

## **ITEM 11 - Information**

July 16, 2003

Briefing on the Joint Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Certification Review of the Transportation Planning Process for the National Capital Region

### **Staff**

**Recommendation:** Receive briefing on findings and recommendations in the attached Certification Review report.

**Issues:** None

**Background:** Federal planning regulations require that the transportation planning processes of metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) be certified every three years. The Certification Review determines if the transportation planning process is addressing the major issues facing the region and if it is being conducted in accordance with applicable requirements.

The FHWA and FTA review team conducted a Certification Review of the TPB transportation planning process on September 16-17, 2002. The review team also met with the TPB Citizens Advisory Committee and interested members of the public to discuss issues relevant to the certification process on September 12, 2002.



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JUN - 9 2003

Dear Mr. Kirby:

This letter transmits the Certification Final Report from our joint FHWA/FTA Certification Review of the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. We would like to thank you and your staff for your time and assistance during our assessment of the planning process. We were very impressed with the participation and cooperation of the various transportation agencies and community groups in the region.

The Certification Reviews are intended to determine the impact of planning on the transportation investment process and provide a technical assessment of the transportation planning and programming process. As a forum for discussion between headquarters, regional, state and local planning officials, Certification Reviews also provide information for input to future long-term Federal policy making, including possible legislative and regulatory changes. This information will be used to help identify how future Federal technical assistance programs can best assist Metropolitan Planning Organizations and other planning agencies in carrying out the requirements of TEA-21 and will serve as a basis of information to measure progress in the transportation planning process for reauthorization.

We look forward to a continued working relationship with you and all the participants in the region as we continue to implement the requirements of the Metropolitan Planning Regulations.

If you have any questions regarding this action, please contact Sandra Jackson, FHWA at (202) 219-3521 or Tony Tarone, FTA at (215) 656-7061.

Sincerely,

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Acting Regional Administrator  
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Transmittal:  
Washington, DC Metropolitan Area  
Certification Review

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**WASHINGTON, D.C. METROPOLITAN AREA  
CERTIFICATION REVIEW**

**Review of the Transportation Planning Process for the National  
Capital Region**

**Conducted by the  
Federal Highway Administration  
and Federal Transit Administration  
September 16-18, 2002**

# Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Area Certification Review

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## **I. Executive Summary**

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) have completed a Transportation Management Area (TMA) Certification Review of the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area transportation planning process, as required under Federal law, for the 3-year period ending in January 2003. The review included on-site meetings, conducted on September 16-18, 2002, with the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB) staff of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) and partner agencies responsible for planning in the greater Washington, D.C. area. This report and all meetings were open to the public and included public participation opportunities. During the review, the team noted issues as findings, requirements and recommendations. The Federal review team findings and recommendations of the certification review are documented herein.

It is the conclusion of the Federal review team that the Washington, D.C. metropolitan transportation planning process meets the requirements of Transportation Equity Act (TEA-21) and applicable Federal regulations. The Federal review team also has formulated findings and recommendations intended to promote improvements in several important aspects of the planning process.

### **Federal Findings and Recommendations**

- 1. Vision Policy.** The Vision Policy is having a valuable impact on the transportation planning process. The activity map, which is related to the Vision Policy, is successfully elevating the importance of coordination between land use and transportation planning to the policy level.
- 2. Constrained Long-Range Plan (CLRP) and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act.** The use of accessibility measures in the CLRP to demonstrate the impacts and benefits on different population groups is an important example of the TPB's proactive approach to meeting Title VI requirements.
- 3. Documentation of Project Selection Process.** The TPB should document the project selection processes used by the Commonwealth of Virginia, the State of Maryland, the District of Columbia and Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) in developing the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Documentation in the TIP of these processes would make them more transparent and understandable to stakeholders.
- 4. Annual Listing of Projects of Federal Funding Obligations.** The TPB has successfully met the Federal requirement for an annual listing of projects, providing useful information on investments to the Federal agencies and other interested parties.
- 5. Updates to Travel Demand Model.** Revisions to the travel demand forecasting model represent significant progress in refining this critical technical tool. The Federal team supports the value of peer reviews as an important further means to assess and improve the model.
- 6. Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP).** The UPWP provides a single informative picture of the importance of transportation planning tasks underway in the region. This document demonstrates that the planning process successfully addresses major Federal planning requirements and priorities.

7. **Congestion Management System (CMS).** The TPB should continue to develop the CMS as an effective tool to analyze the relationships between transportation decisions and congestion. It will be particularly important to understand these connections when the region is reclassified as "severe" under the 1990 Clean Air Act Amendments (CAAA).
8. **Focus on maintenance, operations, and Intelligent Transportation System (ITS).** The Federal team recognizes the value of recent efforts to focus on maintenance, operations, and applications of ITS under the Management, Operations, and Intelligent Transportation Systems (M&O/ITS) work task and encourages TPB and ITS partner agencies, to commit to maintain and use the regional ITS architecture to support the planning process/TIP development as well as in eventual project development/implementation.
9. **Cooperative Relationships.** Participating State and local agencies appear to be successfully meeting the challenge of coordinating complex institutional roles and responsibilities. This is required to assure that the metropolitan transportation planning process is cooperative.
10. **Cooperative Agreements.** The TPB and its partners should redouble their efforts to complete and formalize Memoranda of Agreements to reflect all responsibilities for meeting the TEA-21 planning requirements. The TPB needs to expedite the signing of this agreement in order to avoid corrective actions.
11. **Financial Planning.** The TPB should consider evaluating the accuracy of prior forecasts of costs and revenues. This will increase confidence in TPB's financial analysis and validate predictions that new revenue sources will be required.
12. **Public Involvement Initiatives.** There are numerous noteworthy efforts underway as part of the public involvement process, including the restructured Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC), its outreach meetings and effort to track the TPB Agenda, the Citizens' Guide, and the Access for All Committee.
13. **Effectiveness of Public Involvement.** The Federal team suggests that TPB evaluate the effectiveness of public outreach efforts to identify how it might be improved.
14. **Title VI of the Civil Rights Act Requirements.** The TPB should work with its state and local partners to document how they incorporate Title VI requirements into their transportation planning processes. The TPB could identify ways to enhance visibility of compliance with Title VI requirements.
15. **Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) Requirements.** The TPB is encouraged to formulate an ADA policy and elevate the importance of ADA requirements among the jurisdictions in the region.

## II. Forward

Pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 134(i)(5) and 49 U.S.C. 1607, the FHWA and the FTA must jointly certify the metropolitan transportation planning process in the TMA at least every three years. (A TMA is an urbanized area, as defined by the U.S. Census, with a population of over 200,000. There are 129 TMAs in the U.S., based on the 1990 census.) In general, the reviews consist of three primary activities: a site visit, review of planning products (in advance of and during the site visit), and preparation of a report that summarizes the review and offers findings. The reviews focus on compliance with Federal regulations, challenges, successes, and experiences of the cooperative relationship between the Metropolitan Planning Organization, State Department of Transportation (DOT), and transit operator in the conduct of the metropolitan planning process. Joint FHWA and FTA Certification Review guidelines provide agency field reviewers with latitude and flexibility to tailor the review to reflect local issues and needs. As a consequence, the scope and depth of the Certification Review reports will vary significantly.

