

NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD

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**MINUTES OF THE
TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD
January 18, 2012**

Members and Alternates Present

Monica Backmon, Prince William County
Melissa Barlow, FTA
Andrew Beacher, Loudoun County
Marc Elrich, Montgomery County
Lyn Erickson, MDOT
Jason Groth, Charles County
Rene'e Hamilton, VDOT
Tom Harrington, WMATA
Cathy Hudgins, Fairfax County
Sandra Jackson, FHWA
John Jenkins, Prince William County
Emmett Jordan, City of Greenbelt
Carol Krimm, City of Frederick
Peter May, National Park Service
Phil Mendelson, DC Council
Garrett Moore, VDOT
Mark Rawlings, DC-DOT
Rodney Roberts, City of Greenbelt
Paul Smith, Frederick County
Linda Smyth, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors
Reuben Snipper, City of Takoma Park
David Snyder, City of Falls Church
Kanti Srikanth, VDOT
Harriet Tregoning, DC Office of Planning
Todd M. Turner, City of Bowie
Jonathan Way, Manassas City
Victor Weissberg, Prince George's County
Tommy Wells, DC Council
Patrick Wojahn, City of College Park
Scott K. York, Loudoun County
Sam Zimbabwe, DDOT
Chris Zimmerman, Arlington County

MWCOG Staff and Others Present

Ron Kirby
Gerald Miller
Robert Griffiths
Nicholas Ramfos
Andrew Meese
Rich Roisman
John Swanson
Jane Posey
Wendy Klancher
Sarah Crawford
Gareth James
Karin Foster
Eric Randall
Ben Hampton
Dan Sonenklar
Debbie Leigh
Deborah Etheridge
David Roberston COG/EO
Nicole Hange COG/EO
Paul DesJardin COG/DCPS
Betsy Self COG/DPSH
Bill Orleans Citizen
Jim Maslanka City of Alexandria
Randy Carroll MDE
Judi Gold Councilmember Bowser's Office
Cody Christensen STV Incorporated
Bob Grow Board of Trade
Patrick Durany Prince William County
Nick Alexandrow PRTC
Alex Verzosa City of Fairfax
Ray Johnson FC DOT
Janet Nguyen FC DOT
Dan Malouff Arlington

1. Public Comment on TPB Procedures and Activities

Chair Turner called the meeting to order and invited members of the public to comment on the TPB's procedures and activities. No members of the public chose to comment.

2. Approval of Minutes of December 21 Meeting

Ms. Tregoning made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 21 TPB meeting. Ms. Krimm seconded the motion, which passed. Vice-Chairman York abstained from the vote.

3. Report of Technical Committee

Mr. Rawlings reported that the Technical Committee met on January 6 and received briefings on five items to be reviewed for inclusion in the agenda for the TPB's January meeting: the major projects submitted by the transportation agencies for the Air Quality Conformity Assessment for the 2012 CLRP and FY 2013-2018 TIP; the draft scope of work for the Air Quality Conformity Assessment; the development of the Regional Transportation Priorities Plan (RTPP); the findings and recommendations from the assessment of the TPB's Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) and New Freedom programs; and an outline and preliminary budget for the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) for FY 2013. He also reported that two items were presented for information and discussion: a briefing on the progress toward developing a draft regional Complete Streets policy (including an upcoming stakeholders workshop to help develop the policy); and a briefing on the recently initiated Metropolitan Area Transportation Operations Coordination Program (MATOC) and National Capital Region News and Information web portal websites (www.matoc.org and www.capitalregionudpates.gov, respectively). He pointed out that the purpose of the new National Capital Region News and Information web portal website is to aid communications with the public during weather events and other emergencies.

4. Report of Citizens Advisory Committee

Chair Turner thanked Mr. Mandle for serving as chair of the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) and asked him to report.

