



Are We Achieving Our Regional Transportation Goals?

Draft Report

Listening Sessions

with the Staff of the COG/TPB Member Jurisdictions
on the RTPP and Place + Opportunity

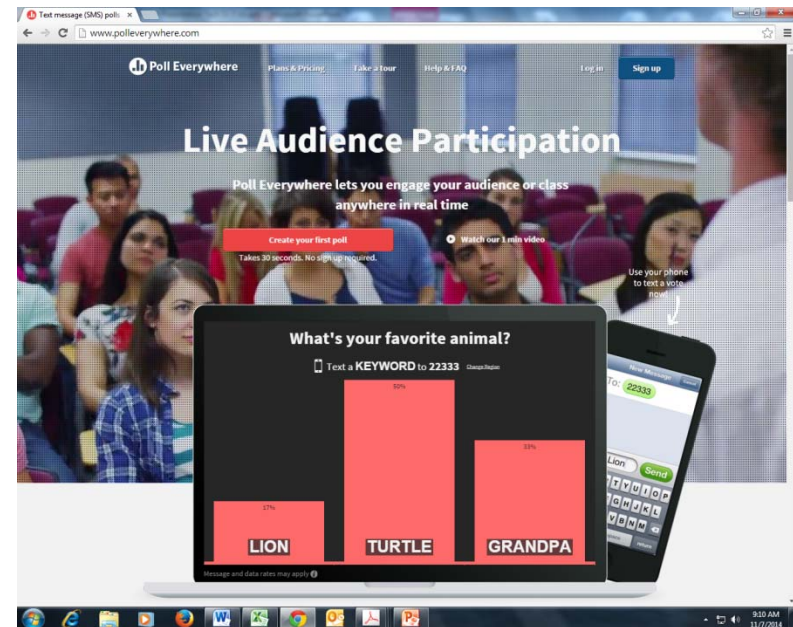
John Swanson, Transportation Planner
Planning Directors Technical Advisory Committee
November 21, 2014

Overview

- 10 Sessions, June-October, 2014
- More than 90 participants –
 - Professional staff from a variety of local departments, perspectives
- Purpose:
 - Gather info on whether/how the staff of our members believe we are achieving regional goals
 - Expand awareness of the RTPP and Place + Opportunity

Methodology

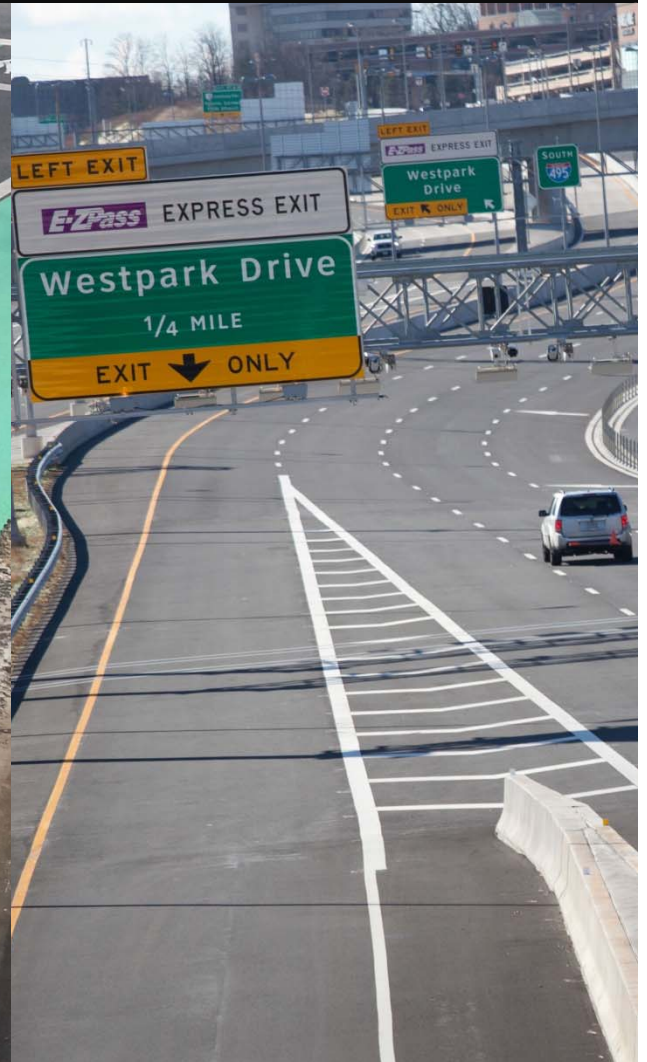
- Two-hour focus groups
- Short presentations:
 - RTPP
 - Place + Opportunity
 - CLRP baseline info
- Polling software used to launch discussion:
 - 10 questions answered with cell phones
 - Polleverywhere.com





Goal 1: Options

Having more options to choose from makes it easier for people to find the travel mode that works best for them



Sufficient Transit Options

Discussion question:

In 25 years, there will be sufficient transit options in our region.

