
TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD
MEETING ATTENDEES
October 19, 2022

HYBRID MEETING

MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES PRESENT

Pamela Sebesky, Chair – Manassas
Charles Allen – DC Council
Christina Henderson – DC Council
Heather Edelman – DC Council
Lezlie Rupert – DDOT
Mark Rawlings - DDOT
Dan Emerine – DC Office of Planning
Mati Bazarro – Bowie
Jason Groth – Charles County
Mark Mishler – Frederick County
Kelly Russell – City of Frederick
Dennis Enslinger - Gaithersburg
Brian Lee – City of Laurel
Evan Glass – Montgomery County
Marc Elrich – Montgomery Executive
Victor Weissberg – Prince George’s County Executive
Bridget Donnell Newton – Rockville
Kacy Kostiuik – Takoma Park
Marc Korman – Maryland House
R. Earl Lewis, Jr. – MDOT
Jeffrey Hirsch - MDOT
Caneq Aguirre – Alexandria
Takis Karantonis – Arlington County
Dan Malouff – Arlington County
David Meyer – City of Fairfax
Walter Alcorn – Fairfax County - Legislative
David Snyder – Falls Church
Adam Shellenberger – Fauquier County
Kristen Umstattd – Loudoun County
Jeannette Rishell – Manassas Park
Victor Angry – Prince William County
Ann B. Wheeler – Prince William County
Maria Sinner – VDOT
William Cutter - VDOT
John Lynch – VDOT
David Reid – Virginia House
Sandra Jackson - FHWA
Allison Davis – WMATA
Mark Phillips – WMATA
Tammy Stidham - NPS

MWCOG STAFF AND OTHERS PRESENT

Kanti Srikanth
Chuck Bean
Lyn Erickson
Mark Moran
Tim Canan
Andrew Meese
Nick Ramfos
Paul DesJardin
Stacy Cook
Leo Pineda
Sergio Ritacco
John Swanson
Eric Randall
Jane Posey
Dusan Vuksan
Deborah Etheridge
Rebecca Schwartzman – DC Office of Planning
David Lorenzo-Botella – Montgomery County Legislative
Bill Pugh, Coalition for Smarter Growth
Stewart Schwartz, Coalition for Smarter Growth

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

Chair Sebesky called the hybrid meeting to order. She welcomed those members who were attending in person as well as those participating virtually. She described the procedures for conducting hybrid meetings.

Ms. Erickson conducted a roll call confirming those participants in the room and those attending remotely. Attendance for the meeting can be found on the first page of the minutes. She confirmed there was a quorum.

Chair Sebesky said this was the first time since the pandemic that public comment was being received in person.

Mr. Pugh from the Coalition for Smarter Growth said the accelerated long-range plan update should analyze alternative long-range plan packages in support of transit-oriented land use and housing. He said the update proposal from staff, which would be presented in Item 10, would essentially be an administrative update that would not be worthwhile. He said that more time should be provided if it is needed to accommodate a more comprehensive approach that will model the impacts of alternative scenarios.

Ms. Erickson said the TPB received two written comments, including a letter from Mr. Pugh that was consistent with his written statement. The TPB also received an email from Arlene Montemarano, which forwarded a letter that was signed by various state and local elected officials, directed to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Maryland Department of the Environment, to deny permits related to an application submitted by MDOT for the I-495/270 Phase 1 South toll lanes project.

2. APPROVAL OF THE OCTOBER 21, 2022 MEETING MINUTES

Mr. Karantonis made a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded and was approved with two abstentions from Ms. Wheeler and Mr. Enslinger.

3. TECHNICAL COMMITTEE REPORT

Referring to the posted meeting summary, Mr. Groth, past chair of the Technical Committee, gave the report. Mr. Groth said he chaired the Technical Committee meeting on October 7.

Mr. Groth said the committee received briefings on informational items, including an update on the MOVES3 model and motor vehicle emission budgets, a briefing on a currently ongoing consultant evaluation of the TPB's public participation activities, and a briefing on the national electric vehicle infrastructure plans.

4. COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT

Referring to the posted report, Ms. Hutson said the Community Advisory Committee met on October 13. She said this was a hybrid meeting and it provided the first opportunity since the pandemic for CAC members to meet face-to-face. She said the meeting featured a focus group with Lori Zeller and Charlie Echard from Foursquare Consulting who are conducting an evaluation of the TPB's public participation activities. The focus group was followed by an open discussion, led by John Swanson of TPB staff, that dug deeper into some key ideas. She said some key themes emerging from the discussion were identified in the committee report.

5. STEERING COMMITTEE ACTIONS AND REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR

Referring to the posted material, Mr. Srikanth said the Steering Committee met on October 7 and approved two TIP amendments. One amendment authorized funding for several projects in D.C. The other amendment updated the funding for the Neabsco Mills Road widening project in Virginia.

Mr. Srikanth said the letters packet included the submission of comments from the TPB to the federal docket on the U.S. Department of Transportation's proposal to add greenhouse gas reduction target setting as part of the MPO's performance-based planning and programming program. The packet also included letters of support for grant applications from D.C. and from Prince William County for the new federal Reconnecting Communities program. The packet also included a letter of support from the TPB for Loudoun County's application for a state grant for a transit ridership incentive program.

Mr. Srikanth said the announcements included a notice about the new fall Street Smart pedestrian and bicyclist safety program. He said the packet also included information about a planned work session, which will be held prior to the November board meeting, that will feature the safety officers from the three state DOTs. He also said the packet included information about the COG annual membership awards luncheon on December 14.

Mr. Srikanth shared some updates. He said that COG and the TPB have received a couple of federal grants. One is for approximately \$125,000, with \$25,000 provided by WMATA, to transition the Commuter Connections reach a ride tool to a one-call, one-click information and referral assistance tool. The second grant is for \$325,000, with about \$62,000 provided by the three state DOTs, to develop a pilot test of an open source, cross-platform mobile application where we could consider using vanpools that are already operating on the region, to also serve as on-demand transit.

Finally, he said that COG staff recently completed their greenhouse gas inventory work. He noted that the region has achieved its goal of reducing greenhouse gases by 20 percent below 2005 levels by 2020. He said the reductions were found to be 24 percent below 2005 levels. He noted that the goal for 2030 is a 50 percent reduction below 2005 levels.

Mr. Lewis spoke positively about the grant project for piloting existing vanpools for on-demand transit. He suggested it would be good if electric vehicles are used. He said he hoped there would be some federal funding to support recharging for minibuses or other types of vehicles for on-demand transit applications.

Mr. Srikanth noted that last year's TPB chair, Charles Allen had encouraged regional leaders to not simply work on rebuilding transit ridership, but also focus on improving the system to make it more responsive for transit-dependent population in particular. He said another item on the agenda, a transit equity study, was another example of work the TPB is doing along these lines.

Mr. Snyder expressed appreciation for the region's efforts on greenhouse gases and safety. He asked if Mr. Srikanth had any initial comments in response to the public speaker, Mr. Pugh, who expressed dissatisfaction with the proposed plan for developing the long-range plan update.

Mr. Srikanth said that Item 10 on the agenda would address this issue. He said he expected that the update of the long-range plan would be an item on the agendas in each of the coming months as well. He said that the staff proposal is consistent with the TPB resolution which called for the new update to "consider" the findings of previous scenario analyses and that the current staff proposal does provide for that. He also said that the staff proposal reflects another important element of the resolution which is to have the plan updated by the end of 2024. He said that updating the plan by end of 2024 has also become important for reasons associated with the time period covered by the plan. Speaking to the scenario analysis, he said that the TPB staff has conducted numerous scenario analyses over the last decade or more which have examined various strategies of advancing TPB's goals. He noted that a review of all of these recent scenario studies show a vast variety of strategies that have been examined and analyzed. He said that these studies have generated hundreds of pages of findings which Mr. Srikanth acknowledged is not easily accessible to members. He said that staff is currently working to summarize all of these findings into an easy-to-use summary document that members can use to inform their updates to the projects. Finally, responding to the suggestion that this update provides the TPB with the opportunity to do something different by conducting a scenario study, Mr. Srikanth noted that the board has always had that opportunity to respond to past scenario analyses with each update of the plan. He said that every time a scenario analysis has been done, dating back to the late 1970s, the intent was for the members of the TPB to use the findings to inform the projects they bring to the long-range plan.

