
**TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD
MEETING MINUTES**

July 21, 2021

VIRTUAL MEETING

MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES PRESENT

Charles Allen, TPB Chair – DC Council
Ella Hanson – DC Council
Brook Pinto – DC Council
Christina Henderson – DC Council
Andrew Trueblood – DC Office of Planning
Kristin Calkins – DC Office of Planning
Mark Rawlings – DDOT
Anna Chamberlin – DDOT
Lezlie Rupert – DDOT
Adrian Boafo - Bowie
Rueben Collins - Charles County
Jason Groth – Charles County
Patrick Wojahn – College Park
Denise Mitchell – College Park
Jan Gardner – Frederick County
Mark Mishler – Frederick County
Kelly Russell – City of Frederick
David Edmonson – City of Frederick
Neil Harris – Gaithersburg
Emmet V. Jordan – Greenbelt
Michael R. Leszcz – Laurel
Marc Elrich – Montgomery County Executive
Christopher Conklin – Montgomery County Executive
Gary Erenrich – Montgomery County Executive
Hannah Henn – Montgomery County Executive
Glen Orlin – Montgomery County Legislative
Terry Bellamy – Prince George’s County Executive
Victor Weissberg – Prince George’s County Executive
Deni Taveras – Prince George’s County Legislative
Bridget Donnell Newton – Rockville
Emad Elshafei - Rockville
Kacy Kostiuk – Takoma Park
Marc Korman – Maryland House of Delegates
Carol Krimm – Maryland House of Delegates
Nancy King – Maryland Senate
R. Earl Lewis, Jr. – MDOT
Canek Aguirre – Alexandria
Christian Dorsey – Arlington County
Dan Malouff – Arlington County
David Meyer – City of Fairfax
Walter Alcorn – Fairfax County
James Walkinshaw – Fairfax County
David Snyder – Falls Church

Adam Shellenberger – Fauquier County
Matthew Letourneau – Loudoun County
Robert Brown – Loudoun County
Kristen Umstattd – Loudoun County
Pamela Sebesky – Manassas
Jeannette Rishell – Manassas Park
Ann B. Wheeler – Prince William County
Paolo Belita – Prince William County
David Reid – Virginia House
David Marsden – Virginia Senate
Maria Sinner – VDOT
Rob Cary – VDOT
Norman Whitaker – VDOT
Mark Phillips – WMATA
Sandra Jackson – FHWA
Tammy Stidham – NPS
Dan Koenig – FTA
Julia Koster – NCPC

MWCOG STAFF AND OTHERS PRESENT

Kanti Srikanth
Chuck Bean
Lyn Erickson
Mark Moran
Tim Canan
Andrew Meese
Nick Ramfos
Tom Gates
Sharon Pandak
Stacy Cook
Abigail Zenner
Leo Pineda
Sergio Ritacco
John Swanson
Sarah Bond
Kyona Davis
Eric Randall
Jane Posey
Dusan Vuksan
Deborah Etheridge
Lynn Winchell-Mendy
Dusan Vuksan
William Bacon
Jen Desimone
Jon Schermann
Feng Xie
Erin Marrow

Greg Slater – MDOT
Jeff Folden – MDOT
K. Youngsbluth - DRPT
Christopher Laskowski – DC Council

Materials referenced in the minutes can be found here:
mwcog.org/events/2021/7/21/transportation-planning-board/

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

Chair Allen called the meeting to order and reminded the board that the meeting was being recorded and broadcast. He said the process for asking questions and voting would be the same as at previous meetings. After each item, members would be asked to comment or vote by jurisdiction.

Ms. Erickson conducted a roll call. Members that were present are listed on the first pages of the minutes.

Ms. Erickson said that the TPB received a total of 563 comments for the July TPB meeting. Nineteen of those comments were letters from organizations and the public. Fifty-six of the comments were received by VDOT and forwarded to the TPB. There was one transcribed voicemail. She summarized those comments and said that 270 of the comments asked the board to remove the I-270 project from the plan. There were 293 comments asking the TPB to include the I-270 and I-495 project in the plan. She said that the memo for this item included a more detailed summary of public comment.