Section 332 of the U. S. DOT's regulations governing the transportation planning process note:

*The Certification Review process is only one of several methods used to assess the quality of a local metropolitan planning process, compliance with applicable statutes and regulations, and the level and type of technical assistance needed to enhance the effectiveness of the planning process. Other activities provide opportunities for this type of review and comment, including Unified Planning Work Program approval, the long-range plan, Metropolitan and Statewide Transportation Improvement Program Findings, air quality conformity determinations (in non-attainment and maintenance areas), as well as a range of other formal and less formal contact provide both FHWA/FTA an opportunity to comment on the planning process. The results of these other processes are considered in the Certification Review process.*

While the Certification Review report itself may not fully document those many intermediate and ongoing checkpoints, the "finding" of Certification Review, in fact, is based upon the cumulative findings of the entire review effort.

The review process is individually tailored to focus on topics of significance in each metropolitan planning area. Federal reviewers prepare certification reports to document the results of the review process. The reports and final actions are the joint responsibility of the appropriate FHWA and FTA field offices and content will vary to reflect the planning process reviewed, whether or not they relate explicitly to formal "findings" of the review.

The public is invited to provide comments on the Certification Report and process to FHWA and FTA.



### **III. Introduction**

On September 16-17, 2002, the Federal Review Team consisting of FHWA officials from the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia Divisions, Eastern Resource Center and FHWA Headquarters; FTA officials from Region 3, the Washington D.C. metropolitan office and FTA Headquarters met with the National Capital Region TPB staff of the Washington Metropolitan COG, the designated metropolitan planning organization for the metropolitan area.

The Federal Certification Review team consisted of:

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On January 7, 2002, FHWA and FTA sent a joint letter formally notifying the chairman of the TPB of the Certification Review that was to take place (Attachment A) and requesting a date convenient for the board. The TPB staff sent notifications concerning the review to various organizations and committees.

When conducting Certification Reviews, it is the customary practice of FHWA and FTA to hold separate meetings with the public to solicit their views on how the transportation planning process is working in that area. However, given the extensive number of involved citizens and advocacy groups in this region and their degree of interest and participation in the planning process, the Federal team decided that a separate public meeting for this Certification Review would not be necessary. The team decided that an expanded meeting with the active and broadly representative CAC would provide the necessary public perspective on the planning process.

The initial stage of the review was a desk audit of the TPB planning process by the FHWA Division Office. This audit was transmitted to the Federal team members prior to the first meeting with the TPB. Prior to the on-site visit, a list of questions for discussion was provided to the CAC for their regularly scheduled meeting.

The Certification Review findings and discussion points reported herein are the culmination of the on-site review and desk audit, further supplemented by activities and products developed within the 3-year period following the previous Certification Review.

## **A Meetings with Representatives of the Citizens Advisory Committee**

Several members of the Federal review team attended a regularly scheduled meeting of the CAC on September 12, 2002. The chairman of the TPB, Phil Mendelson, attended the meeting. CAC members in general were very satisfied with the process. In the years since the TPB adopted its public involvement policy, there has been the opportunity to see the different elements of the policy action in a variety of circumstances. Given the role of the TPB in transportation planning in the Washington region, a consultative role seems appropriate for most TPB activities, especially those in which the TPB is primarily ratifying policy decisions made at the local level.

The Federal team was impressed by the degree of interest and high level of participation of the CAC in the planning process in general, and in the Certification Review in particular. Although the CAC was given discussion questions in advance (Attachment C), the team's discussion extended to include programmatic issues, general public outreach activities and suggestions for possible changes for the future of the CAC. The CAC started with issues that members felt were important to bring to the TPB. The discussion involved public outreach activities and how the TPB should fully engage the public and how to ensure a champion for each planning area or topic to develop more local interest into a regional context. In response to the suggestion that public outreach activities be routinely re-evaluated as part of the work program, the TPB might consider conducting evaluations on a 3-year cycle to coincide with the Federal certifications.

The Federal team identified several major points:

- The CAC has a clearer role in the TPB decision making process;
- The CAC is seen as important to keeping the TPB focused and on course;
- The CAC may want to consider a wider cross section of stakeholders;
- Use of polling, focus groups, and web sites to solicit public views; and
- Revise the formal guidelines for CAC operations to include the CAC as one of the prime venues for developing increased public outreach.

## **B. Progress Since the 1999 Certification Review**

In 1999, based upon the Federal review and evaluation, FHWA and FTA certified that the metropolitan transportation planning process met all of the requirements of the October 28, 1993, Federal Metropolitan Regulations, 23 CFR Part 450, Subpart C. A summary of all the recommendations from the 1999 review is attached in Attachment D. In general the Federal team was pleased with the progress made in improving the transportation planning process in the Washington region over the past three years. Especially noteworthy are some of the innovations in public participation initiated during the vision planning effort.

The evolving process of educating elected officials and integrating their ideas into a complex regional planning process is difficult. The TPB continues to focus on the transportation priorities for the immediate future. Air quality planning and transportation conformity issues and requirements are well integrated into the region's transportation planning process. State Implementation Plan (SIP) and conformity milestones are clearly regarded as one of the area's primary challenges if not the most critical of many. Ongoing efforts are to continue to broaden outreach and pursue new types of analysis and expand travel choices.

The following sections of this report present highlights of the Certification Review and discussions, background information and recommendations by major planning topic.

### **C. The National Capital Area**

The National Capital Region TPB is the metropolitan planning organization for transportation in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. The TPB was created in 1965 in response to Federal Highway legislation requiring the creation of official planning organizations for metropolitan areas. TPB members include representatives from 18 local jurisdictions, the Washington, D.C., Virginia, and Maryland Transportation Departments, and WMATA.

The Washington, D.C. transportation planning area encompasses the jurisdictions of the Metropolitan COG: Frederick, Montgomery, and Prince George's County in Maryland; Arlington, Loudoun, Fairfax, Prince William County in Virginia; and the Virginia cities of Alexandria, Falls Church, Manassas, and Manassas Park. The region's population was roughly 4.5 million people in 2000 and is expected to rise to 5.6 million by 2020. This actually represents a slowing in the growth of the region; from 1960 to 1990, the average annual population growth rate was 1.9 percent. In comparison, growth is expected to average around 1.2 percent between 1990 and 2020. Growth in the region's core (District of Columbia, Arlington, and Alexandria) is expected to be relatively modest. The greatest absolute growth is forecast for the inner suburban jurisdictions (Montgomery, Prince George's, and Fairfax counties and the cities of Rockville, Fairfax, and Falls Church). The highest growth in percentages terms is expected to occur in the outer suburbs.

