
TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
September 21, 2016

MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES PRESENT

Charles Allen, DC Council
Bob Brown, Loudoun County
Ron Burns, Frederick County
James Davenport, Prince William County
Allison Davis, WMATA
Marc Elrich, Montgomery County
Dan Emerine, DC Office of Planning
Gary Erenrich, Montgomery County DOT
Jay Fisette, Arlington County
Jason Groth, Charles County
Rene'e Hamilton, VDOT
Neil Harris, City of Gaithersburg
John Jenkins, Prince William County
R. Earl Lewis, Jr. MDOT
Tim Lovain, City of Alexandria
Dan Malouff, Arlington County
Phil Mendelson, DC Council
Ron Meyer, Loudoun County
Bridget Donnell Newton, City of Rockville
Martin Nohe, Prince William County
Mark Rawlings, DC DOT
Kelly Russell, City of Frederick
Elissa Silverman, DC Council
David Snyder, City of Falls Church
Tammy Stidham, NPS
Jonathan Way, Manassas City
Victor Weissberg, Prince George's County/DPW&T
Sam Zimbabwe, DDOT

MWCOG STAFF AND OTHERS PRESENT

John Swanson
Andrew Meese
Ron Milone
Nicholas Ramfos
Eric Randall
Daivamani Sivasailam
Rich Roisman
Mark Moran
Travis Johnston
Andrew Austin
Michael Farrell
Brandon Franklin
Jessica Mirr
Ben Hampton
Bryan Hayes

Abigail Zenner	
Sergio Ritacco	
Ken Joh	
Debbie Leigh	
Deborah Etheridge	
Chuck Bean	COG/EO
Bill Orleans	HACK
Mike Lake	Fairfax County
Norman Whitaker	VDOT
Pierre Holloman	City of Alexandria
Bobby Klancher	Loudoun County
Anne Carey	USP/Parsons
Nancy Abeles	TPB/CAC
Rob Whitfield	Fairfax County Taxpayers Alliance
Michael Henry	Media Beef, Inc.
Patrick Durany	Sup. Jenkins' Office/PWC
Sydney Hawthorne	Chairman Mendelson – DC Council
Kari Snyder	MDOT
Patricia Happ	NVTC
Chase Rudner	Coalition for Smarter Growth

1. PUBLIC COMMENT ON TPB PROCEDURES AND ACTIVITIES

No members of the public were present to comment to the board.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE JULY 20 TPB MEETING

Chairman Lovain thanked Ms. Newton for chairing the July TPB meeting.

A motion was made to approve the minutes from the July 20, 2016 TPB meeting. The motion was seconded and approved.

3. REPORT OF THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

Mr. Roseboom said that the Technical Committee met on September 9. At the meeting the committee was briefed on the 2016 State of the Commute survey, on the then upcoming September 15 TIP Forum, and on the USDOT proposed rulemaking relating to MPO boundaries. There was also an update on WMATA's SafeTrack surges and the Long Range Transportation Plan Task Force. He said that there were also presentations about Title VI and Environmental Justice regulations, the congestion management process, traffic incident response, the TIGER program, and the Multi-Sector Working Group.

4. REPORT OF THE CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Mr. Stewart said that the Citizens Advisory Committee met on September 15 to brainstorm thoughts on how public engagement could be used as part of the 2018 Long Range Transportation Plan update. He said that the committee discussed the interaction between local projects and regional planning efforts, and the challenges related to getting people excited about regional planning. He said that one way to possibly excite the public would be to demonstrate the impacts of possible investments. He said that the committee also encouraged TPB staff to be creative in using technology to reach out to the public. He said that the goal should be to complement ongoing local planning meetings to get input on regional projects.

Mr. Lovain said that public input is going to be an important part of the Long Range Transportation Plan update.

5. REPORT OF STEERING COMMITTEE

Mr. Srikanth referred to the Director's Report as he summarized the Steering Committee meeting, letters sent and received, and announcements. He said that the Steering Committee met on September 9 to approve two TIP amendments, one from the Virginia Department of Transportation and the other from the District Department of Transportation.

