

ITEM 7 - Action
October 15, 2014

Compilation of Comments Received Regarding the Air Quality
Conformity Assessment for the 2014 Financially Constrained
Long-Range Transportation Plan (CLRP), the 2014 CLRP and the
FY 2015-2020 TIP

Comments Received on the 2014 CLRP and the FY 2015-2020 TIP

Comment on the Draft 2014 CLRP/Draft FY 2015-2020 TIP

Submitted by: An Individual

Baker, Samantha

Frederick, MD 21704

9/26/2014 2:48:33 PM

Subject: CLRP plan

As a resident of frederick county who sits on I-270 for over an hour daily I have to say something needs to be done to relieve traffic on 270 prior to 2030. I commute from Frederick to Rockville which should take less than 20 minutes and most mornings I spend over an hour on 270. It will only get worse as more houses and residents are added. As a taxpayer I don't know how much more of this I can stand. The ICC was a total waste of money doing something as simple as expanding the ICC to where the population truly exists (Clarksburg or Germantown) would help traffic on 270.

Dodson, Daniel

Middletown, MD 21769

9/26/2014 1:21:57 PM

Subject: widening I-270

Please continue to plan (and increase the priority of) widening I-270 in Frederick and Montgomery counties and adding high-occupancy vehicle or express toll lanes.

Geraci, Stephen

Leesburg, VA 20175

9/29/2014 10:39:51 AM

Subject: Concerns over Projects

I am concerned that the projects given priority in this plan are in large part supporting rail infrastructure (including street car) and not other serious transportation issues in the region including specific bottlenecks already identified by the TPB. These projects include upgrades to the Maryland side of the Beltway from the American Legion Bridge to I-95 (both inner and outer loop) and a major upgrade of I-66. Additionally, has an additional Potomac River Crossing (perhaps in the Leesburg area) been explored? These mega-projects seem far more valuable and significant to the region than expanding street car service in urban areas that largely won't be utilized for commuting by residents of Loudoun, Fairfax, Prince William, and Arlington/Alexandria.

Hyden, David

Frederick, MD 21702

10/2/2014 8:47:11 AM

Quality / Engineering

Subject: Widen I270

Please widen us 15 and I 270 immediately. I believe the problem can be solved with one added lane. Please see my recommendation attached.

See Page 3.

McCrimmon, Scott

Frederick, MD 21704

9/29/2014 10:28:51 AM

Subject: In favor of 270/15 expansion

As a a resident of Urbana working in Rockville, I would be grateful for an additional lane on I270. If such an expansion could be accomplished before 2030, that would be even better.

Mcduffy, Cleotis

urbana, MD 21704

9/26/2014 10:28:27 PM

Subject: 270

Widen 270 until Pennsylvania !

Schlossnagle, Jerry

Frederick, MD 21704

9/26/2014 9:59:39 AM

Subject: I-270 Widening

I-270 is, and has been, in desperate need of additional lanes from Clarksville to Frederick! The traffic situation is terrible, and needs addressed sooner than 2030. It needs fixed NOW. The traffic situation will only drastically worsen with all the new development in and around Frederick, Urbana, and Monrovia. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Schulz, Peter

Frederick, MD 21701

9/26/2014 12:50:35 PM

Subject: I-270 & US 15

Please do not widen US 15 and I-270 through Frederick County--it will negatively impact homes and historic sites (the highway already goes through a Civil War Battlefield--don't make it worse). Two lanes in each direction is more than adequate, even in rush hour. Widening a highway for only the worst times leaves you with a situation like I-270 south of Germantown where the majority of the time people speed and drive aggressively because the wide open highway encourages them to. Instead, beef up the Commuter Bus Service and MARC service from Frederick. Widen the shoulders to allow Commuter Buses to use them (I see the SHA nixed this idea because the "shoulders aren't adequate" -RETHINK IT and MAKE THEM ADEQUATE). Please, no more highway building!

Warren, Nicole

frederick, MD 21704

9/26/2014 4:25:40 PM

Subject: Urgent widening for 270

Form 5:30-9:30am and from 2:30-7:00pm , 270 it's a parking lot! Needs URGENT widening.

Submitted by: An Organization

Smith, Nancy

McLean, VA 22102

10/11/2014 8:46:55 PM

Northern Virginia Transportation Alliance

Subject: NVTA Comments on Draft 2014 CLRP - Focus on Fixing the Region's Transportation Framework

See Attached

See page 4.