The multi-jurisdictional nature of the region poses significant challenges for transportation planning. These are most apparent between Maryland and Virginia. (As a practical matter, the District of Columbia is essentially built out with a mature transit system and has less need for new roads and transit investment than the suburban jurisdictions) For example, Maryland and Virginia have different methods for establishing transportation priorities. In Virginia, transportation funds are allocated to different regions based on formulas. The funds are then allocated to projects by the regional districts. In Maryland, the process is more centralized and prioritization takes place at a statewide level through an annual "tour" where State officials receive input from local officials.

Another important distinction between Maryland and Virginia is constitutional structure. To simplify, Maryland is a "home rule" State, while Virginia is a "Dillon rule" State. In essence, this means that local jurisdictions in Maryland have far more range for action than do local jurisdictions in Virginia, which are not given much authority for things like revenue raising under the State's constitution. Because of the complicated nature of the planning process in the Washington, D.C. region, a regional air quality planning entity, the Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee (MWAQC), was established to prepare the air quality plan. MWAQC derives its authority under the Section 174 of the 1990 CAAA and has been certified by the governors of Maryland and Virginia and the mayor for the District of Columbia. Washington is unique among urban areas in that the State air agencies have agreed to share planning responsibilities with the local governments in the metropolitan region. Decision making is very dispersed in the region, making planning by the TPB among the most institutionally complex in the country. The TPB functions with the equivalent of three "State DOTs" with independent functions; numerous city and county governments with land use responsibility and in many cases; Federal government with responsibilities for the District.

## **D. Regional Travel Trends**

The Federal government is the region's largest employer and, along with the services sector, is the engine that drives the economy of metropolitan Washington. In the 1990s, the Washington region, along with the rest of the nation, experienced a dynamic economy, finishing the decade with record low unemployment rates. Growth during the 1990s fueled a surge in commercial construction, and with it came the emergence of suburban employment centers throughout the region. Examples of these centers in the Washington area include Tysons Corner in Virginia and New Carrollton in Maryland. Many of the new jobs that were added in the region were located in these suburban areas, and this resulted in shifting commuting patterns regionwide. In addition to many workers traveling to their jobs in the central core, a significant number of workers now commute to jobs located in the suburbs. In other words, typical commuting is not just radial (suburb-to-core) anymore, but also includes a significant amount of suburb-to-suburb travel. The dominance of the Federal government and the services sector highlights the nature of the regional economy. The composition of jobs in the region (primarily government and services) has resulted in a highly educated labor force. Furthermore, the Washington region has one of the highest labor force participation rates among women nationwide. Subsequently, households with more than one member holding a full-time position are very common.

The latest travel estimates for the highway system indicate that, for the region as a whole, the volume of traffic on the area's roadways outstripped the available highway capacity. The amount of travel on the region's highways is typically measured in vehicle miles of travel (VMT). VMT is sometimes thought of as the "demand" for highway travel and is often compared to a similar measure, lane miles of roadway, which is used to indicate the highway "supply," or the ability of the road system to accommodate potential travel. As the imbalance between travel demand and capacity increases, certain roadways or travel corridors will experience greater levels of congestion. Between 2001 and 2025, VMT is forecast to increase 46 percent and lane miles only 13 percent. Some "real-world" data collected in aerial surveys of the region's freeways illustrate where highway congestion is occurring. The survey, sponsored by the TPB in Spring 1999, used density—the number of passenger cars per lane, per mile, at a given time to measure congestion.

According to the latest census information, changes in regional commuting patterns in the Washington region have had an impact on regional Single Occupant Vehicle (SOV), carpool, and transit modal shares. Employment in the core areas of the region that has good transit service and is supportive of carpooling has not increased, while strong growth has occurred in the inner and outer suburbs of the region.

## **IV. The Transportation Planning Process**

### **A. Long-Range Transportation Plan**

The region has a diverse population in terms of race, income, and age. Over 40 percent of the population is non-white. The suburbanization of residences and employment pose long-term challenges in many respects. Numerous major projects identified as critical for the region are not in the constrained plan because ways to finance them have not been identified. These could amount to billions, perhaps twice the cost of the constrained plan. New revenue sources would likely have to come from user fees – e.g., tolls, gas taxes, or parking. These politically unpopular strategies would require substantial cooperation among states and local jurisdictions, political support, and public commitment.

The Transportation Vision, a TPB document, contains a vision statement, long-range goals, objectives, and strategies to guide transportation planning and implementation in the region. The long-range plan consists of capital improvements, studies, actions and strategies proposed for implementation by the year 2025. It addresses the seven new planning factors in TEA-21. Addressing the Vision's goals is the TPB Policy Element of the 2003 update of the CLRP.

Eighty percent of the financially CLRP is needed for operating and preserving the transit and highway system. The CLRP, which under the final planning regulations must be updated at least every three years, also is updated annually (sometimes more frequently) with amendments. These amendments adjust the phasing or other aspects of some of the projects or actions in the plan, include new projects such as the Woodrow Wilson Bridge improvements or the New York Avenue Metrorail station with identified new funding sources, or change specific projects as new information on them became available.

### **B. Transportation Improvement Program**

The TIP serves several purposes. It is an expression of intent to implement specific facilities and projects in the CLRP through the selection of priority projects during the initial 6-year period of the plan. It provides a medium for local elected officials, agency staffs, and interested members of the public to review and comment on the priorities assigned to the selected projects. Finally, the TIP establishes eligibility for Federal funding for those projects selected for implementation during the first program year, known as the Annual Element of the program. The TIP is a multi modal listing of the public transit, highway and High Occupant Vehicle, bicycle and pedestrian improvements as well as ridesharing programs and transportation emission reduction measures for which the obligation of funds has been programmed. It documents the cost, implementation phasing, sources and types of funds, and describes each project included in the program.

The current TIP covers the 6-year period Fiscal Years (FYs) 2003 to 2008. It identifies a priority list of projects and project segments to be carried out with Federal funding under TEA-21. The TIP, which is normally updated annually, includes a financial plan that shows the total dollars programmed by the District of Columbia, Maryland, Virginia, and WMATA for the TEA-21 funding categories for each year. The plan shows the funding programmed for the priority projects in the first year, which is consistent with the anticipated Federal funding for FY 2003 that each State has authorized for the region. It also shows the funding programmed for the second through sixth years, which is also consistent with the anticipated Federal dollars authorized by each State.