Mr. Mandle said that the January 12 meeting of the CAC was primarily spent participating in a TPB staff-led "listening session" on the performance measures being developed for the Regional Transportation Priorities Plan (RTPP). The CAC also discussed its end-of-year report to be presented to the TPB in a later agenda item. He explained that the purpose of the listening session on performance measures for the RTPP was to "test-drive" public outreach methods staff will use to solicit input from the wider public on the performance measures. He reported that the listening session was a good chance for the CAC to offer its input and that it generated a great conversation. He pointed out two general concerns that emerged quickly from the listening session: that the performance measures needed more clarification and explanation if they were to be understandable by the general public; and that discussing performance measures in isolation from the strategies that will be included in the plan might not be the right approach. He also described the CAC's end-of-year report, which includes items that were of particular interest to the CAC throughout the year. The four main issues addressed in the report were the RTPP, the regional Complete Streets policy, improving access to information about the regional planning process, and WMATA governance.

Mr. Mandle said that the CAC viewed the beginning of the process for developing the RTPP as an exciting development, noting that four CAC members participated in the scoping task force for the RTPP. He also said that the CAC views the RTPP process as an important public involvement tool, that it provides an opportunity to generate genuine interest and enthusiasm amongst the public, that feedback loops for decision-making within the RTPP can be established to ensure that input is received from the public and that the public feels like they've been heard, and that a big challenge will be not losing the big picture. He explained that the CAC thought the use of performance measures was important, but that they should not be so narrowly defined or over-emphasized as to cause people to forget about the broader regional benefits of transportation investments. He said that the CAC still thinks it is important to use a systems approach in developing regional priorities, pulling together different packages of priorities that provide synergistic and mutually supportive benefits.

Mr. Mandle pointed out that the regional Complete Streets policy originated from recommendations by the CAC, and he said that the CAC is excited to see the policy moving forward so quickly. He also described in greater detail the CAC's interest in improving access to information about the regional planning process and how projects make it into the Constrained Long-Range Plan (CLRP). He said that the end goal is to have a regional transportation planning clearinghouse that provides information on the process as well as a portal into the state and local governments in the region. He said that the CAC is also excited about this project moving forward. Finally, Mr. Mandle explained that, while the CAC did not make any official recommendations pertaining to the WMATA governance study, it is generally supportive of the state work group and holds the broad position that the recommendations of the state work group should be implemented quickly.

Mr. Mandle concluded by encouraging the Board to read through the end-of-year report in greater detail, and he thanked Chair Turner and the Board for allowing him to serve as Chair of the CAC.

Chair Turner welcomed questions for Mr. Mandle from the Board. Ms. Tregoning expressed her gratification that the CAC has received as much attention and response from the Board on its primary issues in the last year, and she thanked Mr. Mandle and former chair Mr. Dobelbower for their leadership of the committee.

5. Report of Steering Committee

Mr. Kirby reported that the Steering Committee met on January 6 and, in addition to reviewing the agenda for the January 18 TPB meeting, approved one resolution: an amendment to the Constrained Long-Range Plan (CLRP) to modify the intersection of Boundary Channel Drive and Old Jefferson Davis Highway adjacent to I-395. He explained that the amendment was requested by VDOT on behalf of Arlington County to deal with traffic associated with the construction of a regional aquatic center.

Mr. Kirby also provided an overview of the letters packet, beginning with a memo announcing the launch of “TPB Weekly Report” on January 17, a renewed presence on Facebook, and the launch of a new TPB Twitter feed. He explained that these outreach initiatives came in response to the Federal certification review by USDOT in May 2011 urging the TPB to explore other methods and media for providing information to the public.

Mr. Kirby also explained a memo to the TPB providing vehicle registration data (originally presented at the December 21 TPB meeting) by local jurisdiction and on a per capita basis (per the request of Board members). He pointed out one main caveat on the data, which is that the vehicle registration data are based on where cars are registered, not where they’re actually used.

Ms. Tregoning asked Mr. Kirby whether the data for 2011 was current through the end of 2011. Mr. Kirby explained that the 2011 data is a snapshot as of July 1, 2011. Ms. Tregoning said it appeared that the population data being used for the per capita registration calculations was from 2010 for local jurisdictions. She asked whether staff could update the population data to be current as of July 2011. Mr. Kirby said that staff could go back and look at that.

Mr. Kirby also highlighted a letter to Board Member Patrick Wojahn from Christian Kent at WMATA commenting on the activities of the Human Service Transportation Coordination program. And he explained that the TPB will be resubmitting an application made last year to the USDOT’s Transportation, Community, and System Preservation (TCSP) program, following the theme developed for the most recent grant application for USDOT’s TIGER program. The TCSP grant application seeks \$160,000 in Federal funds to look more closely at opportunities for promoting mixed-use development around the region’s rail stations.