Mr. Erenrich asked Mr. Srikanth to explain why the timing of 2024 is of the essence in conducting this two-year update.

Mr. Srikanth noted that the long-range plan was approved two months ago so it would seem that the federal rules would not require an update until 2026. The TPB, however, has called for the development of an update by 2024. Mr. Srikanth said that this acceleration is in fact fortuitous because the federal regulations require the plan at any given time to cover a minimum of 20 years. He noted that the current plan goes only to 2045, so starting 2025, the plan would no longer be in compliance with the 20-year federal requirement. Therefore, an update prior to 2026, with the plan's outyear of 2050, will be essential. He noted that this new outyear will coincide with the regional greenhouse gas goal year as well.

Mr. Srikanth further noted that before the TPB can adopt a plan update and receive a federal approval of its federal air quality conformity finding, new motor vehicle emissions budgets must be established. He said this is the responsibility of the Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee (MWAQC) and the state air quality agencies. He said that TPB staff is working with the air agencies to conduct that work in calendar year 2023 and to receive EPA approval in 2024, so that the updated long-range plan in 2024 will be able to use the new emissions budgets in the conformity analysis. He said that staff has just learned that this next conformity determination will need to be made for emissions budgets for two ozone standards – the 2008 and the 2015. He said that while staff had anticipated and prepared for working on the 2015 standards, staff will now need to revise the budgets that were set for the 2008 standards and also develop a new set of

emission budgets for the 2015 standard. He said this is twice the amount of work and staff will likely spend all of 2023 engaged in this work to be prepared for the 2024 plan update. He emphasized that it is important to stay focused on getting everything approved by December 2024.

6. CHAIR'S REMARKS

Chair Sebesky said she wanted to congratulate the region for achieving its greenhouse gas reduction goal for 2020. She said this finding affirms that the strategies in the transportation sector, which the board adopted, have the potential to further reduce greenhouse gases and help the region achieve its 2030 goals. She asked Kanti to include in the November TPB agenda a briefing on the COG greenhouse gas inventory report.

Chair Sebesky announced that contrary to previously announced plans, the November TPB meeting would be held as a hybrid meeting and the December meeting would be virtual. She asked staff to make this change, assuming there were no objections.

7. PBPP: FINAL 2022 – 2025 REGIONAL TARGETS FOR HIGHWAY SYSTEMS PERFORMANCE AND HIGHWAY ASSETS

Chair Sebesky called on Mr. Randall to review each set of the highway systems performance and highway assets targets and requested a board motion to adopt Resolution R3-2023 approving the performance targets.

Mr. Randall referred to the presentation materials and reported to the board that no comments were received on the draft highway pavement and bridge condition and travel time reliability targets shared with TPB member at their September 2022 meeting.

Mr. Randall announced that staff have prepared a web map that will portray bridge conditions. He provided the map link and said that pavement conditions will be added in the coming weeks.

Mr. Randall recommended that the board adopt Resolution R3-2023 to approve targets for the highway assets and for the highway travel time reliability for the Metropolitan Planning Region for the period 2022 to 2025.

Chair Sebesky called for a motion to adopt Resolution R3-2023.

Ms. Umstatt moved approval of Resolution R3-2023. The motion was seconded by Mr. Angry.

Mr. Erenrich asked Mr. Randall if local bridges are included in the total 1,400 bridges mentioned in the presentation.

Mr. Randall said that local bridges are not and that federal rules only apply to the National Highway System and bridges that are part of the National Highway System, including the interstates and major arteries proposed by each state DOT and adopted by Federal Highway Administration into the National Highway System.