The TPB staff emphasized that the TIP is not intended to be a Capital Improvement Program (CIP). A CIP shows the estimated expenditure on projects over the program period. The TIP, on the other hand, programs the advancement of projects through the obligation of Federal funds. Once Federal funds have been obligated for a project, it might not appear again in a subsequent TIP. A project would appear in a CIP, however, as long as funds are being expended on it. With regard to the TIP, a project would be programmed for several different years if it were contemplated that the obligation of Federal funds would be sought for different implementation phases of the project during those years.

TPB's TIP is posted on the web and includes projects listed in table form for District of Columbia, Virginia and Maryland but does not provide text describing how the TIP is developed, project selection criteria, or the relationship of the TIP to the Plan, the CMS, or other aspects of the transportation planning process including consideration of Title VI issues.

### **C. Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)**

The UPWP builds upon the previous UPWP, and is the result of close cooperation among the transportation agencies in the region. The UPWP is prepared with the involvement of these agencies, acting through the TPB, the TPB Technical Committee and its subcommittees.

Policy coordination of regional highway, transit, bicycle, pedestrian and intermodal planning is the responsibility of the TPB. This coordinated planning is supported by the State Transportation Agencies (STAs), FTA, FHWA, and the member governments of COG. The TPB coordinates, reviews and approves work programs for all proposed federally assisted technical studies as part of the UPWP. The UPWP work elements are designed to respond to Federal requirements and to strengthen coordination between land activity forecasts and transportation planning. The relationship among land use, environmental and transportation planning for the area is established through the continuing, coordinated land use, environmental and transportation planning work programs of COG and TPB. Policy coordination of land use is the responsibility of COG, through its Metropolitan Development Policy Committee (MDPC) and the TPB. COG's regional land use cooperative forecasts are consistent with the adopted regional long-range transportation plan.

Activities relating to the UPWP, the TIP, the CLRP, the financial plan, private enterprise participation, the bicycle and pedestrian program, public participation, the annual report and DTP management are activities that have been conducted on an annual basis in previous years. The name of the Management, Operations and Emergency Preparedness (MOEP) activities was changed in FY 2003 to reflect the additional focus. Access to jobs planning was a new work item in FY 1999.

### **D. Congestion Management Systems**

The CMS is an integral part of the transportation planning process in the region and is an element of the CLRP. The CMS element of the CLRP provides information on transportation system performance, usage, and efficiency, and provides information on the potential impact of proposed strategies to alleviate congestion. In October 1997, as required by Federal regulations, the CMS for the Washington metropolitan area was fully operational. In FY 1998, a CMS component was added to the CLRP and TIP project submission forms to document that serious consideration has been given to strategies that provide the most efficient and effective use of existing and future transportation facilities, including alternatives to highway capacity increases for SOVs.

In FY 2002, the CMS element was updated with current information on the transportation system's performance. Regional travel trends are described to depict changes in travel patterns and key indicators over time. This travel trend information is based upon the transportation system conditions

and travel data development. MOEP is being incorporated as appropriate. Improvements to the CMS documentation process and submission forms for the CLRP and TIP are undertaken on as appropriate basis. To ensure coordination and compatibility between the CLRP and other long-range transportation planning activities throughout the region, TPB senior staff currently participates in relevant State level long-range planning and CMS activities and studies.

The FHWA advises TPB to continue the task forces assembled to conduct congestion-focused studies or needs analyses; efforts to maintain and implement regional ITS architectures; regional incident management activities; and identify groups formed to develop CMS for the air quality non-attainment area.

Management and operations considerations are key elements in the overall design of the region's transportation systems, and must be reflected in the metropolitan transportation planning process. The Federal TEA-21 legislation included a planning factor that requires statewide and regional transportation plans to "Promote efficient system management and operation." Examples of management and operations considerations include routine or recurring activities such as reconstruction and maintenance, snow plowing and salting, coordination among public safety and transportation agencies, and traffic signalization, as well as nonrecurring activities such as traffic plans for special events, severe weather, or major disasters or emergencies.

The attacks of September 11, 2001, resulted in an increased emphasis and focus on transportation management and operations activities as they relate to emergency or crisis situations. This included identifying the needs for new or accelerated emergency preparedness activities. In FY 2002, the planning agencies accomplished a great deal to improve preparedness under the M&O/ITS work task. This included planning for improved interagency communications in emergencies; working with the COG Board's Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness Task Force on coordination efforts that extended beyond the transportation community to public safety, health, environment, and other concerns; and beginning development of scenarios for regional "play books" for emergency response.

## **E. Air Quality Planning, SIP Conformity and Planning Issues**

The MWAQC is the entity certified by the mayor of the District of Columbia and the governors of Maryland and Virginia to prepare the air quality plans for the DC-MD-VA metropolitan statistical area, under Section 174 of the Federal CAAA of 1990. In executing its responsibilities, MWAQC coordinates air quality planning activities among COG and other external committees and the TPB, reviews policies and resolves policy differences, and adopts air quality plans for transmittal to the three States.

The 1990 CAAA require the performance of detailed technical analysis at the systems level to assess conformity of transportation plans and programs. Procedures and definitions for conducting the analysis, originally issued as Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulations in the November 24, 1993, *Federal Register*, were amended and issued in the August 15, 1997, *Federal Register*, additional Federal guidance was also published by the EPA on May 14, 1999, and by FHWA and FTA on June 14, 1999.

Previous mobile source planning activities included preparation of emissions inventories and analysis of Transportation Emissions Reduction Measures which led to preparation of the revised Phase II attainment plan for ozone with a year 2005 attainment date. FY 2003 activities will involve similar efforts using the MOBILE6 version of EPA's emissions factor model and lead to preparation of an updated ozone attainment SIP. Specific elements of the SIP include review of existing mobile source emissions budgets and provision to demonstrate attainment. Similar inventory and analysis activities

are executed in the development of a carbon monoxide maintenance plan in conjunction with stationary source analysis within the MWAQC policy and technical committee structure.

Given the interdependence of the SIP and the transportation planning processes, the TPB and MWAQC have been working closely together over the past several months to meet key deadlines for addressing the severe area non-attainment requirements specified for the area by the EPA.

It is anticipated that additional emissions reductions will be needed by the attainment year of 2005. Consultations are ongoing in order to thoroughly discuss and identify the ramifications of the emission budgets set forth in the revised Phase II SIP document on the regional conformity process. The new inventories by source category are significantly different from the modeled attainment inventory for the Phase II attainment plan in the year 2000. The mobile model, MOBILE6, will be used to determine a revised budget for motor vehicles emissions of volatile organic compounds and a new budget for nitrogen oxides.

The TPB will need EPA's determination that the mobile emissions budgets included in the SIP revisions are adequate for conformity purposes in order to make a conformity determination scheduled for October of 2003. The last 3-year update of the region's long-range plan, will lapse in January 2004. If a new conformity determination is not in place by that time, only transportation projects exempt from conformity and those projects already approved could proceed. No new highway or transit projects affecting conformity could be approved once a conformity lapse occurs.