Chair Turner asked Mr. Kirby to speak to the memo in the letters packet that addressed the status of the regional Complete Streets policy. Mr. Kirby reported that the policy was drafted by the TPB Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee and has been discussed by the Technical Committee, and he said that there has been some concern that this has, so far, been too much of a top-down effort and doesn’t reflect what has already been done at the state and local level. He said that the conversation seems to be moving in the direction of developing a policy template for jurisdictions to use if they don’t already have a Complete Streets policy, and that a workshop is scheduled for January 30 to help develop a template.

Ms. Erickson commented that there’s a lot of work that still needs to be done on the policy, as she is still not certain how compatible the language that’s been written so far is with Maryland state law and local laws. She said it’s about making sure that state and local jurisdictions are actually capable of meeting the requirements of the policy.

Chair Turner thanked Ms. Erickson for her comments and expressed support for the idea that the policy should be a model document for jurisdictions and should serve mainly as an educational opportunity for the TPB.

6. Chair's Remarks

Chair Turner began by wishing everyone a Happy New Year and said he hopes to follow in the footsteps of the previous Chair, Ms. Bowser. He recognized and thanked the two vice-chairs— Supervisor York from Loudoun County, and Council Member Tommy Wells from the District of Columbia—for volunteering to serve in 2012, and he welcomed Charles County as an official member of the TPB as of January 1.

Chair Turner shared his thoughts for the upcoming year, which included a desire for the TPB to focus on the ongoing regional and national discussion about funding of transportation needs, as well as an intention to set aside time each quarter for jurisdictions in the region to highlight something they're working on so that the TPB can have a better discussion and understanding of some of the projects that come before it. He also said that the Board will continue to advance the Regional Transportation Priorities Plan and continue the annual work program, and he said that the Board should continue to follow the model of working together that was used in developing regional applications for Federal grant programs and participating in the WMATA governance study in 2011. He also expressed his confidence that the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) and its new chair, Tina Slater (if approved), will play an important and necessary role in the TPB's public input and decision-making process. He concluded with one housekeeping item, which was a reminder that only regular voting members have an opportunity to sit at the TPB table. Only when regular members are not in attendance should alternate members be seated at the table.

ACTION ITEMS

7. Approval of Funding and Transmittal Letter for TPB's 2012 Membership in the Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations

Mr. Kirby briefed the Board on a letter from the Executive Director of the Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (AMPO) requesting payment of annual dues in the amount of \$22,000. He explained that the TPB has been a member of AMPO for approximately 15 years and that, in his view, TPB has received very good value from its membership. He requested that the Board approve paying the AMPO dues for the coming year.

Mr. Mendelson moved to approve payment of the dues. The motion was seconded by Mr. Zimmerman.

Ms. Krimm expressed an interest in the TPB partnering more closely with AMPO in participating in national discussions about transportation funding opportunities, given the proximity of the TPB to Capitol Hill. Mr. Kirby said that TPB members and staff are often invited to accompany AMPO staff to meetings on Capitol Hill.

The Board voted to approve paying dues to AMPO for 2012.

8. Approval of Appointments to the TPB Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) for the Year 2012

Chair Turner entertained a motion to appoint the proposed slate of 15 members, the alternates, as well as Tina Slater as chair, to the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) for 2012.

Mr. York made a motion to approve the appointments. Mr. Wells seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

INFORMATION ITEMS

9. Briefing on Project Submissions for the Air Quality Conformity Assessment for the 2012 CLRP and the FY 2013-2018 TIP

Mr. Austin provided a presentation that reviewed the project submissions for the air quality analysis for the 2012 CLRP update and FY 2013-2018 TIP. He provided a summary of the six significant changes to both documents, which included new projects, changes to existing projects, and removal of existing projects. He said the project submissions, conformity tables, and air quality scope of work were released for a 30-day public comment period on Thursday, January 12. He said the public comment period will close on February 11 and the TPB will be asked on February 15 to approve the project submissions for inclusion in the air quality conformity assessment. He said the results of the assessment would be released to the public on June 14, the TPB will be briefed on the results on June 20, and the TPB will be asked to approve the 2012 CLRP update and FY 2013-2018 TIP on July 18.