Mr. Lee asked if the assets report covers bridges that cross the Washington statistical region and the Baltimore statistical region.

Mr. Randall said that data is taken from the national bridge inventory, which all state DOTs report to the Federal Highway Administration. He said that the TPB only looks at the bridges that are within the National Capital Region; however, Maryland DOT would report the information as part of the national bridge

inventory. He said that TPB staff can investigate whether the Baltimore Regional Transportation Board has a similar bridge inventory visualization.

Mr. Lewis said that he knows that the Infrastructure and Investment Jobs Act (IIJA) has programs that provide funding for local bridges separate from the federal system.

Mr. Karantonis asked what fair condition means in bridge ratings and when in the period of reporting are bridges that may deteriorate soon accounted for.

Mr. Randall said that additional information is available online through the Federal Highway Administration.

Mr. Randall said that bridge data is inventoried every two years, and bridges that are approaching structural deficiency are monitored more often. He stated that bridge data is collected every two years using a 10-point rating scale, and that “fair” is anywhere between four and seven on the rating scale, so the bridges are adequate, but they are not in “A” condition or brand new.

Mr. Karantonis said that advance notice on bridge condition is important as the Arlington County jurisdiction had one example where advance notice was not sufficient.

Ms. Henderson asked whether TPB staff can provide information on whether there is funding for replacements.

Mr. Randall stated that it is possible to crosswalk bridges identified as “poor” against the projects in the long-range plan and the Transportation Improvement Program. He said that bridge projects have not been itemized, but identifying those projects is something that the TPB could do in more detail.

Ms. Henderson suggested that as the TPB builds out visual tools, that information might be included.

Chair Sebesky said that if a bridge is in poor condition, she thinks that TPB members would like to know that there is a plan for repair or replacement.

Mr. Srikanth said that Ms. Henderson’s suggestion is a good idea, and TPB staff will look into cross walking bridge conditions with planned projects.

The motion to adopt Resolution R3-2023 passed unanimously.

INFORMATION ITEMS

8. BRIEFING ON THE 2022 STATE OF THE COMMUTE SURVEY

Mr. Ramfos referred to the agenda materials and presented an overview of survey results on commute changes, transportation mode choice, telework practices, and commuter satisfaction.

Ms. Kostiuk said that there seem to be good outcomes of telework increasing which has the potential to reduce congestion and move people away from driving but also negative trends with increased driving alone and reduction in transit use.

Ms. Kostiuk asked whether there was a survey question about demographics and whether respondents had children. She asked whether that was looked at in terms of use of transit and other questions.

Ms. Kostiuk commented that the daily commute is changing. She said that for people with children the

commute might be working from home but driving a kid to daycare and returning home and asked if the TPB could delve into this change.

Mr. Ramfos said that the State of the Commute survey is focused on workers, so questions were not asked about other household members. He said that that the larger, regional household survey does ask questions besides commute trip.

Ms. Kostiuk said that she has completed the other survey in the past and found it difficult to represent the format of trips that she was taking with her own children. She commented that she thinks a segment of trips that people are probably taking on a daily basis is probably missing in data collection.

Ms. Kostiuk asked whether it would be possible to cross-reference information about why people are using alternative modes of transit from the survey with goals and strategies for greenhouse gas emissions reduction to see if there is a connection between one of the strategies such as parking pricing. She said that an example is if one of the reasons people are saying that they are using alternative modes is reduction in cost, there might be crossover or insights.

Mr. Ramfos said that the survey does ask questions about the benefits of using alternative modes and questions about why people use alternative modes. He said that the top reasons are given are time and money.

Mr. Ramfos said that there is interest in sustainability and green commuting, but those responses do not rise to the top for questions about alternative mode use. He noted that the TPB could look closer at the topic.

Mr. Srikanth said that the TPB has been collecting data on travel mode choices and has also has crafted a number of scenarios related to travel mode choices. The data consistently indicate that what people look for is making transit less time consuming and more affordable. He said for example, the scenario of building BRT systems throughout the region in the TPB's Aspirational Initiative study was a reflection of this finding. He said this analysis did show the strategy would be effective in reducing time and cost, and also provided emissions reductions.