#### **F. Financial Planning and Financial Constraint**

In the financial analysis for the 2000 CLRP update, the funding identified by the implementing agencies for system preservation and for accommodating ridership growth on the WMATA rail system was less than requested by WMATA. Concerns also were expressed regarding the adequacy of funding identified for preservation of the highway system. On November 30, 2000, the TPB brought together key regional leaders at Union Station to address these financial issues. Members of Congress, State legislators, and key local officials, as well as top transportation officials attended the meeting from the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia.

During the past year, WMATA and the State and local governments have acted to fund the ongoing repair and rehabilitation of the transit system and address the financial capability to meet the transit needs of the region. Facing significant fiscal pressures, the State and local governments continue to commit limited general or dedicated funds for transit.

The region is addressing the funding needs to rehabilitate, preserve and operate the Metrorail, Metrobus and local bus systems. The TPB, WMATA, and the State and local governments have acknowledged the fiscal challenges facing the regional transit system and have taken steps to identify new funding for rehabilitation and ridership growth.

The TPB at a press conference presented a set of policy principles for Congress to consider when it takes up the reauthorization of the highway bill. Regional leaders stressed transportation priorities including emergency preparedness and system rehabilitation and maintenance. Funding for essential transit programs that will keep the system running safely and efficiently and the unique relationship with the Federal government were key points.



## **G. Experiences with Cooperation and Coordination, and Public Transit Issues**

The WMATA is the principal public transportation provider in the region, and is a recipient of FTA funding. The local governments are co-signatories of the WMATA compact and oversee WMATA's plans, policies and operations for rail and bus services. They also regularly review the costs, revenues and benefits of Metro service in their jurisdictions. The Metro system and, in fact, the region it serves now finds itself at a crossroads in its development. The system's infrastructure needs critical rehabilitation at a time when surging ridership is taxing the system's capacity.

Cooperation and coordination is a must when implementing the transit systems in the Washington, D.C. area. The cities of Alexandria and Falls Church, Fairfax, Arlington and Loudoun County, Virginia and Montgomery County, Maryland have bus services that have replaced or supplemented Metro bus service. These four governments employ privately contracted operations. As part of their contracting process, the local governments solicit bids from qualified providers. Although some vehicles may be provided by private contractors or managed by an independent source, many of the vehicles still interface with the WMATA system. As a result, these local systems closely coordinate with WMATA regarding schedules and routes.

Prince William County, the city of Manassas, Stafford County, the city of Manassas Park, and the city of Frederick are members of the Potomac Rappahannock Transportation Commission (PRTC). In 1998, PRTC selected WMATA for the management, maintenance and operation of their vehicles.

WMATA serves as a forerunner in other areas of cooperation and coordination regarding area transit programs. Key WMATA personnel participated on a Washington COG Task Force on Homeland Security that was established as a result of September 11. The goal of the group (represented by the Federal government, each jurisdiction and emergency personnel from various capacities) was to develop a regional emergency plan for the safe and efficient evacuation of individuals present in the metropolitan area should a devastating incident occur.

WMATA staff also participates on the TPB's Access for All Advisory Committee. In response to the Committee's recommendation regarding the availability of transit information in different languages, a Subcommittee on Transit Information for Limited English Proficiency was formed. Through this committee, WMATA has been bridging the gap to many of its customers by working on meaningful transit information in languages other than English. This work entailed extensive coordination with the other transit operators in Maryland and Virginia.

Annually the TPB's private providers task force, WMATA and local government staffs work cooperatively to conduct a public transit forum where key transit staff from local jurisdictions and WMATA met with interested private providers to discuss their plans for major bus service and paratransit changes and expansions. This region, through local government initiatives, continues to contract with private firms for a considerable amount of bus services and works cooperatively with the local governments in exercising their roles and responsibilities.

## **H. Planning for Movement of Goods (Freight Issues)**

The region does not do well with planning for movement of goods. One of the reasons cited by TPB staff is that freight data is difficult to obtain. Transportation planning related to freight and goods movement could be improved; however, TPB is devoting more resources into truck movement data. The TPB could find greater opportunities for freight industry involvement in the process.

To help decision makers identify areas in need of capacity improvements, the U.S. DOT developed the Freight Analysis Framework (FAF), a comprehensive national data and analysis tool, including county-to-county freight flows for the truck, rail, water, and air modes. FAF also forecasts freight activity in 2010 and 2020 for each of these modes. The movement of bulk goods, such as grains, coal, and ores, still comprises a large share of the tonnage moved on the U.S. freight network. However, lighter and more valuable goods, such as computers and office equipment, now make up an increasing proportion of what is moved. FAF estimates that trucks carried about 71 percent of the total tonnage and 80 percent of the total value of U.S. shipments in 1998. By 2020, the U.S. transportation system is expected to handle about 23 billion tons of cargo valued at nearly \$30 trillion.

In the District of Columbia, trucks moved a large percentage of the tonnage and value of shipments. Truck traffic is expected to grow throughout the District over the next 20 years. Truck traffic moving to and from the District of Columbia accounted for 1 percent of the Average Annual Daily Truck Traffic (AADTT) on the FAF road network. Approximately 12 percent of the truck traffic involved trucks traveling through the District to other markets. About 87 percent of the AADTT was not identified with a route-specific origin or destination. The top five commodity groups shipped to, from, and within the District of Columbia by all modes.

## **I. Cooperative Agreements**

The roles and responsibilities involving the TPB, State and local government transportation agencies, the transit authority, and other MPOs for cooperatively carrying out transportation planning and programming have been established for some time. General Memoranda of Agreement, defining the roles of the various local agencies and the State transportation agencies in the transportation planning process, which were executed on July 1, 1983, continues to be in effect.

The TPB basic agreement defining the roles and responsibilities of the various parties is contained in its General Memorandum of Agreement, between the transportation agencies and the area local governments in accordance with requirements of the Section 134 of Title 23, and Section 5303-5305 of Title 49 U.S. Code. This agreement, which formally establishes a continuing and comprehensive transportation planning process, is under review.

The self-certification of the urban transportation planning process for the national capital region is completed annually. The TPB's statement of certification outlines 16 areas consistent with Federal requirements. The FHWA and FTA will continue to monitor the self-certification documentation and the degree of involvement of the local agencies and the State transportation agencies and a clarification of their roles in the process.

The responsibilities for the primary planning and programming activities are indicated in the UPWP. In addition, two agreements involving the TPB and the Fredericksburg area MPO in Virginia and Charles and Calvert Counties in Maryland are included in the UPWP. The relationship among land use, environmental and transportation planning for the area is established through the work programs of the MWCOG and TPB. Policy coordination of land use and transportation planning is the responsibility of the MWCOG, through its MDPC and the TPB. MWCOG's regional land use cooperative forecasts are consistent with the adopted CLRP.