STRONGLY IN FAVOR OF WIDENING I 270/ RT 15 IMMEDIATELY AND SUGGESTED SOLUTION

I have been commuting from Frederick, MD to Rockville, MD via US 15 and I 270 since 1984. Over this 30 year period, little has changed except that the commute gets longer in terms of time each year. The traffic pattern is the same now as it was then during then during traffic peak season (in school and in government sessions). The traffic is worst travelling south in the morning and north in the evening. During the summer months (Non- peak traffic season) when these entities are off, the traffic is reduced.

My commute is 37 miles one way. I currently spend 1 hour and 15 minutes getting to work when leaving Frederick at 6:15AM weekdays on average. When there is a traffic incident, this has increased to over 2 hours during "peak season" at least once a month.

I have written letters to the governor and local government and have not been given satisfactory responses over the last few years. The responses always involve recommendations to use mass transit, which doesn't fit into my fluctuating work schedule and work travel, nor is it cost effective. The replies seem to be a form letter response issued to folks like me who are very unhappy. I feel confident in saying that the people of Frederick County do not feel that our Maryland brothers and sisters have given this problem the attention it deserves. The photo below is a weekday daily occurrence at the I270 Urbana exit year round.



PROPOSED SOLUTION:

In my opinion, the easiest and least expensive way to solve this traffic problem is to exploit the bottleneck. (See Eli Goldratt's book "The Goal"). In the case of US 15 and I270, the bottleneck is the southbound traffic in the morning and the northbound traffic in the evening travel period.

If one lane was added between the existing north & southbound lanes, and controlled to allow only southbound traffic in the morning and only northbound in the evening, I believe the problem would be solved. I believe this is currently in use on some roads in Virginia.

Very sincerely,

David Hyden

7896 Yellow Springs Road

Frederick, MD 21702

301 682 4454

dthyden@verizon.net

**Comments of the Northern Virginia Transportation Alliance
To the Transportation Planning Board
On the draft 2014 Constrained Long-Range Transportation Plan**

As noted in comments earlier this year, the Northern Virginia Transportation Alliance continues to be disappointed in the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board's (TPB) inability to focus and act as a forum for the identification of transportation investments of greatest regional significance.

The most recent example is the TPB's *Regional Transportation Priorities Plan* that contains no actual project-specific priorities. What started out as the TPB's Citizens Advisory Committee recommendation for a *regional* priorities plan, ended up as a compilation of transportation "strategies" for *local* and *state* governments to "consider" when making transportation decisions. In other words business as usual.

Developing priorities for the region requires taking a top down approach to identifying strategic investments for the region. While the draft 2014 CLRP is said to contain "more than 300 regionally significant improvements to the Washington region's highway and transit system through 2040", many of the projects considered of "greatest regional significance" are more local in nature.

As the region's planning body, the TPB should be looking at the bigger picture – identifying those investment that will move the greatest number of people, reduce travel time, and increase reliability of the network region-wide – and produce the best long-term return on investment.

The draft 2014 CLRP identifies approximately \$42 billion for new construction and identifies such projects as Arlington Street Cars, Corridor Cities Transitway, DC Street Cars, Governor Nice/US 301 Bridge reconstruction and development of the Purple Line as potential projects to fund.

If a major percentage of these funds were directed to projects of greatest regional significance, the region could fund 8-car Metro trains, upgrade the American Bridge and the western side of the Maryland Beltway, build a new Potomac River crossing upstream, expand highway and transit capacity on I-66 outside and inside the Beltway and build the Bi-Bi-County Parkway. By doing so the *regional* plan would be far more "*regionally significant*" and the *region's* transportation network far more efficient and less congested.

Rather than periodic updates that try to match projects to newly available funds, the TPB should re-examine and re-organize the entire CLRP, with future federal, state and new regional revenues committed to projects of greatest regional significance. Projects of local significance should be recognized as such funded by remaining available or new funds.

In short, it's time to fix the region's transportation framework and the TPB's efforts should be so focused.



NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD

October 2, 2014

Ms. Helen Cuervo, P. E., District Administrator
Northern Virginia District
Virginia Department of Transportation
4975 Alliance Drive
Fairfax, VA 22030

Mr. Shyam Kannan, Planning Director
Office of Planning
Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority
600 5th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001

Mr. Donald A. Halligan, Director
Office of Planning & Capital Program
Maryland Department of Transportation
7201 Corporate Center Drive
Hanover MD 21076

Mr. Sam Zimbabwe, Associate Director
Policy, Planning & Sustainability Administration
District Department of Transportation
55 M Street, SE
Suite 400
Washington, DC 20003

Dear Ms. Cuervo, Mr. Halligan, Mr. Kannan, and Mr. Zimbabwe:

The Transportation Planning Board (TPB) received the attached comments on some specific types of projects proposed to be included in the 2014 Financially Constrained Long-Range Transportation Plan (CLRP). Since the comments from the Access for All Committee members pertain to either the design and/or construction of projects (as opposed to regional planning) the Board decided to forward these comments to your attention while urging your agency to fully consider these comments as part of the design and/or implementation activities.