2. APPROVAL OF THE JUNE 16, 2021 MEETING MINUTES

A motion was made to approve the minutes from the June TPB meeting.

Mr. Aguirre seconded the motion.

The board approved the minutes unanimously.

3. TECHNICAL COMMITTEE REPORT

Chair Allen referred to the Technical Committee Report and encouraged board members to review that document. There were no questions.

4. COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT

Chair Allen referred to the Community Advisory Committee report and encouraged board members to review that document. There were no questions.

5. STEERING COMMITTEE ACTIONS AND DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Chair Allen referred to the Director's Report and encouraged board members to review that document.

Mr. Srikanth said that the Steering Committee acted to approve recommended projects for funding under the Transportation Alternatives Program. He said that the list of six projects from Maryland are on page 10 and 11 of the report. He said the four projects from the District of Columbia are described on page 13.

Mr. Srikanth said that the Steering Committee also acted to approve a WMATA request to amend the TPB's FY 2022 TIP to make revisions to funding in all 13 categories. He said that some members had commented that WMATA's schedule to transition to electric buses would have to be expedited to help the region meet its greenhouse gas reduction goals.

Mr. Letourneau, as a WMATA board member, offered at a future meeting to share his perspective about the agency's strategic plan and work on sustainability and fleet planning.

6. CHAIR'S REMARKS

Chair Allen welcomed new members to the board: Ms. King from the Maryland senate, Ms. Gardner from Frederick County, and Mr. Reid from Virginia. He said that while there were not many items on the agenda, he believes all available time would be needed to cover them.

Chair Allen said that Item 9 would revisit the decision made by the board at the June meeting approving project inputs for regional air quality conformity analysis. He reminded the board that the TPB is currently engaged in an update to the long-range transportation plan for the national capital region. He said that the regional transportation plan essentially reflects transportation plans that detail investments to expand, operate and maintain the transportation system, as decided by the various member agencies. He said that these decisions about the plan should be made in a manner that advances a set of regional priorities that this board has developed over a long period of time, for a sustainable, livable mobility that brings prosperity to all within the region. At the June meeting, the board collectively determined that HOT lanes proposed for portions of I-495 and I-270 did not appear to have broad support, so the board voted not to proceed with the proposal for those projects.

Chair Allen said that there have been two developments since the June meeting. First, several board members have asked to re-examine the decision taken last month. Second, MDOT said that by removing I-495/I-270 HOT lanes project from the plan, MDOT would lose \$1.2 billion in revenues that it had planned to leverage for other projects that were approved by the board in June. As such if the I-495/I-270 HOT lanes project was not added back to the plan restoring the revenues, MDOT would have to remove a few other projects that the board approved last month in order to balance the budget. He said both requests would be considered under Item 9.

Chair Allen said that since the two requests are interdependent, he would begin by first considering the request to reinstate the I-495/I-270 HOT lanes project. Depending on the outcome of that action, he would determine if the board would need to consider removing additional projects from the list it approved last month. Mr. Allen said that he would allocate time to each speaker to discuss Item 9, not to curtail discussion rather to be fair to all and efficient. Describing the process, he said that for Item 9, he would first ask Mr. Srikanth to briefly recap the action that is in front of the board. Then MDOT would be given five minutes to present their case to add the project back. He said that after that he would recognize members for a limited amount time to provide their comments starting with 5 minutes for Montgomery County Executive and then 2 minutes for the remaining members. He said that he was starting with Montgomery County and giving them more time since the county had proposed dropping the HOT lanes project and also he understood that the county had had discussions with MDOT and plans to offer an alternate resolution for us to consider under item 9. He said that if time remains after everyone who wanted to speak did speak, then there could be another round of discussion before taking a weighted vote.

He said that if the project does not get added back, then we will take up the second request and consider removing additional projects from the list the board approved last month. If the project is added back, then no further changes would be needed, and thus the second request would not be considered by the board.

