

TPB R6-2009
September 17, 2008

NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD
777 North Capitol Street, N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20002

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE
POLICY PRINCIPLES FOR THE 2009 AUTHORIZATION OF
FEDERAL SURFACE TRANSPORTATION PROGRAMS

WHEREAS, the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB), which is the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for the Washington Region, has the responsibility under provisions of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act - A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) for developing and carrying out a continuing, cooperative and comprehensive transportation planning process for the Metropolitan Area; and

WHEREAS, since 2000 the TPB has been calling attention to the region's long-term transportation funding shortfall, and has documented its unmet preservation, rehabilitation and capacity expansion needs for the region's highway and transit systems; and

WHEREAS, while the federal SAFETEA-LU legislation in 2005 provided a significant increase in funding for the region's highway and transit systems, these funding increases have been partly offset by rapid inflation in construction and energy costs; and

WHEREAS, the Washington region continues to face the challenges of accommodating growth in people and employment, more pervasive congestion on highways and transit systems, and delays in completing critical rehabilitation needs and key expansion projects; and

WHEREAS, the SAFETEA-LU legislation expires on September 30, 2009, and a number of current study and legislative proposals are providing recommendations for the program structure and funding for a new 2009 authorization of the federal surface transportation programs; and

WHEREAS, on July 16, 2008, the TPB was briefed on the report of the most prominent of these study and legislative efforts, the National Surface Transportation Policy and Revenue Study Commission, and on a number of common themes concerning the restructuring of federal transportation programs in the Policy and Revenue Study Commission report and several other proposals including:

- Interim Report of the National Surface Transportation Infrastructure Financing Commission,
- Proposed Infrastructure Banking Legislation,

- Proposed Climate Change Legislation.
- U.S. Department of Transportation Proposals,
- TPB staff Testimony of April 9, 2008 to House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, Panel on Transportation Challenges in Metropolitan Areas,
- Metropolitan Mobility Caucus announced on July 8, 2008; and

WHEREAS, at the July 17 meeting, the TPB asked staff to develop a set of potential responses to these various proposals that Board members might use as they participate in the extensive discussions and debate over the 2009 authorization that will take place over the coming year; and

WHEREAS, on September 5, 2008 the TPB Technical Committee received a briefing and commented on draft proposed policy principles based on the common themes identified in the July 16 briefing to the TPB; and

WHEREAS, at the September 17, 2008 meeting, the TPB received an update on current study and legislative proposals for the 2009 authorization of the federal surface transportation programs;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD approves the attached Policy Principles for the 2009 Authorization of Federal Surface Transportation Programs.

Adopted by the Transportation Planning Board at its regular meeting on September 17, 2008

NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD

Policy Principles for the 2009 Authorization of Federal Surface Transportation Programs

1. Fundamental changes are needed in the current structure and funding of federal surface transportation programs: current planning, programming, and environmental processes are overly cumbersome and inefficient, and inadequate funding levels are resulting in serious under-investment in transportation.
2. An explicit program focus is needed to put and keep the nation's transportation infrastructure in a state of good repair, and to ensure that it is operated efficiently and safely.
3. Decisions on investment in new transportation capacity should be based on a rigorous and comprehensive analysis of economic, social and environmental benefits and costs, which assesses all modal and intermodal options with uniform evaluation procedures and criteria.
4. Federal transportation policy should provide for increased federal funding focused on metropolitan congestion and other metropolitan transportation challenges, with stronger partnerships between federal, state, regional and local transportation officials.
5. A substantial increase in federal transportation funding will be needed to address the current under-investment in the nation's transportation system, and should be sought from:
 - Increases in federal fuel taxes or other user-based taxes and fees;
 - Pricing strategies enabled by emerging technology for all modes of travel, including rates that vary by time of day, type of vehicle, level of emissions, and specific infrastructure segments used;
 - Inclusion of major transportation investments in legislation to create national infrastructure banks or bonding programs; and
 - Auction of pollution emissions allowances.

Approved September 17, 2008