The FHWA and FTA has advised the TPB that a new version of this basic agreement must be completed to formalize current roles and responsibilities in the national capital region transportation planning process and the requirements of the 23 CFR Part 450.

## **J. Public Involvement Process, Title VI and Environmental Justice, and the Americans with Disabilities Act**

### **Public Involvement Process**

The TPB has developed a formal policy on public involvement. The first policy statement was adopted by the TPB on September 21, 1994. In 1998, the TPB commissioned a consulting firm to review and make recommendations on how the public involvement process might be improved. The report recommended, among other things, that the CAC needed to have a clearer role in the TPB's decision making process and should include a wider cross section of stakeholders. The TPB voted to revamp its CAC. All changes to the plan have followed the new public involvement policy, including 30-day public notice and comment periods for all changes, public comment opportunities at all TPB meetings, public involvement opportunities at technical subcommittees of the TPB, and review of TPB documents and all changes by the TPB's CAC.

The CAC is the main standing body for providing citizen input into the deliberations of the TPB. The CAC was originally established by the TPB in 1993. The CAC's mission is to promote public involvement in regional transportation planning and provide independent, region-oriented citizen advice to the TPB. The CAC has 15 members, 5 each from Northern Virginia, suburban Maryland and the District of Columbia. Of these 15 members, 6 are elected by the previous year's CAC and 9 are appointed by the TPB itself. The TPB chair appoints the chair of the CAC.

In 2000, the CAC examined the draft update to the CLRP and offered a number of recommendations, which included a request that the TPB perform a study of different transportation and land use scenarios. This suggestion was taken up by the TPB in November 2000 when it decided to launch the Regional Mobility and Accessibility Study. (This is a good example of how citizen input was considered and implemented with results). The CAC is required to hold six outreach meetings per year throughout the region – two each in District of Columbia, Virginia, and Maryland. These meetings take place in a variety of locations.

In the future, the Citizen's Guide should be available in other languages in compliance with Title VI (national origin) regarding persons with who are Limited in English Proficiency (LEP). The TPB is encouraged to devise an LEP implementation plan with a methodology for how the TPB will provide information to LEP populations. This is also an initiative that the "Access For All" (AFA) Advisory Committee has undertaken. The Citizen's Guide represents an important improvement, but should be more widely distributed. Citizens should not have to visit COG to obtain a copy of the guide. The guide should be distributed at local public meetings.

The TPB hosted a workshop in June 2000 called Ensuring Access for All. The event was intended to obtain suggestions on methods that the TPB might use to reach out to minority and low-income communities and persons with disabilities. The workshop also received ideas about the effects that key transportation issues in the region are likely to have on those populations. Workshop participants offered commonsense suggestions about public participation. "Go where the people are, when they are going to be there, and make it clear that people are not wasting their time by giving input," several attendees said. Others suggested the TPB needed to develop new methods for getting out information with clear messages to which people can respond.

Based on this feedback, the TPB established the AFA Advisory Committee that was formed in 2001 to provide advice to TPB on how to involve the concerns of low-income and minority communities and disabled persons in the regional transportation planning process. It includes more than 20 representatives of interest groups from throughout the region. A member of the TPB chairs the

committee. The AFA is partially funded through a grant from the FTA and will identify projects, programs, services, and issues that are important to these groups, and are in need of improvement.

### Title VI and Environmental Justice

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000(d)) prohibits discrimination in federally assisted programs and activities on the basis of race, color, or national origin. The scope of Title VI was expanded by the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987 (P.L. 100-209) to include a recipient's and contractor's programs or activities whether federally assisted or not.

Executive Order 13166, Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency [LEP] requires Federal departments and agencies to develop guidance on how recipients should assess and address the needs of "limited English proficient" persons seeking access to the programs and activities of Federal-aid recipients. On January 22, 2001, the U.S. DOT issued Guidance to Recipients on Special Language Services to Limited English Proficient Beneficiaries. The guidance is to assist recipients in complying with their Title VI responsibilities in ensuring access to their programs by LEP persons.

In accordance with DOT's guidance, the TPB is encouraged to devise an LEP implementation plan with a methodology for how it will provide information to LEP populations. The FHWA provided copies of the guidance to the TPB staff and the AFA advisory committee members. The AFA Committee immediately began implementing the guidance, including an initiative to provide transit information in multiple languages to better serve the demands of persons who are LEP. The Washington metropolitan region is a very diverse region where multiple languages are spoken. According to the 2000 census, more than 800,000 people are foreign born. Twenty-three percent of the population speaks a language other than English at home, and 10 percent speak less than proficient English. The other languages most often spoken are Spanish, Chinese, African, Korean, French, Vietnamese, and Arabic.

The AFA Committee formed a Subcommittee on Transit Information for LEP Customers in order to focus attention on this important initiative. The Subcommittee also organized a focus group in January 2000 comprised of non-profit agencies from various language communities to discuss how LEP communities obtain information on services and which methods of communication are most effective. Over 30 non-profit agencies that work with LEP populations participated in the focus group, including representatives from community advocacy organizations and social service agencies in the District of Columbia, Suburban Maryland, and Northern Virginia. A summary of the results of that meeting as well as other activities of the Subcommittee were compiled into a report entitled, Report on Major Findings and Recommendations to Improve Transit Information for [LEP] Customers. The focus group identified several barriers for LEP populations in using transit in the region, such as a lack of awareness of the existing language assistance services provided by transit agencies and the ineffectiveness of existing language assistance services. Following are just a few of the recommendations identified by the AFA Subcommittee members:

- Continue the work of the focus group;
- Establish realistic goals for transit agencies to implement;
- Develop ways of measuring the effectiveness of LEP implementation;
- Explore other means of communicating transit information besides written communication.

Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations, dated February 11, 1994, requires Federal agencies to identify and address disproportionately high and adverse human health and environmental effects, including interrelated social and economic

effects of their programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations. In December 1998, the U.S. DOT issued Order 6640.23 FHWA Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority and Low-Income Populations. Order 6640.23 establishes policies and procedures for FHWA to use in complying with Executive Order 12898. The document states that Executive Order 12898 is “primarily a reaffirmation of the principles of Title VI of the CR Act of 1964 and related statutes, the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, 23 U.S.C. 109(h) and other Federal environmental laws, emphasizing the incorporation of those provisions with the environmental and transportation decision-making processes.”

The TPB staff discussed how the issue of Environmental Justice was considered during the development of the long-range plan updates. The discussion included one of the ways to assess the performance of the plan was to consider the number or opportunities or places that can be reached within a certain time frame. Accessibility measures take into consideration a variety of factors, including travel times, congestion levels and land use inputs such as the locations of employment. Accessibility to jobs within 45 minutes is the measure used in this section to assess the long-range plan.

