board for review and action later.

There was no action required on this item.

13. BRIEFING ON THE COG COOPERATIVE FORECASTING PROCESS

Mr. DesJardin briefed the board on the Cooperative Forecasting process. Referring to the materials in the handout, he went through the data and process for the forecast. He explained that staff begin the process with an econometric model for the region and incorporates inputs from planning staffs from the jurisdictions. He then described the job and population forecasts. He noted that the region would be adding jobs at a slower pace than it historically has, but that it will still be at a faster rate than the nation as a whole.

Mr. Elrich asked about which category retail jobs fall under.

Mr. DesJardin answered that the retail jobs are included in the "transportation, trade, and utilities" category.

Mr. Elrich indicated the number under that category, 6,000, seemed surprisingly small.

Mr. Elrich asked whether average income by category is available.

Mr. DesJardin said the forecasts did not include income by sector.

Mr. Elrich asked if the vehicle hours of travel are forecast.

Mr. DesJardin said the Cooperative Forecasts do not include transportation measures, but this would be a question to ask Mr. Griffiths under the next item.

Mr. Kannan thanked Mr. DesJardin and noted the importance of the Cooperative Forecasts, which are very important to the region's jurisdictions and to WMATA. He said he was concerned that the inputs

prepared by the individual jurisdictions for use in the regional forecasts are widely varied in their thoroughness, and he was concerned that the staff at the jurisdictions who are developing the inputs may not truly understand how the Cooperative Forecasts are used. He also said that because of their local policies, some jurisdictions show an unrealistic bias toward job growth and against household growth.

Mr. Kannan expressed concern that in general, the Cooperative Forecasts show high growth in employment and yet the region is anticipating high levels of congestion, which might actually discourage some of the forecast job growth. He said that past performance typically shows that jobs were forecast at higher numbers, especially at the jurisdictional level, than actually emanate. He noted that the cooperative forecasts are used to make decisions throughout the region, including for regional transportation planning. He said it would be beneficial for TPB and COG to assess the impacts of these forecasts by conducting risk assessments so that planners, elected officials and business leaders can understand their implications on funding and public policy.

Mr. Nohe associated himself with Mr. Kannan's statements. He said elected officials have an interest in calling for additional professional jobs and minimizing the growth in retail and service jobs, but he suggested that this was often unrealistic. He noted that the Cooperative Forecast's ratio between professional jobs and "transportation, trade, and utilities" (which includes retail) was 100 to 1, which he said seemed disproportionate. He said he would also support conducting a risk assessment of the forecasts.

Mr. Griffiths noted the forecasts are coming from a combination of regional level forecasts using a very detailed econometric mode and forecasts at the local level developed by local planning directors. With regard to the information on the transportation, trade, and utilities, he noted that forecasts includes wholesale trade as well as retail. Some of the recent trend data showed increasing retail employment in the region but losing some of the wholesale trade. He said that they do take into account where the growth in jobs and population is expected and which sectors may see more growth.

Mr. Nohe said that he appreciated the explanation and noted that he supports the concept of risk assessment for forecasts. He said that every one of our jurisdictions defines what we talk about a more walkable, bikable community as assume it to be where people can live, work, and shop which would mean we're going to have more bicycle, more pedestrian, more transit trips relative to automotive trips as we become more urbanized. The imbalance between growth in retail and population and others job categories here do not predict that people are going to shop. So an examination of these employment numbers is useful to give use the flexibility in the long term to predict a more realistic travel patterns.

Mr. Griffiths noted that while these forecasts are at regional level significant shifts in the timing or nature of development does happen that affects the forecast. As an example, he said that in the District there was considerable uncertainty on the timing for the idea of Return to L'Enfant Plaza, where they were going to build millions of square feet of additional commercial space over the 3rd Street Freeway. He noted that it is now coming to fruition and reflected in the recent set of cooperative forecasts. He also noted similar redevelopment in the District's Nationals stadium area and the growth that is occurring in Prince William and Loudoun Counties in terms of its development and its major activity centers.

Mr. Zimbabwe suggested conducting a stress test of the Cooperative Forecasts that would use the Round 8.3 forecasts in comparison to the Round 9 forecasts.

Mr. Elrich said he would like to see a breakdown of the category that includes retail. He reiterated his skepticism that the growth in retail was correctly forecast. He also said that additional households could be accommodated in the region without changing existing zoning. He said the job growth numbers in the Cooperative Forecasts could suggest rezoning to accommodate more housing without analyzing how

much capacity jurisdictions already have in their zoned capacity. He said this kind of analysis could create momentum for runaway growth and development

Mr. Griffiths did acknowledge that these forecasts appear to indicate that we may not be planning enough residential development to support the employment growth from a transportation standpoint. He said that compared to the prior forecast, this is a significant improvement over what we have been using, getting better balance between jobs and housing and is reflecting current trends. He said that the overall level for the region in terms of its economic growth the forecast appears reasonable. Mr. Elrich said that COG and the TPB need to deliver a more fine-tuned message. He said that several development projects underway in Montgomery County are happening in non-Activity Center locations.

14. BRIEFING ON CURRENT REGIONAL TRAVEL TRENDS

Chairman Lovain asked if this item would be postponed.

Mr. Srikanth said that the item would be postponed. He said that there would also be a presentation in April about the impacts of population and employment growth in the region if no new transportation investments were made.

OTHER ITEMS

15. ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 2:11 p.m.