Ms. Smyth asked for confirmation that the Jones Branch Connector is included in the project submissions for the 2012 CLRP.

Mr. Moore said he believes it is included in the air quality conformity table since it is not considered a regionally significant project.

Ms. Posey confirmed that the project is included in the project submission package.

10. Briefing on Draft Scope of Work for the Air Quality Conformity Assessment for the 2012 CLRP and the FY 2013-2018 TIP

Ms. Posey reviewed the scope of work for the conformity analysis of the 2012 CLRP and FY 2013-2018 TIP. She said the technical approach is similar to the previous conformity analysis in 2011, and will use the version 2.3 travel demand model and Mobile 6.2 for emissions modeling. She highlighted two new technical items: staff will use the Round 8.1 Cooperative Forecast and the 2011 vehicle registration data. She said the analysis years will be 2007, 2017, 2020, 2030, and 2040.

Ms. Tregoning asked Ms. Posey to confirm that the region is in nonattainment for PM2.5. She asked if staff expects the modeling work to show any improvement to this status, as well as if staff has a general sense of whether the region will come into attainment for air quality standards.

Ms. Posey responded that the region is in nonattainment for PM2.5. She said the potential to come into attainment varies for the different pollutants. She said that for PM2.5, staff is working with the Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee (MWAQC) to request re-designation by EPA to attainment status and to establish a maintenance plan, which should be approved by MWAQC in the spring. She said attainment status is more complicated for ozone season pollutants. She said staff expects to hear information on new guidance for those levels soon. She said the region will have to set new budgets for the ozone season pollutants using the MOVES model so that emissions results and budgets can be more easily compared.

Ms. Tregoning asked if the region is in nonattainment for just two pollutants.

Ms. Posey said the region is in nonattainment for ozone season VOC and NOx, and for fine particles pollutant precursor NOx and direct fine particles. She said the region is in maintenance for wintertime CO.

Ms. Tregoning asked if staff expects the model changes to exacerbate the region's nonattainment or ameliorate it.

Ms. Posey said that use of the MOVES model has shown an increase in the amount of pollutants relative to the previous Mobile 6.2 model. She said that in the future, mobile emissions in the region are decreasing by quite a lot according to both MOVES and Mobile 6.2.

Ms. Tregoning noted that one of the recent trends identified in the VIN data is that the vehicle fleet in the region is aging, which means there will be less vehicle efficiency than previously predicted. She said it would be helpful for future conformity updates to provide greater context to the TPB in terms of how the region has progressed regarding nonattainment and any predictions for future attainment. She noted it is the factor of nonattainment that puts pressure on which transportation projects can be funded, assuming money is available.

11. Briefing on Proposed Performance Measures for the TPB Regional Transportation Priorities Plan (RTPP)

Mr. Kirby referred members to the Draft Interim Report 1 on the RTPP, and gave a presentation to describe the work that had been conducted to date. The first five slides provided background information to the RTPP, including the federal government's increasing focus on performance measurement, and the results of an 'International Scan' carried out by the U.S. DOT in 2009 to research how other countries link transportation performance and accountability. Slides 6 to 12 charted TPB staff's preliminary work on the RTPP, from the development of potential performance measures based on regional goals to examples of strategies that might be used to

meet one or more regional challenges. The final slide described the planned public outreach and schedule through July 2012.

Mr. Kirby asked members to consider whether the process, goals, performance measures, and strategies made sense, whether the measures were meaningful, and whether there were better measures that should be considered. He shared with members a couple of points that had been raised at the CAC's January 12th Listening Session on the RTPP. First, he said he had been asked if the current set of potential measures, challenges and strategies was designed to be the beginning of an iterative process. He said he had confirmed this to be the case, as the intention was to refine and improve the "straw man" until it was the best it could be. Secondly, he said a CAC member had asked what an activity center was. He said this question illustrated the challenge of communicating the RTPP process in terms that will engage the general public.