I believe that the members of the Board would like acknowledgment of these comments and an understanding that the comments will receive full consideration in the project development process, prior to its action on the 2014 CLRP at its October 15, 2014 meeting.

Should you have any questions on the matter please feel free to contact Ms. Wendy Klancher, Principal Planner, staff to the TPB at 202-962-3321 or Mr. Tim Lovain, Second Vice Chairman of the TPB and Chair of the Access for All Advisory Committee.

Sincerely,

Patrick Wojahn, Chair
National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board

Enclosure



NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD

Memorandum

TO: Transportation Planning Board

FROM: Tim Lovain
Chair, TPB Access for All (AFA) Advisory Committee
TPB 2nd Vice Chair
Alexandria City Council Member

SUBJECT: AFA Comments on the Draft 2014 Financially-Constrained Long-Range Transportation Plan

DATE: September 17, 2014

At the July 24 Access for All Advisory (AFA) Committee meeting, the committee discussed significant changes to the Draft 2014 Financially Constrained Long Range Transportation Plan (CLRP) and also provided feedback on how they think region is progressing toward implementation of the Regional Transportation Priorities Plan during a structured listening session facilitated by TPB staff. These discussions resulted in the following comments on the Draft 2014 CLRP, and general transportation concerns for people with disabilities, those with limited incomes and minority communities.

Comments on New Projects and Significant Changes in the CLRP

The AFA expressed concern on the impact of shifting High-Occupancy Vehicle lanes to High-Occupancy Toll lanes could have on low-income residents.

- The 2014 CLRP contain a number High-Occupancy Toll lane projects that would require users to pay fees for use of the facilities. The committee raised concerns about how low-income individuals could be impacted if the region moves towards more tolled facilities.

The AFA would like to see more community-based, affordable public transportation.

- Many of the population groups the AFA represents depend on public transportation on a daily basis. The number of new road and road widening projects has the committee concerned that not enough attention is being made to future public transportation needs.

- The AFA raised concerns that in areas further out from the core, bus service is limited to peak hours or not available at all.
- The AFA expressed concerns about affordability of public transit and the negative impact on the quality of living and health of traditionally-disadvantaged population groups if fares continue to rise.
- The AFA supports incentives for people with limited incomes so that they can chose their preferred mode of travel; incentives could include user-side subsidies or reduced fare programs.

The AFA stressed the importance of implementing agencies considering accessibility throughout the planning, design and build stages.

- Accessibility for everyone is improved when agencies consider the needs of people with disabilities early on in the planning stages of a project.
- Sidewalks, curb cuts and detectable warning systems at intersections and bus stop help all pedestrians.
- The AFA raised concerns that the streetcar projects in D.C. and Arlington may not have fully considered how people with visual disabilities and those using mobility devices will safely cross the street given limited visibility, streetcar tracks in the roadway, and passengers boarding and embarking from the vehicle.
- The AFA raised concerns about shifting towards online and app-based transportation information which many times are not accessible to those with visual and hearing impairments.

General Comments on Transportation-Related Concerns

The AFA supports more options for bicyclists, but pedestrian infrastructure and disability awareness should be a priority.

- The AFA supports increasing and maintaining bicycle paths.
- Bicyclists should be made aware and more considerate of pedestrians with disabilities who have visual, hearing and mobility impairments.
- Existing regulations needs to be enforced and more regulations regarding the shared use of pedestrian and roadway infrastructure is needed.
- In D.C., sometimes people using mobility devices use bike lanes when sidewalks are impassable, especially when construction projects are being done.

- Given the need for accessible pedestrian infrastructure, how are implementing agencies balancing the priority for accessible pedestrian infrastructure and the desire to build more bike lanes or facilities?

The AFA stressed the importance of improving and maintaining bus stops and pedestrian infrastructure.

