



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** TPB Technical Committee  
**FROM:** Kanti Srikanth, TPB Staff Director  
John Swanson, TPB Transportation Planner  
Michael Farrell, TPB Transportation Planner  
**SUBJECT:** Developing a Regional Package of Pedestrian and Bicycle Priority Initiatives for *Visualize 2045*  
**DATE:** November 3, 2017

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## OVERVIEW

Consistent with the Long Range Plan Task Force's activities to develop recommendations on a set of unfunded initiatives that have the potential to help the region make significant progress towards achieving its goals, staff proposes to present a package of unfunded pedestrian and bicycle initiatives for the TPB's endorsement. These initiatives would be considered for inclusion in *Visualize 2045*, the regional long-range transportation plan that is scheduled for approval in October of 2018.

The package of improvements to the non-motorized system will feature two initiatives: 1) the National Capital Trail (previously known as the Bicycle Beltway) and 2) Metrorail station access improvements. Staff proposes that the TPB be asked to act on this package at its meeting on December 20 along with the planned endorsement of initiatives from among the ten that are currently being analyzed on behalf of the task force.

Consistent with the Task Force's discussions related to the ten initiatives currently being analyzed, the TPB's endorsement of two additional initiatives which focus on pedestrian and bicycle improvements would mean that these concepts have the potential to improve the performance of the region's transportation system beyond what is anticipated by its current long-range transportation plan and deserve to be comprehensively examined for implementation. The TPB's endorsement would make it possible to include the concepts represented by these initiatives in the aspirational element of the 2018 update of the TPB's long-range plan, *Visualize 2045*. The meaning of such an endorsement would not be a mandate from the TPB for its member jurisdictions to alter their own plans, programs, or policies or to design, fund, and implement these initiatives without further study.

Also consistent with the Task Force's discussions related to the ten initiatives currently being analyzed, the TPB's endorsement would be a call for future concerted action by TPB members. Staff believe that at a minimum, it would involve a commitment by all TPB member jurisdictions and agencies to collaborate and undertake a further examination of the concepts represented by the endorsed projects. Further examination efforts could include a study of the constructability of the illustrative projects included in the initiatives that were identified through the TPB's process. Following such a study would be efforts to secure funding to implement them. Funding sources could

include future federal TIGER grants, TPB's TLC and TAP program, and other funding opportunities in the region.

The idea of working with the hundreds of non-motorized projects that were part of the Long-Range Plan Task Force's Phase 1 study (the "All Build" analysis) to identify a set of projects with the potential to affect travel choices and accessibility at a regional level was previously discussed and accepted by the Task Force in April of 2016. To date, this work activity has been carried out by the TPB's Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee and TPB staff in consultation with WMATA.

## SOURCES FOR THE REGIONAL PACKAGE

The package will be assembled from recent planning activities in which the TPB has been involved and which have already gained significant support. Specifically, these activities include the development of the National Capital Trail and WMATA's identification of station access improvements .

- **National Capital Trail** – Originally called the "Bicycle Beltway," the National Capital Trail (NCT) is a proposed network of circumferential trail connections circling the core of the Washington region. The full perimeter of the NCT is 45 miles, but it is also divisible into shorter loops. The TPB's Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee began working on the Bicycle Beltway in 2014 at the request of a TPB member. The National Park Service adopted the Bicycle Beltway concept as part of its Paved Trails Plan, released in 2016, and branded it the National Capital Trail (NCT). Later in 2016, the TPB's Bicycle/Pedestrian Subcommittee adopted the name, concept, and route for the NCT.

More recently, working with the staff of the local jurisdictions, gaps in the proposed trail's network have been explicitly identified. The TPB's endorsement of this initiative will be a call to the TPB member jurisdictions to commit to undertake a further examination of the illustrative projects needed to close the gaps, including project feasibility and cost.

- **Station Access Projects** – WMATA staff in 2016 completed a study called the Metrorail Station Investment Strategy (MSIS), which highlighted priority projects that would improve non-motorized access to rail stations. Working with staffs of the local jurisdictions, WMATA staff began the analysis for the MSIS by identifying 4,217 unbuilt pedestrian and bicycle projects that have been planned in proximity to the region's 91 Metrorail stations. All of these projects are from locally approved plans and programs. Using twelve weighted evaluation criteria, WMATA then identified 394 projects, which are around 31 Metrorail stations, that represents the types of station access improvements that can have the greatest impact on walk and bike access to transit. Continuing to work with the local jurisdiction staffs, the MSIS study identified 200 of these projects that are unfunded and remain unbuilt and are still considered "active" by local jurisdictions. Most of the projects are in or near Regional Activity Centers.

The TPB documentation for this initiative will explain the methodology that WMATA used to prioritize the short list of several hundred unbuilt projects at Metro stations. The initiative being recommended to the TPB will package station access improvements as one of the non-motorized improvement initiatives the TPB would endorse for further concerted action by TPB member jurisdictions. The TPB's endorsement of this initiative will be a call to the TPB

member jurisdictions to commit to undertake further examination of the illustrative projects identified by the MSIS study including the constructability of the projects with the intent to fund these or similar projects. Such improvements will close key infrastructure gaps, thereby expanding walk accessibility (increasing the station's walkshed) and meeting existing or future demand.

## WORK ACTIVITIES

TPB staff will complete the following tasks in a process that will define the package, seek buy-in from our members, and present the material in a manner that is compelling and useful.

- ***Pull together a draft document*** – Using the sources cited above, staff will develop a draft document rooted in regional policies that shows the impacts of the proposed priorities and identifies steps for implementation.
- ***Seek buy-in among TPB members*** – Staff will convene a regional work session (possibly use the Bicycle-Pedestrian Subcommittee meeting on November 28) to solicit support for the draft document. In this session, we will discuss potential opportunities to promote implementation, including supporting planning and engineering through the TLC and TAP programs, and we will note that as jurisdictions develop these project components to a level of readiness, the region could pursue a TIGER grant application for those projects that are construction-ready.
- ***Revise the draft*** – Based upon the input received from the jurisdictions, staff will develop the final content for the package. We will develop the package into a document that is persuasive and attractive. It will be written in a way that will enable it to be inserted as a chapter in *Visualize 2045*.
- ***Brief committees and seek TPB approval*** - Staff will present the final draft document to key committees, including the Bicycle/Pedestrian Subcommittee on November 28 and the TPB Technical Committee on December 1. The Long-Range Plan Task Force will be briefed on December 6. TPB approval will be sought on December 20.