Mr. Srikanth said that the letters include one sent to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) requesting the extension of a comment period about changes to how MPO's define their planning areas. The request was not granted. He said that the TPB also sent comments to the FHWA about proposed changes to the National Performance Management System. The comments were technical. The departments of transportation in the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia also submitted comments on this subject. He said that the letters also included a letter to the FHWA and FTA commenting on how MPO planning areas are defined and how they conduct their coordination.

Mr. Srikanth said that announcements included two memos. The first memo described various Metrorail safety related activities, including: the East Falls Church Metrorail derailment; efforts to establish a Metro Safety Commission; and information on WMATA's SafeTrack program. The other memo was the final status update on the TPB's TIGER grant. He said that this concludes seven years of work and is a major accomplishment. Fifteen new projects were implemented in the region, using about \$59 million in TIGER grant funds. He thanked the participating jurisdictions and recognized Eric Randall, the TPB staff member who managed the TIGER program.

The board applauded in recognition of Mr. Randall.

Mr. Fisetle distributed a letter from the Secretary of the Virginia Department of Transportation to elected officials in Alexandria, Arlington, and Fairfax. He thanked the secretary for the letter. He said that the letter commits Virginia to provide at least \$15 million for transit TDM improvements and enhancements along the I-395/95 corridor. He said that Virginia will also ensure that excess revenues received by VDOT will be provided for transit and TDM services. He said that there is some uncertainty about whether or not this project will be a public/private partnership or will be publicly funded. Finally, he quoted the letter, saying, "Our major interstate corridors will have essentially reached their ultimate footprints where future widening will be cost prohibitive, and impacts to communities to great." He said that this is the reason that transit and TDM on I-395/95 is so important.

Mr. Fisetle asked VDOT whether or not more information on this subject will be released by VDOT. He asked for further clarification and for something official that can be incorporated into the CLRP resolution.

Ms. Hamilton said that VDOT supports Mr. Fisetle's request, and has additionally invited VDOT's Chief Financial Officer to the next meeting to discuss the letter and progress about the I-395/95 negotiations.

Mr. Fisetle asked if the TDM study would be done by the end of 2016.

Ms. Hamilton said the study would be complete.

Chairman Lovain said that the TPB appreciates VDOT's response.

Mr. Meyer asked that VDOT provide more information on the labor agreement for the I-395/95 project.

Ms. Hamilton said that information will be made available.

6. CHAIR'S REMARKS

Chairman Lovain summarized the three priorities he shared with the board at the January meeting.

He started with the Long-Range Plan Task Force and the effort to develop a list of unfunded projects. He said the first phase of the Long-Range Plan Task Force's work on unfunded projects has been completed. He said that the board will receive a complete report in November on that work. He said the goal is to include the unfunded project element in the 2018 CLRP. The second phase will be to select a subset of game changing projects for prioritization. Next he spoke about his interest in traffic incident management. In May, the region had its first ever convening of traffic incident management practitioner from the region. He said that on November 2, the TPB will host a follow-up conference on traffic incident management. He encouraged board members to attend. Finally, he said the TPB staff have been actively engaged with COG and the chief administrative officers of the Metro Compact. He said that this technical panel is working on four tasks: documenting current funding projections; developing operating benchmarks and performance metrics; exploring potential sources of revenue; and documenting the economic value of the Metrorail system to the region.

INFORMATION ITEMS

7. BRIEFING ON THE RELEASE OF A REGIONAL CARPOOLNOW MOBILE APPLICATION

Nick Ramfos briefed the board about Commuter Connections new mobile application, CarpoolNow. Referring to his presentation he explained how the application can connect riders and drivers looking to form a carpool in realtime based on their smartphone's GPS.

Mr. Lovain thanked Mr. Ramfos for the presentation and noted that the application is similar to the Uber app but is a free carpooling service. He also then thanked the DOTs for their supporting the effort and praised Commuter Connections for their work.

Mr. Allen asked if Mr. Ramfos knew how many people had downloaded the application.

Mr. Ramfos said he did not since it was still in a testing phase at that time but that it would go out to Commuter Connection's 75,000-person network and that they would be rolling out a marketing campaign for the product to get the word out.

