
TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
July 20, 2016

MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES PRESENT

Bob Brown, Loudoun County
Rick Canizales, Prince William County
James Davenport, Prince William County
Allison Davis, WMATA
Marc Elrich, Montgomery County
Dan Emerine, DC Office of Planning
Gary Erenrich, Montgomery County DOT
Jason Groth, Charles County
Rene'e Hamilton, VDOT
Konrad Herling, City of Greenbelt
Sandra Jackson, FHWA
Catherine Hudgins, Fairfax City Board of Supervisors
John Jenkins, Prince William County
Julia Koster, NCPD
R. Earl Lewis, Jr. MDOT
Moises Marrero, FHWA
Phil Mendelson, DC Council
Bridget Donnell Newton, City of Rockville
Mark Rawlings, DC DOT
Kelly Russell, City of Frederick
Jarrett K. Smith, City of Takoma Park
Linda Smyth, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors
Todd Turner, Prince George's County
Jonathan Way, Manassas City
David Whitaker, Frederick County
Sam Zimbabwe, DDOT

MWCOG STAFF AND OTHERS PRESENT

John Swanson
Andrew Meese
Nicholas Ramfos
Ron Milone
Eric Randall
Rich Roisman
Dusan Vuksan
Mark Moran
Wendy Klancher
Jane Posey
Andrew Austin
Michael Farrell
Jon Schermann
Wenjing Pu
Ben Hampton
Bryan Hayes
Abigail Zenner

Sergio Ritacco	
Lamont Cobb	
Jessica Mirr	
Debbie Leigh	
Deborah Etheridge	
Samantha d'Addario	
Steve Kania	COG/OPA
Sarah Crawford	Arlington County
Kari Snyder	MDOT
Patrick Durany	Sup. Jenkins' Office/PWC
Tanya Emam	FHWA
Sam Rosen-Amy	DC Council
Yon Lambert	City of Alexandria
Pierre Holloman	City of Alexandria
K. Jane Williams	MDOT, Director Washington Area Transit Office
Bill Orleans	HACK
Mike Lake	Fairfax County
Cynthia Porter-Johnson	PRTC
Robert Whitfield	Fairfax County Taxpayers Alliance
Patricia Happ	NVTC
Nancy Abeles	TPB/CAC
Stewart Schwartz	CSG
Norman Whitaker	VDOT-NOVA

Vice Chair Bridget Newton presided over the meeting as Chair Tim Lovain was away.

1. PUBLIC COMMENT ON TPB PROCEDURES AND ACTIVITIES

No members of the public signed up to speak.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE MAY 18 MEETING

A motion was made to approve the minutes from the June 15, 2015 board meeting. The motion was seconded and was approved unanimously.

3. REPORT OF THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

Mr. Roseboom reported on the work of the Technical Committee. He gave an overview of the written report provided in the meeting materials. The Technical Committee met on July 8 and received briefings on the Maryland Transportation Alternatives Program, Car-Free Day, an Analysis of SafeTrack, and the plan for updating the regional travel demand forecast. He said the committee discussed how the current travel demand model is used and how changes would affect modeling for local jurisdictions. He also reported that the Technical Committee received informational briefings about a parking study by the District of Columbia Office of Planning, the congestion management process and the TPB Regional Bus Priority Project.

4. REPORT OF THE CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Mr. Stewart said that at the July 14 meeting, the CAC continued its discussion about how the committee can add value to the development of the long-range plan. He said that the committee was briefed on the progress of the Long-Range Plan Task Force and the analysis of an all-build scenario. As part of future activities of the task force, Mr. Stewart emphasized that the CAC strongly urges that public input

be sought to give residents of the area an opportunity to weigh in and provide input about which projects are most important. He added that the CAC recommends that TPB staff develop a plan for public input into the long-range plan update. He said the committee feels that there should be multiple points of engagement throughout the process.

Mr. Stewart said that the committee was also briefed on the first SafeTrack surge. He said the committee also did a mid-year review of the CAC work plan. The committee agreed to continue spending most of their remaining time this year advocating for public involvement in the long-range plan update.

5. REPORT OF STEERING COMMITTEE

Mr. Srikanth reported on the information provided in the meeting materials from the Steering Committee. He reported on approved amendments to the TIP. He also went over letters that were received and memos to the board including two Fast Lane grants for the Arlington Memorial Bridge reconstruction and for the Atlantic Gateway project in Virginia. He also reported on a workshop that the Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee hosted about separated bike lanes and the recent meeting of the Access for All Committee.

Mr. Srikanth also reviewed US DOT's proposed changes to the planning rules that govern the planning activities of MPOs. He said he believed the proposed provisions were quite substantive, and if finalized as proposed, they would require MPOs to work with the states to reassess how regional planning is conducted. He noted that part of the activities would, at a minimum, require consultation with the state DOTs and adjacent MPOs regarding MPO boundaries and the area for which MPOs will have responsibility to conduct regional planning and new agreements would need to be executed with the states and adjacent MPOs. There would also be a new set of activities around coordination and developing the CLRP, the TIP, performance targets as required on the performance-based planning and programming, and also conducting air quality conformity analysis.