ACTION ITEMS

7. REGIONAL ROADWAY SAFETY PROGRAM APPROVAL

Mr. Schermann referred to his presentation and said he is pleased to share the first set of recommended projects to receive funding from the Regional Roadway Safety Program. He said this program was established and funded by the TPB in 2020. He said the purpose of the program is to “assist TPB member jurisdictions and the region to develop and/or implement projects, programs, or policies to equitably improve safety outcomes for all roadway users.” He said that the Regional Roadway

Safety Program provides technical assistance to member jurisdictions and agencies for projects that promote the TPB's roadway safety priorities. He said that funding for these projects ranges from \$30,000 to \$60,000 for planning projects and up to \$80,000 for projects that include preliminary engineering. The application period was open from January to March. During that time, 11 applications were submitted requesting a total of \$700,000 in funding. He described the composition of the selection panel.

Mr. Schermann said that five of the projects were selected for funding. He said that all of these projects address one or more of the TPB's funding priorities and that all of them either directly or indirectly encourage improved roadway use behavior. He said three of the projects are from Maryland and two are from Virginia. More detail on the selected projects can be found in the presentation and materials for this item.

Chair Allen made a motion to approve the Regional Roadway Safety Program technical assistance recipients.

Ms. Russell seconded the motion.

Chair Allen asked when the next round of applications will be submitted. He asked when the projects will be sent back to the TPB for approval.

Mr. Schermann said the next round of applications, for FY 2022, will be in August. He said the projects would be brought back to the board for approval before the end of year.

Chair Allen said that this work is really important and that he is glad to see that so many of the selected projects focus on Equity Emphasis Areas.

Mr. Lewis said that this is a great program and that MDOT looks forward to working with the region as it moves forward.

Mr. Snyder said that daily headlines remind us that motor vehicle-related fatalities and injuries continue to plague this region. He said that the board has taken a series of steps to improve roadway safety in the region and that he looks forward to progress reports on safety in the future.

Mr. Cary said that roadway safety and saving lives is the number one priority for VDOT.

The board approved the Regional Roadway Safety Program technical assistance recipients.

8. AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT OF 2021 (ARPA) FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS AND FY 2021-2024 TIP AMENDMENT TO INCLUDE THE PROJECTS

Ms. Winchell-Mendy referred to her presentation and said that the American Rescue Plan Act included \$50 million for 5310 Enhanced Mobility projects in the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia. She said the funding does not require a local funding match and is prioritized for operating expenses, payroll, and transportation to vaccination sites. The award can be retroactively dated to January 2020. Eligibility is the same as in previous legislation, so awards will go to existing or recent sub-recipients of Enhanced Mobility for the same project or purpose. The selection committee recommended five of the nine submitted projects for funding. More details on the recommended projects can be found in the materials and presentation for this item.

Chair Allen made a motion to adopt Resolution R1-2022 to approve the supplemental Enhanced Mobility grand funding and to amend the TPB's TIP to include these projects.

Ms. Sebesky seconded the motion.

The board voted unanimously to approve the resolution.

9. AMENDING THE CONFORMITY PROJECTS APPROVED ON JUNE 16, 2021 (RESOLUTION R19-2021) TO RE-ESTABLISH THE FISCAL CONSTRAINT FOR MARYLAND PROJECTS

Mr. Allen recapped the process he had outlined during his remarks, which he would be using to facilitate discussions under this item. He then asked Mr. Srikanth to provide a quick review of action the board had for consideration. Mr. Srikanth said that there were two parts to this agenda item. Part A was a proposal to add the Maryland I-495/I-270 HOT lanes project – that was removed at the June meeting – to the conformity inputs for analysis. Part B proposed removing a few projects from the conformity inputs and would be dependent on the outcome of Part A. He said he would focus on Part A. He said that the board will be considering a request made by MDOT and at least six other TPB members to amend the list of projects to be included in the air quality conformity analysis that the board approved on June 16. He said that the request was to add the Maryland I-495/I-270 HOT lanes construction project. He said Resolution R2-2022 is what the board will be working with and a number of support documents that had been provided to members. He described additional materials and said that they include summary documents that support the resolution, including a TPB staff memo that provided the background for the action. The materials also included copies of all the letters the TPB received from members and other legislative bodies. He also noted that he had provided members, via an email that morning, a proposed amendment to the staff Resolution R2-2022 that had been provided by Montgomery County. Mr. Srikanth said that if the board did not approve the resolution, then the discussion would move to Part B, for the purpose of considering MDOT's proposal to remove five additional projects from the list that the TPB approved in June. He said if the board were to entertain this request it would issue notice of its intent to remove these projects at this meeting and convene a special board meeting on August 18 to take that action. The reason MDOT has provided for proposing to remove the five projects is that the removal of the Maryland I-495/I-270 HOT lanes project last month from the plan also eliminated the private revenue associated with that project. Some of that private funding was planned to be used to leverage Maryland state funding for other projects. With no additional funding to offset this loss of revenue, the only way to balance the finances would be to remove these five projects.