Mr. Allen asked if they would be providing any incentives to get people to use it.

Mr. Ramfos replied that they are looking into that.

Mr. Erenrich asked if the service will be available for the whole region.

Mr. Ramfos said that it would be available throughout the entire region and that it would be something to promote for special events.

Mr. Erenrich commented that SafeTrack surge 10 could be a great opportunity to test it out while the Red Line is shut down. He said that they might want to market it sooner to get it out.

Mr. Fisette asked how feedback would be provided for riders and if there would be any rating system similar to Uber.

Mr. Ramfos said that they were looking into a rating system for riders and drivers. He also noted that they worked out the legal terms that users must be 18 years of age and that anyone doing anything inappropriate will be barred from using the app.

8. BRIEFING ON THE STATE OF THE COMMUTE REPORT

Referring to his presentation, Mr. Ramfos briefed the board on the highlights from the State of the Commute survey. He said the survey is conducted every three years. He spoke about findings related to commute mode shares, distance traveled and prevalent attitudes about transportation services that are available in the region. The presentation explained the early survey results showing that commutes are, on average, getting a bit longer but that commuters are driving alone less and teleworking and taking transit more. People who bicycle or walk to work are among the most satisfied with their commutes, while satisfaction among transit riders, drivers, and commuter rail passengers has dropped. The percentage of teleworkers has increased from 27 percent of commuters in 2013 to 32 percent. He said that staff has produced a technical report. A final report on the survey will be available midyear next year.

Ms. Newton asked about the finding that about half of respondents would consider shifting their commutes from the peak period if they would receive an incentive of \$3.00. She asked what was the origin of that number.

Mr. Ramfos said they have looked at other incentive programs that were out there and they took that number as an average. He said it was also an amount they were using for carpool incentives through Pool rewards but he also said it could change down the road.

9. BRIEFING ON THE FY 2017-2022 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) AND THE TIP FORUM

Mr. Austin said that the TPB is required to update its Financially Constrained Long-Range Transportation Plan (CLRP) and the Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) every four years. He said that the CLRP covers at least a 20-year planning period. The current planning horizon is 2040 and that the last major update was in 2010. He said the TIP covers a six-year period and goes through FY 2022. He said the TIP is updated every other year. He said that state DOTs program their specific federal, state, and local funding into the TIP. The TIP describes funding sources and more specific detail, things which are not included in the CLRP.

Mr. Austin said that TPB staff faces the challenges of sharing information about the TIP in a way that is useful and accessible to the public. One way that staff try to this is hosting a TIP Forum every other year. On September 15 the TPB hosted a TIP Forum in conjunction with the CAC meeting. The meeting was simulcast online. Staff sent out over 1,000 emails and postcards to people in the region announcing the event. Additionally, an article was written for TPB News and announcements were posted to Facebook and Twitter. Twenty residents from the region attended in person, and five participated online. He thanked staff from DDOT, MDOT, and VDOT for participating in the event.

Mr. Austin referred to his memo and aid that the TIP Forum covered project selection as well as the cycle and timing for TIP inputs. The current draft TIP contains over 300 projects that would cost about \$9 billion. He said that almost half of the TIP funding comes from state and local sources. He said that the Purple Line, Silver Line Phase II, South Capitol Street Bridge, I-66 multimodal improvements, and the I-495 interchange at the Greenbelt Metro station are all high-profile projects that could be found in the TIP. He said that the public had questions and discussed a range of topics, including: impacts of Maryland's new project scoring system; the lack of funding for specific projects; and the ability of the TIP to track funding for state of good repair. He said suggestions were made to incorporate better graphics to help explain information in the TIP.

Mr. Austin said that the next step is to develop a final draft and make it available for public comment. This final draft should include a financial summary with graphics, an index of projects by type, funding source, and location. All of this information will also be available on an online map of the TIP. Public comment starts on October 13 and runs through November. The board will be asked to approve the TIP

at the November meeting.

Mr. Lovain asked about the difference between the CLRP and the TIP.

Mr. Austin said that the CLRP is the long range plan, and that the TIP is the first six-years of the plan. He said the TIP can also be considered the budget for the plan, or the plan for implementation.