Mr. Srikanth said that based on his conversation with his counterparts in the adjacent MPOs and with members of the Association of MPOs, the National Association of Regional Councils, and the American Association of State and Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO), there are considerable concerns identified with these proposed changes. He said there has been at least one meeting with the Secretary of Transportation, and a subsequent meeting with the Federal Highway Administration, which has already conducted one webinar on the subject and will host another in the future.

Mr. Srikanth informed the board that comments on the proposed federal rules were due on August 26. Because there are no board meetings scheduled in August, he proposed that TPB staff should work with the TPB officers to develop comments on the proposed rules that could be submitted to the federal docket by August 26. This proposal was accepted.

Mr. Turner asked Mr. Srikanth for more information about the rule changes.

Mr. Srikanth summarized the proposed changes to the planning process. He addressed the proposed changes in three groups. He said that in group one, there are changes to how the planning area for a MPO is defined. He said that the proposed rule would revise the regulatory definition of the metropolitan planning area to include, at a minimum, an entire urbanized area as defined by the Census based on current population and also include contiguous areas that could become urbanized in the next 20 years. He said that in the TPB's case, this could be a huge swath of area extending from Fredericksburg, from Stafford, all the way into Delaware and Pennsylvania.

The second group of proposed changes is that such a planning area should have a single MPO by default. The rules do acknowledge that in some cases the area could be large and in such cases, as an exemption to the rule, the Governors and the multiple MPOs would have to make a determination that the size and complexity of the area would merit creating multiple MPOs, rather than a single MPO.

The third group of changes notes that in instances where there are multiple MPOs for a given planning area, there should be a single long-range plan and a single TIP, a single conformity analysis on the joint plan, and all of these multiple MPOs in this large area should have coordinated performance targets.

6. CHAIR'S REMARKS

The chair made no remarks.

INFORMATION ITEMS

7. APPROVAL OF THE NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION FREIGHT PLAN

Mr. Schermann said that no substantive changes have been made to the draft Capital Regional Freight Plan following a presentation to the board in June and a public comment period. He reminded the board that the plan comes in two documents, an executive summary and the plan itself. He said that the plan covers a wide range of topics, from the underlying drivers of freight demand to the changing nature of supply change, as well as other freight-related issues. He said that this version of the plan differs from the 2010 plan in that it includes a policy section. He said that the plan also includes a set of recommendations intended to guide TPB staff.

A motion was made to adopt TPB Resolution R1-2017 approving the National Capital Freight Plan. The motion was seconded and was approved unanimously.

8. APPROVAL OF PROJECTS RECOMMENDED FOR FUNDING UNDER THE FY 2017 SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BLOCK GRANT SET ASIDE PROGRAM FOR SUBURBAN MARYLAND TPB JURISDICTIONS

Mr. Cobb presented the Maryland projects for approval as the TPB's selections for the FY 2017 Surface Transportation Block Grant Set Aside Program. The 2015 FAST Act requires that MPOs work with states to administer a portion of Surface Transportation Program funds, as a set aside. The set aside is the new iteration of the Transportation Alternatives Program from the 2012 MAP-21 legislation. TPB staff worked with Maryland SHA to administer the program, and to form a selection panel to review applications and to make recommendations. The selection panel recommended the TPB approve five projects for \$1,100,114 in funding through resolution R2-2017.

Mr. Turner gave his thanks to the selection panel and noted the projects in Prince George's County, particularly those focused on Safe Routes to School. He made a motion to approve the recommendations.

The motion was seconded and was approved unanimously.

Ms. Russell expressed her thanks regarding the project in the City of Frederick.

9. APPROVAL OF REGIONAL CAR FREE DAY 2016 PROCLAMATION

Referring to the handout and mailout material, Mr. Ramfos briefed the board on Car-Free Day. He provided background on this annual international event, which the TPB first sponsored in 2008. He described some activities that occur around the world. He spoke about last year's Car-Free Day, including press coverage. He said people can sign a pledge to go car-free at www.carfreemetrodc.org. He described the media strategy for this year's event and local activities that are planned. He said the goal this year is to get 10,000 pledges.

Mr. Erenrich noted that Car-Free Day would coincide with a SafeTrack surge on the Orange Line in

Virginia. He said the message of Car-Free Day could potentially be seen to conflict with SafeTrack's message to find alternative modes other than transit.

Mr. Ramfos said the organizing committee for Car-Free Day hopes that other alternative modes can be promoted, such as teleworking or bicycling.

Mr. Erenrich suggested that for SafeTrack Surge #9 in Northern Virginia, an alternative day for Car-Free Day might be offered.