Mr. Slater provided an overview of MDOT's request to add the project back into conformity inputs. He said that Marylanders were returning to the roadways, approaching pre-pandemic levels, and that traffic volumes on the Capital Beltway at the American Legion Bridge have exceeded pandemic levels for the same week in July. He said traffic data illustrates that I-270 from the split from MD 117 and then on I-495 from the Virginia line to the I-270 West spur is the highest daily traffic in the state. He said to address this issue, the Governor proposed the system of HOT lanes four years ago. He said that the project the TPB has in front of them today is however not the same project that was first proposed. He noted that based on public input and coordination with local partners, the scope of the project had been reduced. He said the project now incentivizes people, not cars. He said that the state has committed to bicycle and pedestrian crossings over the Potomac River. He noted that much of the new added lanes on I-270 will be done by repurposing the pavement between the general-purpose lanes and the collector/distributor (CD) lanes. He said that other accommodations have been made. He said that based on this work, the plan proposed by MDOT is in sync with the TPB's Aspirational Initiative to Expand the Express Highway Network. Similar to Virginia's experience with its HOT lanes, he said that MDOT models show reduction of congestion on I-270 and I-495. He said that the project under discussion the board is regionally focused, it is interconnected, it is multimodal, and it includes a piece of critical infrastructure for the region. He said that from the perspective of a state of good repair, the region's needs are significant. He said that bridges and trails in the region, including the American Legion Bridge, are in need of attention. He said MDOT has a \$4 billion backlog on highway projects and a \$2 billion backlog on transit. He said that this project included \$6 billion in private equity which would offset the \$1.23 billion in public financing needed to maintain a state of good repair without providing congestion relief. He thanked the board for considering this project once again and moved adoption of the resolution by the TPB.

Chair Allen checked with legal counsel on the process.

Ms. Pandak said that MDOT has decided to proceed with their original resolution. She said the resolution needs to be seconded in order to proceed.

Ms. Russell seconded the motion.

Mr. Elrich from Montgomery County began by offering an amendment to the resolution that had been moved and seconded and said that he hoped it would be accepted as a friendly amendment.

Mr. Lewis and Ms. Russell indicated that each accepted the amendment as friendly.

Mr. Elrich said Montgomery County is going to vote against this project because he believes that nothing has changed since the previous vote. He said that there is broad agreement that the I-270 and I-495 corridors are plagued with problems and that toll financing might be appropriate and tolls might be useful as a demand management strategy. He said that 76 of 78 state legislators have opposed this plan since an evaluation of the state's ability to raise the money needed instead of having the private sector raise the funds. He said he believes the state can borrow money for less than the private sector and the project needs to be delivered as cost-effectively as possible. He said that in the past he advocated for improving the American Legion Bridge. He said he wants to solve three major issues. First, this plan does not require that this project go from the bridge to Frederick. He said that he is negotiating an agreement to have the project go up to Frederick in a uniform piece. Second, he said he is still interested in reversible lanes on I-270 and believes it will work since the state's demand projections are pre-pandemic and he expects there to be less peak period demand post pandemic. Third, the projected tolls are extraordinarily high and would not be affordable to many of the County's residents. He said his preferred solution is putting the bridge back into the plan and giving the state and counties more time to work through the details.

Chair Allen said that board members will be given two minutes each to discuss this item.