Mr. Emerine asked about the typical process for removing a project from the TIP.

Mr. Austin said that if a project is not shovel ready, or gets delayed, it can sit in the TIP for a while. Usually what happens is that an agency will reprogram that money to a project that is shovel ready or has political will behind it. He said that this is done through a TIP amendment, which is usually taken to the Steering Committee for approval, but also shared with the board.

Mr. Emerine asked how the TIP could be used to track funding for state of good repair.

Mr. Austin said that the TIP cannot track everything that happens in the region. That said, there are a number of maintenance and state of good repair projects in the TIP. Through this grouping, that money can be tracked. He added that the 2018 TIP will be developed differently, using performance-based programming. He said that it would be interesting to see how state of good repair funding will be reported under the new approach.

10. BRIEFING ON MITIGATION ACTIONS AND EXPERIENCES FROM WMATA'S SAFETRACK SURGE ACTIVITIES

Mr. Randall referred to his memo and provided some context about WMATA's SafeTrack program. He said that Surge 10 will begin at the end of October, which will completely shut down a portion of the Red Line between the Fort Totten and NoMa Metro stations. He said this may impact as many as 108,000 trips per work day.

Mr. Erenrich said that Montgomery County had a test case for how to prepare for Surge 10 when Surge 6 caused single tracking. Those preparations included shuttle buses and parking restrictions. He said the goal for Surge 10 is to provide alternatives for people who live and work in Montgomery County and rely on Metrorail. He said that shuttle service will be offered between Silver Spring and Fort Totten. He said that the shuttles will run from 5:30 to 10:00 a.m. and from 2:30 to 7:00 p.m. During this time the goal is to have 7-minute headways. He said that shuttles will make the Green Line a viable option for many. He said that the county is also working with MARC to help people commute using the Brunswick Line so people in Rockville, Germantown, and Gaithersburg can bypass Metro altogether to get downtown. To make sure that traffic moves well, he said that the county will prohibit parking in Silver Spring during the commute. This will help buses and carpoolers to flow more freely. Finally, he said that he is working with the State Highway Administration to make sure there is no construction on roads that might cause additional traffic.

Mr. Zimbabwe said that the District is also building on lessons learned from previous surges. He said that Surge 10 will be the first time that a major shutdown will occur during school, since the Red Line is used by many children. He said that students may be among the most confused by the change. He said that DDOT is working with DCPS to make sure that information is getting out to these children and their families as early as possible. Additionally, he said that there will be off-street bus staging at all affected Metro stations, except NoMa, to help circulate people. He said that there will be additional bikeshare corrals for people who choose to bike.

Mr. Hamre said that Metro will be working with Montgomery and the District to provide shuttles between Fort Totten and NoMa stations. He said that Metro will encourage people to use the Green Line. He said that the area effected by Surge 10 is well served by buses. People are also encouraged to utilize existing bus services and to explore bus routes on other corridors, like 14th Street and Georgia Avenue.

Metro has 60 buses from the fleet dedicated to the shuttle service and the additional route services, and they'll be utilizing as many as 100 operators a day to provide these additional services.

Ms. Sullivan said that a report comes out after each surge. Referring to her presentation she described the impacts of Surge 7. She said that the goal of SafeTrack is to do three years of track maintenance in 12 months. To date, Metro has replaced more than 10,000 cross-ties, 10,000 fasteners, and more than 13,000 linear feet of rail. She said that this information is shared with local government and the media. She said that the goal is to make this information easy for the public to understand.

Ms. Sullivan said that WMATA released a revised SafeTrack plan that was developed in coordination with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). This revised schedule builds on lessons learned and a need to improve productivity. She said that the SafeTrack plan for 2017 will be released in December.

Ms. Silverman asked three questions. First, she wanted to know how SafeTrack has impacted congestion. Second, she is concerned about people not returning to Metro after SafeTrack. And third, referring to the presentation, it might make people uncomfortable to see that "most tasks are complete" (because this would seem to imply that some tasks are not complete).

Ms. Sullivan said that Metro's construction and repair crews would not leave a section of track if it were unsafe.