Mr. Srikanth said that he thinks that the survey results could be tracked against scenarios so that jurisdiction decision-makers can look at priority projects and decide whether to support a particular change or not. He said that TPB scenarios are intended to help local decision-making.

Ms. Kostiuk stated that she thinks it would be interesting to ask in future surveys about personal benefits not just for alternative modes but for driving and driving alone to find out why people are choosing to drive instead of using transit or other modes.

Ms. Henderson asked if there were any survey questions around what type of vehicle the person is driving. She said that she is interested in seeing if there has been an uptick in electric vehicle purchases in the region.

Mr. Ramfos said that the survey did not ask about vehicle type but did ask how many vehicles the household has.

Ms. Henderson said that for the future if there is an uptick in electric vehicles how will that be weighed in terms of emissions goals. She said that a flashing red light in the results is commute satisfaction and that transit users were the least satisfied and bike/walk users were the most satisfied. She said that even though someone may be spending 45 minutes in a car by themselves, they are still more satisfied than someone getting on a bus or a train, and that is a problem that needs to be addressed.

Mr. Srikanth said that the TPB collects vehicle registration data every three years that tracks the sale of electric vehicles. He said that he would be able to share information from COG's greenhouse gas inventory work that shows how electric or plug-in electric and hybrid vehicle purchases have increased by two-to-three-fold. He said that the increase in electric vehicle purchases helps explain the increase in federal investment in EV infrastructure.

Mr. Walkinshaw asked whether there was a survey question on which days of the week the respondent is teleworking.

Mr. Ramfos said that the TPB does have that information and that in past surveys, the most popular days were Fridays and Mondays.

Mr. Walkinshaw said that the days of the week are a core issue because it causes a coordination challenge if everyone in the region is going to the office on Wednesdays and none on Mondays or Fridays. He provided the example of Virginia Railway Express service and high demand on Wednesdays but then no one riding the train on Mondays and Fridays, which creates a system inefficiency.

Mr. Walkinshaw said there may be a role for the TPB in convincing federal agencies and private businesses to spread out the telework days across the week.

Mr. Lewis said that electric vehicle purchases are growing in Maryland and EVs are one percent of registered vehicles. He said that it is difficult for transit to compete with a custom ride. He stated that there are new systems and infrastructure such as BRT and the Purple Line and that will get some riders back, yet the transportation system is a mix, and some are never going to give up their cars.

Ms. Sebesky said that as a resident of an outer jurisdiction that by the time public transportation is reached, people see that it is not beneficial, and they continue in their single-occupancy vehicles.

Mr. Karantonis said that the survey results do measure an extraordinary situation over the past two years. He asked if there is data on whether employers made destination parking free or easily available and how incidental is that to the high drive-alone rate.

Mr. Ramfos said that the information is available, and commuters were asked about parking. He said that the core area experienced an uptick in free parking.

Mr. Srikanth said that the move away from transit to driving in this survey is a reflection of disruptions to travel and work arrangements from the pandemic. He said that the pandemic-related disruptions and changes in travel behavior also highlighted the importance of bus service to those who were unable and preferred not to drive and sent a signal to examine bus routes and bus service regarding service and fare equity. He said that a reexamination of bus systems is underway to find time and cost savings and to improve convenience.

Mr. Srikanth said that while teleworking has benefits for greenhouse gases and reducing congestion, it also has an unintended negative consequences on transit systems. This is one example of where one strategy is good for some TPB goals but not for others.

Mr. Srikanth stated that Mr. Walkinshaw's example of telecommuting demand is excellently made because when demand for transportation system and service has sharp peaks, how does one decide on investments for building system capacity. He said that this update could be an opportunity to examine what kinds of investments and approaches we'll be taking for making changes to our transportation system moving forward.

Mr. Snyder asked whether the greenhouse gas reductions discussed earlier were for the year 2020 which was during the pandemic. He said that he thinks another area of interest is non-commuting trips, which underscores, with so many people continuing to use the highways, the significance of converting to the electric vehicle fleet and everything we can to support that.