Mr. Orlin said he is a long-time board alternate member. He said that the Montgomery County Council supported the revised resolution, with the technical adjustments, proposed by Mr. Elrich. He said it addresses congestion by allowing use of HOT lanes without requiring it. It also allows for a bus rapid transit system to use the HOT lanes and serve locations along I-270 and also into Virginia. He noted that the proposal does include a northern phase that goes from I-370 to Frederick. He drew attention to three conditions included in this amendment. Among these, he said that \$145 million of the money paid by the private contractor would be used for development costs, with \$60 million of that to design either the Corridor Cities transitway or the Maryland 355 bus rapid transit project and another \$300 million to support other transit initiatives in the corridor.

Mr. Harris said that Gaithersburg has no Metrorail stations and that residents rely on highways more than people who live in the core of the region. He said that the additional funding for long-planned transit improvements including the Corridor Cities Transitway and the Route 355 BRT are also important to give residents in Gaithersburg high-quality transit access to the region. He encouraged the board to add the American Legion Bridge and the I-495/I-270 project back into the air quality conformity analysis.

Ms. Newton asked VDOT to confirm that there is an agreement with Transurban whereby Virginia would be penalized if transit was encouraged across the updated American Legion Bridge.

Mr. Cary said that no such agreement is in place.

Ms. Newton asked again if there is no penalty to Virginia for putting transit on the American Legion Bridge or along I-495 and I-95.

Mr. Cary said that there is no agreement about a penalty along I-495. He said he needs to check to be sure there is no agreement that would penalize Virginia for putting transit on I-95.

Ms. Newton made a motion to table the discussion. She said the reason is that it is unusual to receive a correction via email regarding this item 15 minutes before the start of the meeting. She said the TPB and her colleagues in Rockville were not given adequate time to review the change. She said she agreed with Mr. Harris that transit is needed in this part of the region. She said the plan, as proposed, would not bring transit and was unclear on what toll prices would be.

Chair Allen asked legal counsel about procedure about Ms. Newton's proposal to table the motion.

Ms. Pandak said a second was needed to proceed with Ms. Newton's motion.

Mr. Elrich seconded the motion.

Chair Allen said that a motion has been made and seconded to table the discussion on this item. Underneath that is a motion made by Mr. Elrich to amend the plan. He asked for a vote on the motion to table the discussion.

Ms. Erickson conducted a roll call vote.

Chair Allen clarified that the motion to table the discussion does not necessarily guarantee the discussion would be brought back next month. He said that a motion to table means motion to take it off the table, meaning it is no longer before us and that it does not mean motion to postpone, for example, or motion to a date certain, which would automatically bring it back before us. Ms. Pinto asked whether an approval of the motion to table meant the item could be discussed in the future.

Chair Allen said that was correct.

Mr. Leszcz asked whether approval of the motion to table would mean that the resolution approved in June would stand.

Chair Allen said that was correct.

The following members voted 'yes' to the motion to table the discussion: Mr. Boaf, Mr. Wojahn, Mr. Jordan, Mr. Elrich, Ms. Newton, Ms. Kostiuk, and Mr. Korman.

The following members voted 'no' to the motion to table the discussion: Ms. Pinto, Chair Allen, Ms. Henderson, Mr. Collins, Mr. Gardner, Ms. Russell, Mr. Harris, Mr. Leszcz, Mr. Orlin, Mr. Bellamy, Mr. Taveras, Ms. King, Mr. Lewis, Mr. Aquirre, Mr. Dorsey, Mr. Meyer, Mr. Alcorn, Mr. Walkinshaw, Mr. Snyder, Mr. Shellenberger, Mr. Letourneau, Ms. Umstadd, Ms. Sebesky, Ms. Rishell, Ms. Wheeler, Mr. Belita, Mr. Reid, Mr. Marsden, and Mr. Cary.

The following members abstained in the motion to table: Mr. Trueblood, Ms. Chamberlin, and Mr. Phillips.

Ms. Erickson said 7 members voted to table the discussion, 29 voted against tabling the discussion, and three members abstained.