Mr. Zimbabwe asked how the pledge goal of 10,000 compared to last year's goal.

Mr. Ramfos said the goal was the same as last year. He said that the Pope's visit occurred during Car-Free Day last year, so the goal was not achieved.

Mr. Zimbabwe said that SafeTrack's messaging does not explicitly call upon people to drive during SafeTrack surges, but rather it reminds people to seek other options or at least be aware that single-tracking will make the commuting process slower. He asked whether in the future, it might be possible to conduct more extensive events around Car-Free Day like those conducted in European cities.

Mr. Ramfos said that the planning committee has discussed whether the "open streets" concept, which used in European cities, could be done here. He said implementing such an event would be challenging, but he said that the committee would be open to exploring such ideas in the future.

Mr. Srikanth explained that the "open streets" idea requires a local jurisdiction to take the regulatory action necessary to shut down part of the street or a network of streets for a certain amount of time.

Mr. Ramfos said that in the future, it may be possible to coordinate an amalgamation of events that occur around the region during the week of Car-Free Day.

A motion was made to approve the proclamation for Car-Free Day. The motion was seconded and was approved unanimously.

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

Mr. Randall went over a presentation outlining what all the jurisdictions have been doing to mitigate the effects of SafeTrack. He said they are implementing a number of strategies but that overall, the most important factor is clear communication for people traveling in the affected area.

Mr. Hamre then went over how Metrobus has been working to mitigate the effects on the rail system. He explained that each surge has a different set of challenges and that communication and planning is critical.

Mr. Erenrich asked a question about bus availability from Greenbelt to New Carrollton.

Mr. Hamre explained that Metro plans to have standby buses available and that in single tracking sections, Metrorail has enough capacity to get people through.

A question was asked about people using other modes to get through SafeTrack areas.

Mr. Randall explained that TPB staff is in the process of gathering the data about how people are switching modes during these safety surges.

Mr. Turner asked about the actual work that is being done.

Ms. Sullivan answered that reports were provided in the meeting materials about the work that Metro has done during these safety surges. She also noted that the information is available on the website.

Mr. Mendelson asked about how Metro is getting the word out to customers who rely on the service. He said that the first surge was widely reported but that he felt that the information diminished over time.

Ms. Sullivan explained that Metro is working through their marketing team to get the word out for people who use the affected stations. She noted that the media has also been reporting on the surges.

Ms Hudgins talked about how to get the word out on alternatives that people can use. She said that working with the business community was key.

Mr. Zimbabwe noted that while it was important to help people find alternatives while the work is being done that he also wanted to be sure that people knew when to come back to Metro after work is completed.

11. STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE TPB TRAVEL DEMAND MODEL

Mr. Milone said that Mr. Moran would provide an overview of TPB staff's efforts to improve its travel demand modeling and forecasting model.

Mr. Moran's presentation covered current uses of the TPB travel demand model, the TPB model development program, and TPB staff's strategic plan for model development. He said the travel forecasting subcommittee provides oversight on the model for staff. The TPB currently uses an aggregate, trip-based four-step model, with annual updates. Staff researches peer MPOs and found most to be using or switching to a more detailed, activity-based model. After discussion with the subcommittee and other regional stakeholders, Mr. Moran said that TPB staff developed a seven-year strategic plan to implement an activity-based model in three phases. Phase I includes updates to the existing travel demand model for this year and next year. Phase II will take three years, involving the developing of the activity-based model using existing data. Phase III will last two years, involving the development of the activity-based model using new data.

Mr. Elrich asked if staff would be testing the new model to assess impacts of projects and provide data that is more reliable.

Mr. Moran commented that the TPB's model focuses on the regional level. He said that county-level analysis would be slightly different. He noted that the dynamic traffic modeling conducted by the University of Maryland would be time intensive for the TPB. He also said that only two of the TPB's peer MPOs did dynamic modeling. He said this type of modeling would be exceptional at the regional level.

Mr. Elrich mentioned the Transportation Research Board's review of the TPB's travel demand model roughly ten years ago. He stated that his office was working with the University of Maryland to create a more fine-grained tool for analysis. He said there was a difference between detailed analysis versus that of the TPB model.

Mr. Srikanth remarked that there are differences between operational models and regional-level long-term travel forecasts. He said the TPB has worked with several types of models in the past, but emphasized that models produced by the University of Maryland and the Commonwealth of Virginia are sub-area operational models.

Mr. Elrich said that with Northern Virginia, as well as the state of Maryland, completing this fine-grained analysis for their respective jurisdictions, the TPB should be able to handle the magnitude of analysis.

Mr. Moran commented that the TPB's consultant on this project, Cambridge Systematics, has not recommended the TPB pursue a model similar to that of the University of Maryland.

OTHER ITEMS

12. ADJOURN

No other business was brought before the board. The meeting adjourned at 1:59 p.m.