The TPB undertook a special study in 1999 to assess how the CLRP impacted low-income and minority populations. The study entitled, A Regional Accessibility Analysis of the 1999 CLRP and Impacts on Low Income and Minority Populations, measured the number of jobs in the year 2020 that will be accessible within 45 minutes by auto and transit. Accessibility for low income and minority citizens was compared with accessibility for the population at large. The study found that high levels of congestion on the major interstates and arterials are expected to contribute to a significant loss in accessibility to jobs by auto for the regional population at large. Accessibility to jobs by transit will generally increase. In general, these trends were roughly the same for low income and minority groups as for the entire regional population. The results of this study were used as an input to the development of the 2000 CLRP. The study will be an ongoing TPB activity and will be updated when additional data becomes available.

The FHWA and FTA encourages this and recommends that the TPB use other factors in their analysis of benefits and burdens (adverse impacts) on minority and low income populations. It is suggested that the TPB also examine accessibility for persons with disabilities.

The UPWP also described several activities to address the social, economic, and environmental impacts of candidate projects and actions on minority populations and low income for the 2000 update. The team noted additional consideration of environmental justice issues as it relates to project selection criteria for the TIP and the inclusion of information on community impacts of both highway and transit improvements as well as environmental impacts is encouraged.

### The Americans with Disabilities Act

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. §§ 12101-12134), as implemented by regulations at 28 C.F.R. Part 35 (Title II), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S.C. § 794), as implemented by regulations at 28 C.F.R. Part 42, Subpart G (Section 504). Title II of the ADA prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in all of the services, programs, and activities provided or conducted by States and local governments, including employment (42 U.S.C. § 12132). Section 504 prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in programs and activities that receive Federal financial assistance (29 U.S.C. § 794). Both statutes apply to Metropolitan Washington COG because it is a public entity under the ADA, and a recipient of Federal funds under Section 504.

As stated in 23 CFR §652.5, "The safe accommodation of pedestrians and bicyclists should be given full consideration during the development of Federal-aid highway projects, and during the construction of such projects. The special needs for the elderly and the handicapped [persons with disabilities] shall be considered in all Federal-aid projects that include pedestrian facilities. Where current or anticipated pedestrian and/or bicycle traffic presents a potential conflict with motor vehicle traffic, every effort shall be made to minimize the detrimental effects on all highway users who share the facility."

To address the ADA paratransit regulations, WMATA and the local jurisdictions established the Regional Paratransit Coordinating Committee (RPCC) in January 1991 to provide a forum for an exchange of information, ideas and strategies. WMATA contracted with a consultant to assist, with RPCC, in preparing a regional plan for submission to FTA by July 26, 1992. This plan defines how WMATA will arrange for new paratransit services and how the existing paratransit services funded by each jurisdiction will be changed, improved, or coordinated with the other services in the region in order to meet the requirements of the new legislation. Frederick County and the city of Frederick also prepared an ADA paratransit plan to complement their fixed route bus services. On July 15, 1992, the TPB certified that both plans are in conformance with the long range transportation plan for the region.

Other programs in the Washington region also contain special efforts to serve elderly persons and persons with disabilities. The Annual Element identifies the projects using FTA Section 5310 funding. ADA affects not only WMATA, which operates federally assisted transit services in the region, but all of the bus, paratransit, and commuter rail services in the region. On September 6, 1991, the U.S. DOT issued final rules, which called for significant changes to the existing regulations on providing transit services to disabled persons. Under these rules, all purchased buses must be accessible, and all lifts and securement devices must accommodate all types of commonly used wheelchairs. In addition, complementary paratransit services have to be available to persons who cannot use the fixed route service. The paratransit service has to be comparable to the fixed route services in terms of fares, response time, hours of operation, service area and other criteria.

Compliance with Title VI, Environmental Justice, and ADA requirements will continue to be a priority concern for FHWA and FTA. The team notes that these considerations should routinely be reflected throughout the stages of the planning process, whether in development of the Plan and TIP, in UPWP tasks, or in public involvement efforts. This consideration should be documented in the various written products of the planning process. The team also notes that these requirements apply equally to planning for public transit as well as for other modes in the region. Federal review of these requirements will continue as part of oversight of the TEA-21 planning process as well as through other routine contacts between Federal staff and TPB and its State and local planning partners.

## **K. Travel Demand Forecasting**

Using complex computer programs ("models"), the TPB staff estimates how the transportation system planned for the next 25 years will affect travel in the region. The process, which is called travel demand modeling, uses data inputs including forecasts of job and population growth, and engineering assumptions about the future ability of roads and transit to handle the anticipated travel. TPB's transportation models include computerized representations of more than 28,000 road segments and travel data for 2,200 geographic zones. Depending on the application, each model "run" can take as much as 8 hours of processing time on a personal computer, spread over 24 hours.

The current model development work includes a new model set that incrementally advances applications of the travel model in Washington with added sensitivity and enhances features.

Concepts extracted from the new model set that can be practically implemented and empirically validated are being incorporated in this incremental approach. In addition, the TP +/Viper and Minutp travel demand software Version 2.1 and MOBILE6 emissions model are now linked to operate in tandem to produce estimates of air quality emissions for updates to the long-range plan.

An environmental advocacy group's report in 2001 asserted that there were a number of deficiencies in the travel demand and air emissions models and procedures employed by the TPB. TPB staff prepared responses to address the key assertions stated in the critique report.

To address the challenges of improving the travel modeling process, the TPB initiated an independent assessment of the travel demand model by the Transportation Research Board of the National Academy of Sciences. This peer review process, to be completed in 2004, will also review the direction of future travel model upgrades in the Washington region. TPB envisions changes for the travel demand modeling process, based on substantial new data available and as a result of the peer review.

The Cooperative Forecasting Program (CFP) at the COG enables local and regional planning to be coordinated by using common assumptions about future growth and development. The program combines regional data, which are based upon national economic trends and regional demographics, with local projections of population, households and employment. These local projections are based on data about real estate development, market conditions, adopted land use plans and planned transportation improvements. The TPB staff uses the CFP extensively in modeling travel demand and emissions.

## **L. Certification**

Based upon the Certification Review, the FHWA and the FTA jointly certify that the transportation planning process for the National Capital Region TPB meets the requirements of 23 CFR 450 and 49 CFR 613.

## Attachment A

### Joint FHWA and FTA Letter Announcing Review



U.S. Department  
of Transportation

Federal Transit Administration  
Region III  
1750 Market Street, Suite 500  
Philadelphia, PA 19103  
215-656-7100  
215-656-7260 (fax)

Federal Highway Administration  
DC Division  
1990 K Street, N.W., Suite 510  
Washington, DC 20006  
202-218-3536  
202-218-3545 (fax)

Honorable Phil Mendelson, Chairman  
National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board  
c/o Mr. Ronald Kirby, Director of Transportation Planning  
Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments  
777 North Capital Street, NW, Suite 300  
Washington, D.C. 20002-4201

JAN 14 2002

Re: Transportation Planning Process Certification Review

Dear Chairman Mendelson:

This is to notify you that in accordance with the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) and the joint Statewide and Metropolitan Planning Regulations of October 28, 1993, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), will be conducting a joint Certification Review of the National Capital Region's transportation planning process.