Chair Allen turned the floor back to Ms. Newton who had 90 seconds left to speak.

Ms. Newton asked to reserve her time for later in this round of discussion.

Mr. Cary said, in response to Ms. Newton's earlier question on penalty for transit expansion of I 95, the current agreement notes that Metrorail cannot be expanded within the right-of-way for the I-95 corridor, but it could be expanded outside the immediate corridor, like the Yellow or Blue line.

Mr. Korman said he had three questions for MDOT. First, he asked if the development rights fee was to repay the transportation trust fund for money already expended, or if the money was available for other projects. Second, he asked what it means "that the bridge will structurally support a future transit line." Third, he asked if the draft CTP coming out in the fall of 2021 will show funding for projects threatened to be defunded.

Mr. Slater said that the development rights fee would go back into the trust fund to repay the project development activities of this plan. He said a portion of that money would be used to invest in the engineering of the Corridor Cities Transitway. He said that the American Legion Bridge is being planned with adaptive capacity, so that it is capable of being adapted to support the greater weight of a new transit line without expanding the bridge's footprint. He said MDOT is currently evaluating the draft CTP. He said the priorities have not changed and would focus on system preservation.

Mr. Korman urged board members not to change their votes from the previous month.

Mr. Wojahn said that College Park would continue its opposition to this expansion. He said that in the past MDOT made promises that similar expansions would resolve congestion, but those promises did not bear out. He said no information has been presented to show why things are different this time. Last week the College Park City Council voted unanimously to oppose the expansion of I-495 and I-270. He said College Park supports smart growth development and transit alternatives instead of roadway expansion. He said that he will vote no to prevent the projects from being added back into the long-range plan.

Ms. King asked if the project on I-270 stops at the ICC or goes all the way to Frederick. She also asked for clarification on what the toll rates would be.

Mr. Slater said that that the public private partnership includes the stretch from the George Washington Parkway across the American Legion Bridge and up I-270 to Frederick. He said that there were two environmental studies that cover this area. One is the managed lane study that goes to the ICC. The second is a managed lane study that goes to Fredrick. Regarding tolls, he said that the tolling structure is different than what has been used across the country and has a hard cap and a soft cap. He said that in Maryland on Phase I South, the most common trip would be about six miles, between G.W. Parkway and MD 187, while the total distance between G.W. Parkway and I-370 is about 12 miles. He said that the weekday average tolls are projected to be around \$4.42 northbound per trip, and \$3.44 southbound per trip. He noted, for comparison, that in Virginia the average tolls on I-495 and I-95 are around \$5 and \$8 per trip respectively. On I-495, 87 percent of their trips were less than \$12, and 85 percent of their customers spent less than \$20 a month.

Ms. King reserved the remainder of her time.

Ms. Kostiuk said she does not support adding the project back into the long-range plan. She said that the City of Takoma Park believes that the board made the right choice the previous month by voting to remove the project. She said the concerns voiced then remain valid. She said this project moves the region backwards on climate change. She said that there are more visionary alternatives for the Washington region that would fund projects that focus on transit and make it safer and easier to walk and bike around the region.

Mr. Jordan said that the City of Greenbelt's council is unified in opposition to adding these projects back into the plan. He said there is agreement that the American Legion Bridge corridor is a priority for investment. He added that there are significant flaws in the plan as proposed. He said the plan does not address access and equity concerns. He added that residents of Prince George's County would pay more. He said it was problematic to select a vendor prior to completing the environmental impact study. He said there are additional unintended consequences of repurposing HOV lanes for use as toll lanes.

Ms. Gardner asked about the commitment to transit investments that would be appropriately scaled for the Phase I North component of the project. She also said that her vote today represents the majority opinion of the County Council and that she had polled the County Council and there was no split between the Council and the County Executive.

Mr. Slater said that Phase I will have the same appropriate type of transit investment. He said that the Board of Public Works has a condition that the transit investments from toll revenue go directly to impacted jurisdictions. He said this is true in Phase II and that MDOT would work with the County on this.