Mr. Snyder said that the RTPP is a very important exercise for the region, and expressed his appreciation for the work that had already gone into it. He welcomed the importance placed on some objectives, such as environmental improvement and congestion management, but he said he believed safety was receiving third-tier treatment. He stated that a recent study by the AAA had concluded that the cost of congestion to this region is about \$4 billion annually. He said that the cost for motor vehicle crashes, including lost time at work and health care costs is \$7.5 billion, almost double. He said that if one of the aims of the RTPP is to reduce costs, safety should be right at the top of the list, and that there is nothing more important to members of the public than arriving safely at their destination. He suggested that safety might deserve its own category, and said there were lots of ways to measure performance besides those that had been proposed. He said that fatality rates and injury rates are certainly important, but that measures such as accidents per licensed driver, accidents per capita, and overall safety costs, should also be considered. He stated that the data are readily available, and said he hoped to see a greater emphasis on safety in the next iteration of the report. He also stated that motor vehicle crashes contribute substantially to congestion, with about one half of nationwide congestion resulting from non-recurring causes, and he did not believe the salience of this issue was reflected in the initial report.

Mr. Roberts asked if it seemed likely that federal transportation funding would be based on performance measures in the future.

Mr. Kirby replied that funding for the state DOTs and transit agencies would almost certainly be tied to performance monitoring. He added that it was possible, depending on the final language in the bill, that agencies would be held to certain performance targets, with restrictions placed on the way they can use their funding if they do not meet those targets.

Mr. Roberts asked if the federal government would set the requirements, or whether it would be the responsibility of the DOTs and transit agencies.

Mr. Kirby said the intention was not that the federal government would set the targets, but that it would hold the DOTs and transit agencies accountable for meeting performance targets that they would set for themselves based on federal guidance.

Ms. Hudgins said that measures in the TPB's Priorities Plan that focused on the right areas could lead to the right outcomes, but she was concerned that the potential measures for Goal 2 did not include one that was directly related to affordability.

Mr. Kirby replied that the cost of housing and transportation as a percentage of income listed in Figure 3 could be a very important measure, but that some of the necessary local data, such as from the household travel survey, had not yet been finalized. He also stated that the concept of activity centers, which he described as an integral part of this effort and Region Forward, would need to be effectively communicated to ensure that measures of activity center performance would be meaningful. Mr. Kirby added that the link between activity centers and rail stations is another critical measure, as the initial analysis had highlighted a mismatch between the two, and there seem to be opportunities for improving that match.

Ms. Hudgins said that activity centers without rail, but with affordable housing and other good transportation alternatives, could be more valuable than those that have rail but which are lacking those other components. She said rail can help elevate the performance of an activity center, but that the affordability of housing and transportation has to be another major focus of this effort.

Mr. Kirby agreed that this was the case. He said it was clear that not all of the activity centers would have rail transit, but he said they should still have good transit and other transportation options.

Mr. Zimmerman stated that the housing aspect of activity centers was a key issue for long-term planning, as the houses are physically there, but are unaffordable for local people, which adds to the regional transportation problem. He said it was vital to have measures relating to this issue in the RTPP, and that there was plenty of data available for the region, such as a recent study by Brookings and the Center for Neighborhood Technologies and a forthcoming study by the Department of Housing and Urban Development. He said he did not fully understand what is meant by the term "meaningful to the interested public," and that while it is good to think about how to communicate the TPB's work to the public, this is mostly about setting priorities and having the transportation planners figure out how to evaluate different things. He said the most important thing is to be able to communicate why one project might be more important than another project, based on a full understanding of the criteria. He also asked for clarification regarding the meaning of the term activity center, given that it is such an important part of the RTPP effort.

Mr. Kirby responded that the Region Forward report described activity centers as "areas of concentrated employment," which is how they were defined initially. He added that mixed-use activity was desirable in these centers, which meant the inclusion of housing and commercial activity, but he said the current activity center list was primarily based on employment density.

Mr. Zimmerman said this clarification highlighted the problem a little bit, but that it is even worse than that. He said that many years ago he had been on the Metropolitan Development Policy Committee, the precursor to the Region Forward Coalition, when the concept of activity

centers had first been developed. He said that the problem was that everybody had to have an activity center, so they were all over the place, and there was no consistency - in some cases the activity center might have been a very large area, while others were small, compact areas. He said that while defining activity centers in terms of employment might help explain the “activity,” it does not explain what qualifies as a “center.” He said that in the absence of a geographic constraint, the list of activity centers includes very large areas that meet the employment density criterion but serve little use for transportation planning, as what is actually needed are centers. He said the region must take advantage of existing centers and build new ones in other places, not codify sprawl patterns and risk exacerbating the problem. He agreed that activity centers are important to the RTPP effort, but he said that the measures need to include whether housing is affordable on a range of different incomes, and that the definitions of terms need to be discussed and settled upon before engaging the broader public.