Ms. Silverman said that there needs to be an information program encouraging people to return to Metrorail after a surge is completed.

Ms. Sullivan said that it is taking riders longer to come back than planned. She said that they are coming back. Just not as quickly.

Ms. Silverman asked again about congestion.

Mr. Randall said that the TPB has monitored congestion and conducted an analysis of the first four surges that was published in TPB News. He said that congestion does get worse in SafeTrack work zones, but because the region is so big, it is not possible to say whether or not SafeTrack is having a bigger impact outside work zone areas. He also said that every surge is unique, so it is hard to draw lessons from one to the next.

Mr. Allen asked why Metro is not tracking success using a metric that measures how many people return to Metrorail. He said that is an important issue that relates to the long-term sustainability of the entire Metrorail system.

Ms. Sullivan said that she would take that idea back to Metro for further discussion. She said that Metro is working with the FTA to ensure safety on a daily basis.

Mr. Allen said that we need to be explicit and say that there needs to be a metric used to measure success: who returns to the system.

Mr. Erenrich said that many people in Montgomery County were happy with alternatives, and may make the move away from Metrorail to bus and MARC.

11. BRIEFING ON FEDERAL PLANNING REGULATIONS

Mr. Srikanth described proposed rulemaking that would impact MPOs. He said that the rule proposed by the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) intend to: strengthen coordination between MPOs importance and states; promote regional approaches to transportation planning; and emphasize the of the regional perspective. He said that for a pro-active and high-performing MPO such as the TPB, these activities are already underway. He said the TPB supports the stated intent, but that there are concerns about how the proposed rules would achieve the outcomes. He said that the rules can be grouped into three

topics: the planning area for each MPO; the planning products that each MPO creates; and the process that each MPO uses to develop those products.

Mr. Srikanth said that the first rule states that the planning area should not be focused on one urbanized area, but it should also include all of the areas that would be contiguous over the next 20 years. He said that if this were to be the case we would end up with rather large planning areas. He said that the expectation is that there would be a single MPO for a large area. He referred to the map in his presentation and said the map includes the TPB's planning area – which already includes three discrete urbanized areas – and the planning area of neighboring MPOs, including Fredericksburg and Baltimore. He said that at a minimum, according to the new rule the TPB would need to merge with the Fredericksburg and Baltimore MPOs. He adds that depending on the interpretation of the rule, all of the urbanized areas that connect to these places would also need to be included in the MPO. This would extend the planning area to near Philadelphia in Delaware, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. He said that the current TPB planning area covers 3,500 square miles and is inhabited by 5 million people. This larger potential planning area is more than 11,000 miles and includes 15 million people, six states, and more than 40 jurisdictions.

Mr. Srikanth said that the second element of the proposed rule states that if there are multiple MPOs in a planning area, the planning products should all be unified. This would mean that there should be a single constrained long-range plan and a single transportation improvement program for that entire region. This also includes a single conformity analysis and shared performance targets. He said that the TPB believes that coordinating these products and processes across a six state region would be impractical.

Mr. Srikanth said that the third element of the proposed rule says that MPOs would have to coordinate all of the data, financial assumptions, and policy assumptions that would be used for analysis. He said that there is not much clarity on what this rule would be expected to accomplish. He said that, for example, it is conceivable that under the rule the TPB would need to consult with residents of Delaware and New Jersey for project decisions that are being made in the Washington region.

Mr. Srikanth said that the TPB comment urged USDOT to withdraw the proposed rule changes. He said that while the TPB agrees with the stated intent of the rules, USDOT should share perceived delicacies in the existing coordinated planning process that could perhaps be improved within the framework of the existing rule.

Chairman Lovain said that it is not farfetched that according to the proposed rule there would be one MPO stretching from Florida to Maine along east coast. Fortunately, he said that MPOs around the country have also sent their objections to USDOT. He asked if the second half of this presentation could be postponed to the October meeting.

Mr. Srikanth said that the presentation on the first performance-based rules to go into effect can be presented at the next board meeting.

OTHER ITEMS

12. ADJOURN

No other business was brought before the board. The meeting was adjourned at 2:08 p.m.