Ms. Taveras said the concerns about the project raised are valid. She said her vote would reflect the majority of the council of Prince George's County. She said at the end of the day, the TPB should not be political. Most of the outstanding concerns should be part of the EIS and NEPA processes. She said they should be raised at the Board of Public Works and in the General Assembly. She asked if Maryland would have to wait until 2025 to resubmit the project, if the board voted not to add the projects back into the long-range plan,

Ms. Srikanth said no. He explained that for the projects not currently included in the current plan update, the earliest it could be added back in would be mid-2022. He added it would take an additional nine months to get it approved by the federal agencies. He said that in this scenario, federal approval likely would not come until mid-2023.

Ms. Taveras asked about the robustness of the air quality conformity analysis in that scenario.

Mr. Srikanth said that it would be as robust as it always is.

Mr. Dorsey said that his vote in June to remove the I-495 and I-270 projects from the long-range plan was not intended to inject Arlington County into the decision-making process in Maryland. He said after reviewing the updated resolution, he felt that the improvements clarify a commitment to transit and to engaging with localities for best implementation solutions. He said he would vote to add the project back into the plan and hoped to see Maryland regional consensus.

Mr. Letourneau commended the Chairman for his professionalism in handling what has to be one of the most challenging virtual meetings of the entire pandemic. He said that he would speak to the matter from a regional perspective and noted that Virginia had set a path years ago on HOT lanes. He said HOT lanes have their pros and cons, but they have contributed to economic growth and moving more people. Virginia also demonstrated the ability to fund transit with toll revenue. He said Maryland is now making a similar commitment. He said that there are no questions that climate change is going to require a full series of solutions. He said this is the epitome of a regional project and that removing it from the plan hurts the region.

Mr. Cary said that Virginia residents, businesses, and commuters have seen benefits of tolled express lanes. He said the I-95 Express Lanes move twice as many people per lane compared to general purpose lanes. The reason is that bus trips and carpool trips via the express lanes have grown considerably. He noted that since 2015, bus trips on the I-95 express lanes have increased 150 percent. Beltway carpooling has increased 550 percent between the express lanes' opening and early 2020, and that transit trips on the Virginia express lanes remove more than 112 million passenger miles each year and prevent the release of more than 6,000 metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions annually. He said that if the I-495/I-270 project is added back to the plan, Maryland would see similar benefits. He said Virginia's experience with express lanes can be instructive. He said that with a million more people expected to move to the region in the next 20 years, this project is vital for the region's mobility.

Ms. Rishell said that she does not believe this is a political vote and that this is a vote that asks the board to act as a regional body and consider what is best for the entire region. She said Manassas Park supports the resolution.

Mr. Marsden said that the region needs to move as one for its shared economic future. He said that our economic future depends on good transportation. He said the express lanes are the pathway to commuter transit via buses across the bridge which would unite the region. He said that we should bring a way for us to connect with each other to bring Bethesda and Tyson's Corner into a region where people have transportation opportunities to work in one place and live in another. He said that the future is now and we have to act. He urged the board to vote to add the project back into the plan.

Mr. Snyder said that this is the type of debate that the TPB was created for. He thanked the board for the rich discussion. He said that from the Virginia perspective there are a number of transit projects that run along I-495 that will run into a wall of gridlock on the American Legion Bridge unless action is taken. From that perspective it is critical that major action be taken. He said that the June vote to remove these projects set the region in a direction to meet effective climate change goals for transportation. He said that regional climate change goals should be considered when approving any new projects. He said it is important to make these projects cost-effective.

Chair Allen said there would not be time for a second round of discussion. He turned to members who reserved their time.

Ms. Newton agreed with Mr. Snyder that this is an important discussion. She said it is a shame that this has become a political issue. She said that the TPB sets goals for air quality, transit, and equity. She said the message has been to think regionally and act locally. She urged members of the board to think regionally. She said the project is not ready for approval. She said that MDOT has not addressed the cost of tolls at rush hour, or quotes from VDOT about the potential implications of new transit reducing toll revenue. She said she asked the discussion to be tabled so that the board has an opportunity to dig into the new proposals from MDOT and the Montgomery County amendment.

Ms. King said her goal is to move people via as many modes as possible. She supports moving ahead with this project.