Mr. Wojahn commented that he was excited to see the progress of the RTPP effort, but that he was surprised by the scant mention of access to public transportation. He said he meant access in a number of ways. He said that it may be more meaningful to consider what percentage of jobs and affordable housing is located within a quarter of a mile of public transit throughout the region, rather than focusing solely on activity centers. He said the affordability of public transportation was a key accessibility concern, and that as Metro fares continue to increase every year, there is a risk of forgetting that one of the goals of public transportation is to make sure it is accessible to everyone in the community. He said that for access for people with disabilities, he appreciated that accessible bus stops were mentioned, but that accessible public transportation goes far beyond bus stops and it is necessary to more broadly consider whether people with disabilities have access to some means of transportation to get to where they need to go every day.

Ms. Tregoning agreed that access to transit was missing from the initial list of performance measures, and she said several other things were also missing. She suggested including a walk score measure, and perhaps including walkability in the definition of activity centers, adding that rail to Tysons Corner would not have been feasible were it not for the fact that it had so much development already concentrated there. She said that some of the tenor of previous discussions about the RTPP did not seem to be reflected in this first set of measures, as too many seem to be about transportation for transportation's sake rather than about transportation's ability to support the region's economy. She said that housing and transportation cost as a percentage of income is something that should be measured across the region, not just in activity centers, and that analyzing that data could provide a better understanding of the form, pattern, and types of transportation that would be needed to improve people's access to jobs and education, making the region's economy more resilient. She said that some measures should be per capita, as an enormous increase in the number of pedestrians or bicyclists would result in an increase in the number of injuries, even if the number of injuries per unit of use were improving. She said that for the efficiency measures, an off-peak transit ridership should be considered, as that is when the system is already running but not generating enough revenue. She said that with regard to WMATA, she found it strange that the only rail-related measure for maintenance and preservation of the existing system is whether the escalators work. She suggested that other measures that are more directly related to safety and the maintenance of the rails should be

included. She said she would like to know more about why certain performance measures that had been considered were deemed not to meet the criteria for inclusion on the short-list, citing storm-water and public health as examples. She said she thought both of these would be easy to measure, are in the public interest, are costly to every jurisdiction in the region, and can be positively or negatively impacted by the transportation system. She said that there was a lot to be considered, that the District would be likely to put some feedback together, and that it might be useful to set up a TPB subgroup to bring together those members who are particularly interested in this effort.

Chair Turner thanked everybody for their comments, and said that he had spoken with Mr. Kirby regarding the idea of a working group along the lines of the original RTPP scoping task force. He agreed with Ms. Tregoning that this was something they should pursue, but he added that the public outreach opportunities would be vital to get beyond the “inside baseball” discussions about the proposed measures. He said that members rely not only on professional staff, but also on the public, to make a determination regarding priorities, whether that be for transportation, education, or any other activity. He said it might be too soon to ascertain the level of public interest in the process as a whole or in specific measures, but that this would be resolved through the scheduled outreach opportunities. He reminded members that no performance measures had been excluded at this point, as what had been presented to them was a good faith effort to produce an initial set of measures for them to react to. He said that this had been a good discussion, and that a pre-meeting to continue it would be scheduled for those who wished to participate.

12. Briefing on an Assessment of the Job Access and Reverse Commute for Low Income Individuals (JARC) Program and the New Freedom Program for Persons with Disabilities in the National Capital Region

Mr. Wojahn, Chair of the TPB’s Human Service Transportation Coordination Task Force, said the assessment of the JARC/New Freedom Program in the National Capital Region was conducted in 2011. He said the TPB has been the federally designated recipient of JARC/New Freedom funding since 2006 and developed the Human Service Transportation Plan to govern this process. He said each program provides approximately \$1 million each year to the region. He said that between 2007 and 2010, 35 JARC and New Freedom grants were awarded, totaling \$10.3 million - \$7 million in federal funds and \$3.3 million in matching funds. He said the purpose of the assessment was to review the TPB’s administration and oversight of the program, to assess the 35 grants funded, and to compare this program to other agencies across the nation. He asked Ms. Klancher of TPB staff to review the major findings and recommendations of the assessment.

Ms. Klancher provided a summary presentation of the assessment. She said the assessment found that there was a wide variety of grants funded, from fixed-route services, travel-training for people with disabilities, and auto loan programs for low-income individuals. She provided details on the composition of the grant recipients and status of the grants. She added that the real bonus from these grants is that if persons with specialized transportation needs can be matched to a

mode that provides them with more independence and mobility, the region can save public transit money, especially on paratransit.

Ms. Klancher reviewed how the TPB's administration of the two programs compares with that of the agencies around the county. She said nine peer agencies were chosen, from MPOs to transit agencies. She reported the following findings relative to the peer agencies:

- The TPB has been successful in obligating all the funds, which is unique;
- The TPB has funded a greater range of project types and has had a larger variety of sponsors;
- The TPB's selection committee tends to be more robust than that of its peers;
- The peer agencies found similar challenges with the federal requirements, including that the activities eligible for funding are too limited (in particular, that the money cannot be used to provide transit passes), and that the 50 percent match on operating projects is too large for many potential applicants.

Ms. Klancher reviewed other key findings from the assessment, which did not call for any major changes to the way the TPB administers the program. She said the report identified many different customer benefits from the programs, ranging from the impact on a client's quality of life to cost savings on paratransit trips. She said the assessment learned from the grantees that match funding is hard to find, the administration and management of the grant took longer than anticipated, and potential applicants are reluctant to commit to a new program if they cannot guarantee a funding source for the program after the federal grant is spent.

Ms. Klancher highlighted some of the recommendations from the assessment that TPB staff plans to initiate for the project solicitation in April 2012. She said the selection committee members will be rotated more often. She said TPB staff will strengthen grant performance measurements and monitoring, which will help TPB staff identify if the grantee is having trouble meeting the requirements. She said the report recommended that the project solicitation occur every two years, rather than annually, so that a larger amount of funding would be available for grantees, and more time would be available to develop effective regional applications. She said the report also provided recommendations related to the federal program, which could be timely given the status of reauthorization. She said two recommendations for the federal program include lowering the match requirement for operating projects and expanding the activities eligible for funding.

Mr. Smith said he likes the current frequency of the grants, noting that annual grants give an opportunity for more grants spread around the region over time, allowing jurisdictions to compete each year.

Ms. Hudgins said she appreciates the recommendation on expanding the eligibility of projects for this funding. She said the ability to subsidize the cost of transit trips for lower income people, which are not just bus trips, but often a combination of rail and bus trips, provides greater mobility and job opportunities for those who often struggle to reach employment locations.

Chair Turner asked if the Board needs to act on the recommendation to implement a two-year project solicitation.

Ms. Klancher said the report recommended the task force discuss this item. She said the task force is in favor of the idea and she does not believe it would exclude any jurisdiction from participating.

Mr. Wojahn said that given the recommendations regarding the federal aspect of the program, it would be prudent to send a letter transmitting those recommendations to the Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations and the American Public Transportation Association. He made a motion to do so. The motion was seconded by Ms. Hudgins and was approved.

13. Review of Outline and Preliminary Budget for the FY 2013 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

Mr. Kirby provided a brief summary on the outline of the FY 2013 Unified Planning Work Program. He said the TPB will receive a draft of the UPWP in February and be asked to approve the FY 2013 UPWP in March. He said one outstanding uncertainty is the total budget that will be available on July 1, which depends on details of the federal appropriation for FY 2012. The best estimate is a flat line budget of approximately \$12 million. He noted that the SAFETEA-LU authorizing legislation will expire on March 31, but that there appears to be bipartisan support for maintaining the federal transportation program at or above the current funding level. He said the TPB would likely have to amend the approved FY 2013 UPWP in the late summer, once the details of the authorizing legislation and the federal FY 2012 appropriations are finalized.

14. Other Business

Chair Turner said that he would like to use this time over the course of the year to invite board members to discuss any issues, events, or activities that are regionally relevant. He invited the Board to submit any possible TPB agenda items for consideration to himself and Mr. Kirby.

15. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 2:02 p.m.