Mr. Srikanth said that the greenhouse gas inventory was for 2020, so COVID disruptions would be reflected in those greenhouse gas changes.

Mr. Lewis said that Maryland met its greenhouse gas goal by 2020 as part of the region, and it was corrected for the pandemic, but the goal was still met. He said that the goal is a more aggressive one than the TPB's goal.

Ms. Sebesky encouraged TPB members and the public to view the State of the Commute Survey report on the TPB website.

9. BUS TRANSIT EQUITY: 2022 UPDATE

Mr. Randall referred to the presentation and agenda materials to provide an overview of the updated analysis of local bus transit service in the region. He said that the TPB has been increasing equity work over the past two years, and this report updates work completed earlier in 2022.

Mr. Randall shared key findings and demonstrated a web map tool that layers Equity Emphasis Areas with bus routes.

Mr. Randall said that the information has been shared with the TPB Technical Committee and the regional public transportation subcommittee.

Mr. Erenrich said that Montgomery County has its own sophisticated tool based on pulling data together for Ride-On and the Ride-On Reimagined Study.

Mr. Randall stated that coverage versus frequency is a key paradigm for transit service in terms of whether as system should provide more coverage or high frequency of service.

Mr. Emerine said that the report is showing how many people have access to transit at all or especially frequent transit and the map is showing what would be expected, that there is greater transit access and greater frequency in the denser areas and corridors. He asked if there are additional thoughts on that that could be gleaned from the report.

Mr. Emerine said that WMATA has been sharing service guidelines with the region to help better plan and much of those guidelines are based on density. He commented that if there are household-dense or job-dense areas that lack frequent transit service that could be a service gap that needs to be addressed.

Mr. Emerine stated that it could be that if there is a lack of service in some areas, it could be that there are not sufficient households or jobs to run efficient service, and he asked how that can provide guidance to colleagues who are working in the land use arena.

Mr. Randall said the TPB is limited in resources in terms of being able to address some of those questions; however, he stated that the memo on the October 19 TPB meeting page lists a number of geographic areas or neighborhoods that the TPB has pinpointed as specific areas to consider across the region. He said that the mapping tool is provided for people interested in equity or for those planning transit service.

10. 2024 LONG-RANGE PLAN UPDATE

Chair Sebesky introduced the item, observing that the TPB just wrapped up the four-year update of the long-range transportation plan, but the board has decided not to wait another four years but instead to do another update in two years, meaning in 2024.

Mr. Srikanth said the update would be substantively different than other updates over the past three decades in three important ways. First, he said the update will ask each TPB member agency to reexamine all of the projects that they have currently planned and included in the TPB's long-range plan and to determine if this is indeed the set of projects that the agency would now like to invest in to meet mobility and accessibility needs for the next 25 years. Second, he said, the update will ask each member agency to more directly correlate the projects and programs they propose for the TPB's plan with the TPB's planning priorities. Third, he said, the update will ask member agencies to use the results of past TPB scenario analyses in their project selection. He said that the submitting agencies would be given at least five months to develop their inputs, which is much more time than previously given. As part of that process, TPB staff will conduct work sessions at the state level with all relevant agencies. Finally, he noted that the success of this effort will depend on how engaged the board members will be with their jurisdictions and their agencies. He emphasized that project selection does not occur at the TPB.

Ms. Cook gave an overview of the current plans for the 2024 update to Visualize 2045. She described major changes that will be included in the new update, including: 1) updating non-transportation elements; 2) financial plan revisions; 3) new motor vehicle emissions budgets (MVEBs); and 4) projects re-examination/re-submission. She also described products to support the 2024 update, including a synthesized policy framework and a summary of scenario findings. She ended with the preliminary schedule, culminating in approval in December 2024.

Because of the lack of time, Chair Sebesky asked TPB members to send their comments to staff or to leave comments in the chat.

Ms. Newton said that she and other long-time members were thrilled to see the planned changes in the long-range planning process.

11. ADJOURN

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:03 P.M.