- Many of the population groups represented on the AFA depend on public transportation to meet their daily mobility needs. The committee expressed its support for current efforts by WMATA and local jurisdictions to improve access to bus stops for people with disabilities.
- The committee asked how the local jurisdictions and WMATA are prioritizing and coordinating on bus stops improvements, particularly on the 157 stops that WMATA has prioritized.
- The committee raised the need for maintenance of bus stops and sidewalks after improvements have been made.
- Lighting at bus stops is an important accessibility and safety feature, in addition to curb cuts, accessible bus shelters, connecting sidewalks, and concrete landing pads.
- The AFA advocated for fast-tracking problem areas, improving inter-jurisdictional cooperation, setting a timeframe for improvements, and more funding for more improvements throughout the region.

The AFA expressed concerns about MetroAccess service, eligibility, and fares.

- AFA members noted that they have seen improvements in MetroAccess but still report having difficulty with 1) Scheduling a trip within the requested pick up and drop off times and 2) inconsistent levels of driver professionalism and courtesy.
- The AFA raised concerns about how higher MetroAccess fares and stricter eligibility requirements are impacting those that are dependent on paratransit, and recommends that WMATA implement a simpler fare structure.

Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee

Suite 300, 777 North Capitol Street, N.E. Washington, D.C. 20002-4239 202-962-3358 Fax: 202-962-3203

October 2, 2014

Honorable Patrick Wojahn, Chair
National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board
777 North Capitol Street, NE
Washington, D.C. 20002

Dear Chair Wojahn:

Thank you for providing an opportunity to the Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee (MWAQC) to comment on the 2014 Constrained Long Range Plan (CLRP) and the FY2015-2020 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). MWAQC has reviewed the draft Air Quality Conformity assessment and concurs that the transportation sector emissions associated with the proposed transportation plans meet the approved motor vehicle emissions budgets (MVEBs) for the 1997 8-hour ozone national ambient air quality standard (NAAQS); the MVEBs found adequate for the 1997 annual fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) NAAQS; and the approved MVEB for the carbon monoxide (CO) NAAQS.

The Washington region is currently working toward meeting the more stringent 2008 ozone standard of 75 parts per billion (ppb). Draft data from the air quality monitors for the period 2012 through 2014 shows the region's design value for ozone is now at 76 ppb; an indication that the air quality has been improving over the years and now there is a strong likelihood that the region will be able to attain the above NAAQS by the required deadline of December 2015. However, since the Washington region's compliance with the 2008 ozone NAAQS will be based on its ambient air quality levels during the period 2013 through 2015, the region would still need to continue its efforts of reducing emissions from both transportation and non-transportation sectors to make sure it is able to meet the above NAAQS by 2015.

MWAQC also notes that U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is scheduled to propose a revised and potentially tougher ozone NAAQS likely somewhere in the range of 60-70 ppb in December 2014 and is expected to finalize it by October 2015. Therefore, the region would need to reduce its emissions even further in order to meet the above expected tougher NAAQS. While the recently adopted Tier 3 program will provide significant emissions reduction benefits from the transportation sector, MWAQC will need the support and consultation with TPB to examine emissions from the transportation sector and to identify new cost-effective strategies and opportunities to reduce emissions in order to meet the above expected tougher NAAQS. Please note that the MWAQC also intends to work with the non-transportation related sectors to reduce emission from those sectors in order to meet the expected tougher attainment requirements.

In its PM_{2.5} Maintenance Plan submitted in May 2013 to the EPA , the Washington region committed to update MVEBs for PM_{2.5} and oxides of nitrogen (NO_x) using the latest models by the end of 2015. EPA released a new version of the mobile emissions model called MOVES2014 in July 2014. This model includes the recently published Tier 3 vehicle emission and fuel standards rule as well as two greenhouse gas rules for motor vehicles. MWAQC would like to work with TPB to update the annual PM_{2.5} and NO_x MVEBs described in the above plan using the MOVES2014 model, updated 2014 motor vehicle registration data, and the most current version of TPB's Travel Demand Model.

MWAQC is encouraged to learn that the region is actually achieving reductions in per capita vehicle miles travelled (VMT), even with an increase in employment. We urge TPB's continued investment in VMT and emission reduction strategies including public transit, ride-sharing, and transit-oriented development, for example, to continue to mitigate future growth in vehicle emissions. MWAQC strongly urges TPB to maintain its commitments to Transportation Emission Reduction Measures and other emission reduction measures. All of these efforts are essential to meet the 2008 ozone standard and potentially more stringent ozone and fine particle standards expected in the future.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on the draft conformity analysis.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'DSnyder', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Hon. David Snyder, Chair
Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee