
**TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD
MEETING MINUTES**

March 16, 2022

HYBRID (IN-PERSON/VIRTUAL) MEETING

ATTENDANCE

MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES IN-PERSON

Pamela Sebesky, Chair – City of Manassas
Patrick Wojahn – College Park
Kelly Russell – City of Frederick
Brian Lee – City of Laurel
Kacy Kostiuik – Takoma Park
Canek Aguirre – Alexandria
Takis Karantonis – Arlington County
Dan Meyer – City of Fairfax
James Walkinshaw – Fairfax County Legislative
Ann B. Wheeler – Prince William County
John Lynch – VDOT
Amir Shapiir – VDOT
Allison Davis – WMATA

MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES ONLINE

Christina Henderson – DC Council
Heather Edelman – DC Council
Kristin Calkins – DC Office of Planning
Mark Rawlings – DDOT
Lezlie Rupert – DDOT
Mati Bazurto - Bowie
Reuben Collins – Charles County
Jan Gardner – Frederick County
Mark Mishler – Frederick County
David Edmondson – City of Frederick
Neil Harris - Gaithersburg
Rodney Roberts – Greenbelt
Gary Erenrich – Montgomery County Executive
Evan Glass – Montgomery County Legislative
Victor Weissberg – Prince George’s County
Executive
Deni Taveras – Prince George’s County
Legislative
R. Earl Lewis, Jr. – MDOT
Kari Snyder – MDOT
Dan Malouff – Arlington County
Walter Acorn – Fairfax County Legislative
David Snyder – Falls Church
Adam Shellenberger – Fauquier County
Robert Brown – Loudoun County
Kristen Umstatt – Loudoun County
Jeannette Rishell – Manassas Park
Victor Angry – Prince William County
David Marsden – Virginia Senate
Julia Koster - NCPC

MWCOG STAFF

Kanti Srikanth
Chuck Bean
Lyn Erickson
Mark Moran
Tim Canan
Andrew Meese
Nick Ramfos
Paul DesJardin
Leo Pineda
Stacy Cook
Sergio Ritacco
Bryan Hayes
Andrew Austin
Dusan Vuksan
Deborah Etheridge
Kim Sutton
Jon Schermann
Eric Randall
Rachel Beyerle
Michael Ferrell

OTHERS ONLINE

Matt Arcieri – City of Manassas, Technical
Committee Chair
Ashley Hutson – Community Advisory Committee
Chair

Audio and video of the meeting, and materials referenced in the minutes can be found here:
mwcog.org/events/2022/3/16/transportation-planning-board

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

Chair Sebesky called the meeting to order. She said that this meeting was the first in-person TPB meeting in two years. She described the process for asking questions. She said that members present in the room would be recognized first and that online participants would have a chance to speak after.

Ms. Erickson read the name of the participants in the room and participating remotely. Attendance for the meeting can be found on the first page of the minutes.

Ms. Erickson said that three comments were submitted. The first comment, from Mr. Schwartz honored local elected officials in Ukraine and urged the region to end oil dependency and to address climate change. The second comment, from Ms. Montemarano, linked to an article titled, “Corporations Benefit from Transit, So Why Aren’t They Paying for it? The final comment, from Mr. Filipowski listed suggestions for improving the region’s land-use and transportation system. The full comments can be found attached to the memo for this item.

2. APPROVAL OF THE FEBRUARY 16, 2022 MEETING MINUTES

Mr. Karantonis made a motion to approve the February meeting minutes.

Ms. Kostiuk seconded the motion.

The minutes were approved.

3. TECHNICAL COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Arcieri said that the Technical Committee met on March 4. At the meeting the committee was briefed on items also on the board agenda. He said the committee was excited to see the online tool that accompanied the Draft 2022 Update to the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan for the National Capital Region. He said the committee continued its discussion on the climate change element of the long-range transportation plan.

More detail can be found in the report for this item.

4. COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT

Ms. Hutson said that the CAC met on March 10. At the meeting the committee was briefed on the COG Cooperative Forecast and plans for promoting the completion of Visualize 2045 and promoting awareness about the public comment period and open houses.

Ms. Hutson said that the committee also divided into small groups and discussed member comfort with returning to in-person meetings. The committee also discussed the benefits of meeting with TPB officers.

More detail on the CAC meeting can be found in the report for this item.

5. STEERING COMMITTEE ACTIONS AND DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Srikanth acknowledged the return to in-person meetings, thanked the COG IT staff for their assistance especially over the past two years of remote work and virtual meetings, and said that staff are working on figuring out the best use of technology to make hybrid in-person and online meetings a success.

Mr. Srikanth said the Steering Committee met on March 4. At the meeting the committee approved two amendments. One was for a TIP amendment for a project in Maryland. Details can be found on pages 4 to 12 of the report. The second amendment was for WMATA to update funding amounts for several projects and details can be found on pages 13 to 33 of the report. He said that the 2021 Infrastructure Investment Jobs Act increased funding available for many existing federal programs from the US departments of transportation, including the RAISE grants. He said the TPB was providing letters of support for RAISE grant requests from across the region. Details are on page 35 to 38 of the report. He said that Commuter Connections had recently kicked off a live audio podcast on social media, to encourage people to return to ridesharing and transit, as part of its campaign, called Commute with Confidence. He thanked Chair Sebesky for taking part in the most recent podcast. He reminded the board that the climate change mitigation survey is due on April 1. He added that staff will host a four-part webinar series on transportation resiliency planning. He announced that the 30-day public comment period for Visualize 2045 starts on April 1. He also announced the dates and times for two Visualize 2045 Virtual Open Houses.

Ms. Kostiuk asked if the TPB has plans to apply for or encourage members to apply for new federal transportation funding.

Mr. Srikanth said that the TPB does support its members applying for grants with letters of support. With regard to new federal grants, he said that USDOT has been gradually releasing guidelines for the new programs. These are still rolling out. He said staff anticipate getting detailed regulations and program guidance soon and would be glad to explore interests for a regional grant application.

A board member asked how the TPB prioritizes RAISE grant applications from jurisdictions in the region.

Mr. Srikanth said that the approach has been to review TPB adopted goals and planning priorities and that if the proposed project advances those goals and priorities, then the TPB will endorse the project.

Mr. Roberts asked if he could get printed copies of the draft Visualize 2045 when released for public review and comments.

Mr. Srikanth said that staff can send draft copies of the plan document to board members at the start of the public comment period.

6. CHAIR'S REMARKS

Chair Sebesky encouraged board members to work with their colleagues and staff to complete the climate change mitigation survey distributed by TPB staff. She said that the board wants to add greenhouse gas reduction strategies to the long-range transportation plan and that jurisdiction input is important to selecting those strategies. She said that before the April TPB meeting there will be a work session focused on reviewing survey results and beginning to craft a set of strategies for inclusion in the plan.

Chair Sebesky said that COG published the Metropolitan Washington Planning Framework. She said the framework recognizes the interdependency of transportation, housing, land use, climate, planning work, and the importance of equity. She said the framework is informed by the TPB's work.

ACTION ITEMS

7. AN AMENDMENT TO THE FY 2022 UPWP, FY 2022 CARRYOVER FUNDING TO FY 2023, AND APPROVAL OF THE FY 2023 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM

Ms. Erickson said that the board was being asked to approve two resolutions. The first would amend the current UPWP to remove funding and carries that funding into the 2023 UPWP. The second would approve the 2023 version of the work program. She said that the carryover information had not changed in the last month. She said the final budget is \$19.495 million. She said the only changes are on Tables 1, 2, and 3 so that the tasks are reconciled with revenues available. She said that once the board approves the UPWP it will be submitted to USDOT for approval. After that, the state DOTs need to authorize funding. The work program starts on July 1.

Mr. Wojahn made a motion to adopt Resolution R10-2022 to amend the FY 2022 UPWP and carry the FY 2022 funding over to FY 2023.

Mr. Lee seconded the motion.

Mr. Glass asked if TPB staff have the capacity to look at future projects through a climate lens in accordance with the board resolution on climate.

Mr. Srikanth said that the resolution adopted by the TPB called upon the board to update the plan again in two years. He said that the work plan includes funding for this interim plan.

Mr. Snyder asked if the work program adequately maintains TPB safety initiatives.

Mr. Srikanth said that the proposed budget continues to set aside \$250,000 to provide technical assistance projects to TPB members for safety projects. He said that the funding for planning level activities continues.

Chair Sebesky called a vote on the first motion. The board unanimously approved Resolution R10-2022.

Mr. Lee made a motion to adopt Resolution R11-2022 to approve the FY 2023 UPWP.

Mr. Aguirre seconded the motion.

Chair Sebesky called a vote on the second motion. The board unanimously approved Resolution R11-2022.

8. APPROVAL OF THE FY 2023 COMMUTER CONNECTIONS WORK PROGRAM

Mr. Ramfos reminded the board that they were briefed on the FY 2023 Commuter Connections Work Program at the February board meeting. He said that some minor corrections were made throughout the document. Details on these changes can be found in the materials for this item.

Mr. Karantonis made a motion to adopt Resolution R12-2022 to approve the FY 2023 CCWP.

Ms. Wheeler seconded the motion.

Chair Sebesky called a vote. The board unanimously approved Resolution R12-2022.

9. PERFORMANCE-BASED PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING – 2022 TRANSIT ASSET MANAGEMENT TARGETS

Mr. Randall said that the TPB was briefed about the federal requirement to set performance targets for transit assets in the metropolitan Washington region at its February meeting. The board was presented with draft targets for the four TAM performance measures. He explained that the regional targets were developed using individual targets adopted by transit agencies across the region, and the targets have been reviewed by the TPB Technical Committee and the TPB Regional Public Transportation subcommittee. He stated that no comments were received on the draft targets prior to the TPB's February briefing.

Mr. Wojahn made a motion to adopt Resolution R13-2022 to approve transit asset management targets.

Ms. Wheeler seconded the motion.

Chair Sebesky called a vote. The board unanimously approved Resolution R13-2022.

INFORMATION ITEMS

10. DRAFT 2022 UPDATE OF THE BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN PLAN FOR THE NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION

Mr. Srikanth said that as context, the Visualize 2045 long-range transportation plan, in addition to road and bridge assets, includes bicycle and pedestrian planning activities, transit, regional freight movement, and safety projects. The plan document brings all of these elements together and that under this item the regional bicycle and pedestrian plan was being presented to the board.

Mr. Meese referred to the handout materials to provide an overview of the draft 2022 plan which will supersede the 2015 plan approved by the TPB. Changes since that time include development of the National Capital Trail Network (NCTN), new facilities, and micromobility. The plan will include an interactive dashboard of the network. Sections of the plan include planning context, bicycling, and walking activity in the region, bicycle safety, facility types, best practices, and the 2045 network. An appendix lists approximately 1,650 projects measuring about 2,500 miles with 1,880 miles classified as low-stress facilities.

Mr. Meese said that the draft plan is presented for review. TPB staff will address comments and return to the board for plan approval at its May 18 meeting.

Mr. Karantonis asked about the emergence of e-bikes and implications for infrastructure, such as trail width and the type of trails provided. He requested feedback on how the TPB will account for the e-bike trend. Mr. Karantonis also asked about planning for and building around pedestrian facilities and pedestrian-oriented development.

Mr. Meese said that the operating characteristics of e-bikes are different than regular bicycles, including speed, the way facilities are built, whether pedestrians and bicyclists are together on the same facility, and facility rules. He said that promoting pedestrian infrastructure can be a challenge because of the small scale and localized conditions of pedestrian facilities. The bicycle and pedestrian plan describes best practices for pedestrian improvements. TPB remains concerned about mid-suburbs where there are more zero-car households yet good pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure was not built, so those areas are playing catch up, and that is pointed to in the plan.

Mr. Farrell said that e-bikes are looked at with respect to the trail system, and National Capital Trail Network, and a standard 20 mile per hour design speed. An e-bike typically has a cut-out feature where the cyclist no longer gets electric assist at speeds more than 20 miles per hour. Twenty miles per hour was selected because there are fit cyclists who can maintain 20-mile per hour speeds, so that's a speed that is similar for many bicyclists as for e-bikes.

Mr. Karantonis said that he encourages TPB to look at whether the e-assist means that the technology will attract more cyclists, so this means that the technical specifications for network capacity should be scalable to the increase in demand. He commented that other issues include storage and having supporting infrastructure to meet demand.

Mr. Srikanth said that TPB staff have chosen from the 2,800 plus miles of planned bike facilities, 1,400 miles of trail and branded it as the National Capital Trail Network where a minimum of eight-foot trail width is the criterion for inclusion in the network. The NCTN was conceived for connecting employment centers, commercial activity centers, regional activity centers, and transit stations. Additional engineering and pavement management techniques will be needed as the usage of trails increases.

Mr. Lee asked whether the TPB staff looked at other human-assisted mobiles from a safety perspective as a lot of jurisdictions are having issues with scooters and skateboards. He also asked whether jurisdictions will be able to add updates to the interactive map and dashboard.

Mr. Meese said that the plan covers micromobility devices, there is an ongoing planning program to look at micromobility, and the TPB Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee has invited staff from member jurisdictions to talk about opportunities around the challenges related to micromobility use, regulation, and parking. TPB staff will take comments on technical corrections for the interactive dashboard, and there will likely be an annual cycle to receive updates from jurisdictions.

Mr. Farrell said that authorized users can edit projects with a staff review and edit approval process. The dashboard has a built-in mapping function to add a new bike trail or facility. The tentative plan is to have projects updated at the same time on an annual basis.

Mr. Wojahn said that one reason the NCTN was developed was to help prioritize connectivity, equity, and how trails can be used as a tool for connecting to jobs and also making sure that people who live in areas that have traditionally been under-resourced for active transportation do have access. He asked if the plan addresses where infrastructure is needed and has there been thought to prioritizing facilities beyond the NCTN in order to use trails as a tool for equitable access for safe walking bicycling.

Mr. Srikanth said that one of the GIS capabilities is to overlay where planned bicycle and pedestrian projects are within each jurisdiction and Equity Emphasis Areas. Other information available includes population and number of jobs within a half-mile of the trails. Land use activities around a project and opportunities for co-investment, partnering, or proffers is information available at the local jurisdiction level. He said that if TPB members have a process through which they have identified what their priorities are, that is information that can be added to the GIS database. Mr. Srikanth stated that if the TPB has an interest in applying for new competitive grant funding, then TPB staff could look at top priority projects from different jurisdictions and stitch them together as an application that would improve accessibility and connectivity.

Mr. Wojahn asked if the TPB can be a resource for jurisdictions for determining which projects or investments have the greatest impact for providing equitable access to trails, connecting low-income communities, communities of color, and identifying safe places to walk and bike.

Mr. Srikanth said that the TPB staff can work with member jurisdictions to see what methodologies or best practices may be applied to quantify equity benefits of a particular project.

Ms. Davis asked how the bicycle and pedestrian plan relates to Transit Access Focus Areas (TAFAs) and the Transportation Land-Use Connections (TLC) programs, and whether thought has been given to if a project has to be in the plan to receive TLC funding. Ms. Davis also asked how equity was thought of at the start of the plan and how was it is considered when formulating the package of products in the plan.

Mr. Srikanth replied that the plan is a compilation of locally planned projects and trusts that localities have integrated equity considerations in developing these local plans. From there, the TPB overlaid regional priorities such as Equity Emphasis Areas and High Capacity Transit Areas when looking at the local plans as a regional network. The TLC, Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program, and TAFAs

use the connecting or serving an Equity Emphasis Area as an application criterion with bonus points if a project is part of the NCTN.

Mr. Meese said that in addition to a plan document, TPB has a planning process, subcommittee, and training opportunities to go along with the grant programs.

Ms. Taveras asked about the integration of individual jurisdiction plans and projects with the work that TPB has been doing, noting several Maryland bike and pedestrian projects underway in Langley Park, Avondale, connections to the Rhode Island Trolley Trail, and others.

Mr. Meese responded that the plan includes a summary and references to member agency and local jurisdiction plans. Participating members submitted planned projects through the database. He offered to work with the jurisdiction if any of the projects are missing.

Ms. Kostiuk commented that it would be useful if some of the work that has been done on the walksheds around transit and high-capacity transit centers could be incorporated into the plan or if some type of walkability score could be included. She asked about younger bicyclists and whether there is an aspect about young cyclists that could be incorporated into the plan as some planning processes emphasize adult versus child users. A concern is that on-street facilities are a lot less feasible for children, and sometimes they use sidewalks which can pose a safety concern for pedestrians and the children.

Mr. Farrell stated that with respect to TAFAs, TPB staff know whether the low-stress network serves a TAFE walkshed. The NCTN and the low-stress network, which consists of three types of facilities -- shared-use paths, protected bicycle lanes, and bicycle boulevards -- are three types intended to be usable by people of all ages and abilities.

Mr. Snyder commented that there appears to be a desire among TPB members for more analysis and interest in determining what we should be doing that we are not currently doing regarding bicycle and pedestrian funding and safety.

Mr. Roberts commented in recent years he has noticed Maryland roadways with 50 mile per hour speed limits that are posted with bike path or "Bicycle may use full lane" signs. He asked what qualifies as a bike route or bike lane from a safety perspective.

Mr. Meese responded that in Maryland and other states, the motor vehicle law will state what is allowed or signed for bicycle use. The bicycle and pedestrian plan prioritizes protected bicycle facilities. In some rural areas, facilities may exist to serve as connections for more experienced cyclists.

11. COOPERATIVE FORECASTING STATUS UPDATE

Mr. Srikanth said that the Visualize 2045 long-range transportation plan update depends on population, employment, and household projections and understanding the level of growth the region anticipates and is planning for the next 25 years and where that growth is projected to happen. Local land-use planning determines where housing and jobs will be located and what mix of land use and density will be permitted and informs TPB's travel demand modeling. Federal regulations require TPB to use approved land-use plans from the region's local jurisdictions. COG's Department of Community Planning and Services coordinates locally approved plan information as an annual coordinated work activity, and Mr. Desjardin's brief includes highlights of the next Cooperative Forecast update.

Mr. Desjardin referred to the handout materials and presented background on the forecasting program and process, which is used for transportation modeling as well growth projections for capital improvement planning. The Round 9.2 forecasts are being used in the Visualize 2045 air quality conformity analysis. Work is underway for the Round 10.0 update which will look at impacts of COVID-19, commercial (office and retail) space utilization, and demographic information such as household size, and timing and location of future housing in the region.

Mr. Walkinshaw said that the commercial to residential transition conversation is important to examine. He stated that remote workers are not captured in traditional modeling and planning, yet it is a growing category of employee, and if there is a way to capture the dynamic of economic development impact in terms of how many remote workers are in the region, where they are moving, why are they moving or why not, that information would be of benefit.

Mr. Desjardin said that yes, the information can be difficult to quantify, and it is an economic development challenge.

Mr. Walkinshaw said that projections of household growth and population growth are tied to projections for job growth, and the job growth numbers are predicated on corporations filling up the commercial office space and workers having to live in the region, and whether that is going to be the case means that traditional mechanisms and formulas to do this kind of planning is going to be in flux over the next five to ten years.

Mr. Karantonis asked a question about transiency of the region's population, differences in employee retention rates and how that information is captured in forecasting.

Mr. Desjardin said that some of the information relates to the economic competitiveness of an individual employer. He said that currently, the labor market is competitive, and the incentives and opportunities offered to workers may affect worker tenures.

OTHER ITEMS

12. ADJOURN

No other business was brought before the board. The meeting adjourned at 2:00 p.m.