Chair Allen said he appreciated everyone's comments. He said that should this resolution pass today he would thank MDOT and some of the jurisdictions in Maryland that worked to put forward what is a revised resolution. He said that the purpose of this discussion has been whether to add two projects into the region's long-range transportation plan, Visualize 2045. He said that when he visualizes 25 years into the future, he is concerned about how additional lanes for cars will induce demand, create more congestion, and result in increased emissions.

He also said that he hears his colleagues in outer jurisdictions talk about what their connections can be and should be for the entire region. He noted that overall, he believes that this has been a very healthy and good debate.

He said he would not support this resolution because there would be an opportunity to review these projects more thoroughly and add them back into the plan with changes as early as September 2022.

Mr. Elrich offered an amendment adding language to the resolution that said: "MDOT will initiate NEPA evaluation of I-270 between I-370 and I-270 within six-months of this resolution and will reconstruct I-270 as one consolidated project."

Chair Allen asked MDOT if they would accept that as a friendly amendment.

Mr. Slater said that NEPA is already initiated, so he does not anticipate a challenge on that request. However, there are economic implications to continuous construction that have not been worked through.

Mr. Lewis said that MDOT does not accept this as a friendly amendment.

Chair Allen determined that the amendment was out of order because it was not shared in writing and that there is not time to fully understand the implications. He called for a weighted vote.

Ms. Erickson said the resolution up for vote as edited this morning to clarify the difference between the Phase I and Phase II projects. She said those edits were supported by Montgomery County and MDOT. She said a 'yes' vote approves Resolution R2-2022 as amended. 'No' would be a vote not to approve.

Mr. Srikanth asked Ms. Erickson to describe what happens, under TPB rules, to votes to abstain in the case of a weighted vote.

Ms. Erickson said that every vote counts in a weighted vote. A vote to abstain means that the weight gets redistributed.

Mr. Trueblood requested that the District be called upon last.

Chair Allen agreed.

The following members voted 'yes' to approve Resolution R2-2022: Mr. Collins, Ms. Gardner, Ms. Russell, Mr. Harris, Mr. Leszcz, Mr. Orlin, Mr. Bellamy, Ms. Taveras. Ms. King, Mr. Lewis, Mr. Aguirre, Mr. Dorsey, Mr. Meyer, Mr. Alcorn, Mr. Walkinshaw, Mr. Snyder, Mr. Shellenberger, Mr. Letourneau, Ms. Umstatted, Ms. Sebesky, Ms. Rishell, Ms. Wheeler, Mr. Belita, Mr. Reid, Mr. Marsden, Mr. Cary, Mr. Trueblood, and Ms. Chamberlin.

The following members voted 'no' to not approve the resolution: Mr. Boafo, Mr. Wojahn, Mr. Jordan, Mr. Elrich, Ms. Newton, Ms. Kostiuk, Mr. Korman, Ms. Pinto, Chair Allen, and Ms. Henderson.

While waiting for the votes to be tabulated and confirmed, Mr. Srikanth announced that within an hour of the meeting adjourning members would be sent a certified resolution with all the updates and changes.

Chair Allen said the time showed it was already after 2:00 p.m. In the event that the resolution passes, the meeting will end, If the resolution does not pass, there will be a brief notice of an August meeting.

A member said they heard Greenbelt vote twice.

Ms. Erickson said that no votes were counted twice. She said that 28 people voted for the motion, and 10 voted against it. She said the weighted vote was 10.6 for approval and 4.3 against.

The board approved Resolution R2-2022 to add the Maryland I-495/ I-270 HOT Lanes construction project to the conformity inputs for the Visualize 2045 Update and the FY 2023-2026 TIP.

Chair Allen said that with the approval of the amendment, Part B of the agenda would no longer be needed. No special meeting was scheduled for August.

OTHER ITEMS

10. ADJOURN

Chair Allen asked about the date for the next board meeting.

Mr. Srikanth said that next board meeting would be scheduled for September 22. He said that the meeting will occur on the fourth Wednesday of that month.

The meeting adjourned at 2:12 p.m.