[Agree? Disagree?]

Discussion themes:

- New projects are generating optimism and excitement.
- Local bus systems are effectively meeting local needs
- Lots of good plans, but doubts about implementation.
- Concerns about lack of funding and leadership.
- Some major regional gaps, particularly in the suburbs.
- Good land-use designs are essential for making non-road options viable
- Concern that transit systems will not be sufficiently connected across jurisdictions.

Sufficient Options for Drivers

Discussion question:

In 25 years, there will be sufficient options in our region for drivers. [Agree? Disagree?]

Discussion themes:

- General acknowledgement that we won't be adding a lot of new roads in the next 25 years.
- But some key road connections are still needed.
- Significantly reducing congestion is not likely.
- Tricky to find the right balance between providing supply and reducing demand.
- There's little appetite for tolling.

Sufficient Options for Pedestrians & Bicyclists

Discussion question:

In 25 years, there will be sufficient options in our region for pedestrians and bicyclists. [Agree? Disagree?]

Discussion themes:

- “Just look at the progress we’ve made” – big changes in the last decade.
- In many cases we’ve taken care of the low-hanging fruit.
- Significant differences between inner and outer jurisdictions.

Maximizing Use of the Existing Transit System

Discussion question:

The region is making adequate progress in maximizing use of the existing transit system. [Agree? Disagree?]

Discussion themes:

- Small fixes can go a long way -- e.g., improving bus stops.
- There is still underutilized capacity to tap -- e.g., reverse commute, lines on the eastern side of the region.
- Transit capacity in the core is deficient.
- Lack of enthusiasm for WMATA's Metro 2025 package (Momentum).

Accessibility for Disadvantaged Populations

Discussion question:

The region is making adequate progress in ensuring accessibility for persons with disabilities, low incomes and limited English proficiency.

[Agree? Disagree?]

Discussion themes:

- Steady progress for people with disabilities.
- But full accessibility for people with disabilities is expensive and takes a long time
- Affordable housing is the top concern regarding low-income access.
- But the cost and limited coverage of transit is also a problem.



Goal 2: Activity Centers

Concentrate housing and job development in Activity Centers, connect Activity Centers with high-capacity transportation options, and enhance local circulation

Concentration In Activity Centers

Discussion question:

In 25 years, the Activity Centers in my jurisdiction will be high-quality places in which to live and work. [Agree? Disagree?]

Discussion themes:

- Broad acceptance of the concept of concentrated, mixed-use centers.
- But true mixed-use development is still challenging to implement.
- Activity Centers are increasingly unaffordable.

Circulation Within Activity Centers

Discussion question:

In 25 years, it will be possible to conveniently travel within the Activity Centers in my jurisdiction without a car. [Agree? Disagree?]

Discussion themes:

- Big attitude change in recent years.
- Lack of good design is a continuing challenge.

Connections Between Activity Centers

Discussion question:

*In 25 years, the Activity Centers in my jurisdiction will be sufficiently connected to the rest of the region with a variety of transportation modes.
[Agree? Disagree?]*

Discussion themes:

- New and existing transit is making good use of Activity Centers.
- Attracting jobs is key.
- Last-mile connections continue to be a challenge.
- More regional systems planning is needed.



Goal 3: Maintenance & Safety

Keeping the region's roads, bridges, and transit systems in a state of good repair in order to ensure reliability and safety



Maintenance of Roads & Transit

Discussion questions:

- *Rate how you think the region is doing in maintaining our roads. [5-1: Excellent to Poor]*
- *Rate how you think the region is doing in maintaining our transit systems. [5-1: Excellent to Poor]*

Discussion themes:

- Compared to other places, we're actually doing pretty well in this region.
- Perception that roads are better maintained than transit.
- New state money helping to get systems to a state of good repair.
- Even with new state money, funding for local roads is squeezed.
- General concern that funding will continue to be unreliable.

Goals 4-6

Goal 4: Maximize Operation Effective and Safety of the Transportation System

- Self-optimizing systems will offer big opportunities.
- Data coordination is vital

Goal 5: Enhance Environmental Quality, and Protect natural and Cultural Resources

- Emphasize public health.
- Evaluate transportation and land-use options for climate change impacts.

Goal 6: Support Inter-Regional and International Travel and Commerce

- Airports are economic engines for the region.
- Airport access is a continuing challenge.

What Can/Should the TPB and COG Do in the Future?

Some suggested ideas:

Regional Planning

- Scenario analysis.
- Regional inventory of planned unfunded projects
- Define, clarify and focus upon true regional challenges

Technical Assistance

- Support and expand high-payoff, low-cost technical assistance.
- Provide information and analysis for decision-making related to Activity Centers.

QUESTIONS?

John Swanson jswanson@mwkog.org
Dan Sonenklar, dsonenklar@mwkog.org
Ben Hampton, bhampton@mwkog.org
Sophie Mintier, smintier@mwkog.org

QUESTIONS?