The Certification Review is intended to determine if the Transportation Management Area's (TMA) transportation planning process is addressing the major issues facing the area and if it is being conducted in accordance with the applicable requirements. A Certification Review must be undertaken at least once every three years. Upon completion of the Certification Review, the FHWA and the FTA will jointly certify:

- a) the transportation planning process;
- b) the transportation planning process subject to certain specified corrective actions being taken; or
- c) the planning process as the basis for approval of only those categories of programs or projects that the Administrators may jointly determine and subject to certain specified corrective actions being taken.

If, after the review and evaluation outlined above, the FHWA and the FTA jointly determine that the TMA's transportation planning process does not substantially meet the requirements, one of the following actions may be taken:

- a) withhold in whole or in part, the apportionment attributed to the metropolitan area, under 23 U.S.C. 133(d)(3), capital funds under 49 U.S.C. Sections 5309 and 5307 (formerly Sections 3 and 9 respectively, of the Federal Transit Act, as amended); or
- b) withhold approval of all or certain categories of projects.

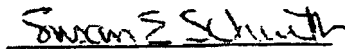


Should the planning process remain uncertified for more than two consecutive years, 20% of the apportionment attributed to the metropolitan planning area under 23 U.S.C. 133(d)(3) and capital funds under 49 U.S.C. Section 5307 will be withheld.

Per discussions with Ron Kirby, of the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board staff, we have selected September 16-18, 2002, for your area's Certification Review. In preparation for this review, we are asking for your help in providing the appropriate documentation as well as designating staff to assist in the review. Since policy and technical issues are likely to be discussed, please ensure that appropriate representatives are present during the Certification Review to address questions, which may arise. Be aware that TEA-21 requires that we provide for public involvement during the Certification Review. Please provide us with your views on how we may involve the public in your Certification Review.

We look forward to hearing from you on the on the above mentioned process. Should you have any questions, please contact Sandra Jackson, of the FHWA District of Columbia Division, at (202) 219-3521 or Tony Tarone, of the FTA Region III Office, at (215) 656-7100.

Sincerely,

  
Susan E. Schrueth  
FTA Regional Administrator

  
Gary L. Henderson  
FHWA Division Administrator

## **Attachment B**

### **Agenda for Certification Review Site Visit**

**Federal Certification Review of the Metropolitan Planning Process  
September 12, 16-18, 2002  
Washington Council of Governments, Washington, D.C**

**Location: Training Center  
777 North Capital Street, NE  
Washington, DC 20002  
(202) 962-3200**

#### **SEPTEMBER 12—CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC) MEETING**

The federal team has arranged to join the CAC scheduled meeting for an open dialogue on public involvement in the transportation planning process. (The team will provide a background summary and discussion questions in advance.)

#### **I. SEPTEMBER 16-18, CERTIFICATION REVIEW**

**Format for all sessions:** Each topic is introduced by the federal team discussion leader, followed by a five minute overview and update by TPB staff (and other local agencies identified by the federal team). The federal team will then lead a discussion involving all participating agencies:

**Participants:** Appointed members of the Citizen Advisory Committee  
Washington, D.C. District Department of Transportation (DDOT)  
Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT)  
Maryland State Highway Administration (MSHA)  
Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)  
Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (VDRPT)  
Washington Metropolitan Area Transit (WMATA)  
18 Cities and Counties

**Federal Review Team Members:** FHWA/FTA Division and Regional staff

**Federal Review Team Resource Staff:** FHWA/FTA Headquarters, FHWA Resource Center, FTA Region 3, and U.S. DOT/Volpe Center.

**DAY 1 – MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 16**

8:00 a.m. Continental Breakfast

8:30 a.m. Certification Meeting (*Federal Review team only*)

**Format for all sessions:** The federal team discussion leader will introduce each topic, followed by a five-minute overview and update by TPB staff (and other local agencies identified by the federal team). The federal team will then lead a discussion involving all participating agencies.

10:00 a.m. **Welcoming Remarks**

**Overview of the Certification Process of the Transportation Planning Process**

This opening session will provide a brief discussion of the Certification Process and summarize issues from the April, 1999 Certification and Findings. TPB staff will then provide an update and summary of major regional issues and priority planning activities, with discussion among all participating agencies.

Federal Discussion Leader: Sandra Jackson, FHWA, D.C. Division  
Tony Tarone, FTA, Regional Office

Resource: William Lyons, U.S. DOT/Volpe Center

11:30 a.m.

12:15 p.m. **Overview of the Transportation Planning Process (including the Long-Range Plan, Vision Policy, Transportation Improvement Plan, Unified Planning Work Program, and Planning Factors)**

Discussion will include over-all planning process and the required elements of the Transportation Planning Process through these documents and activities.

Federal Discussion Leader: Tony Tarone, FTA, Region 3  
Sandra Jackson, FHWA, D.C. Division

Resource: Brian Betlyon, FHWA Resource Center

1:45 p.m. **Congestion Management Systems**

Federal Discussion Leader: Steve Rapley, FHWA Maryland Division  
Resource: Brian Betlyon, FHWA Resource Center

2:15 p.m. **Air Quality Planning, SIP Planning and Conformity Issues**

Experiences with air quality planning, SIP issues and conformity including effectiveness of inter-agency consultation procedures.

Federal Discussion Leader: Steve Rapley, FHWA, Maryland Division  
Resource: Gary Jensen, FHWA Headquarters

2:45 p.m.

3:00 p.m. **Continue Air Quality and SIP Planning Issues**

This will continue the previous session discussion with a focus on coordination with the air agencies.

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Federal Discussion Leader: Steve Rapley, FHWA, Maryland Division  
Resource: Gary Jensen, FHWA Headquarters,

4:00 p.m. Adjourn

**DAY 2, TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2002**

8:00 a.m. Continental Breakfast

8:30 a.m. **Financial Planning and Financial Constraint**

This session will focus on the funding in the Long Range Plan, TIP and planning process activities leading to identification of funding sources.

Federal Discussion Leader: Ivan Rucker, FHWA, Virginia Division  
Brian Glenn, FTA, D.C. Metro Office  
Resource: William Lyons, U.S. DOT/Volpe Center

10:15 a.m. Break

10:30 a.m. **Experiences with Cooperation and Coordination, and Public Transit Issues**  
This session will include identification of the process for formal agreements; status of MPO designation and boundaries; public transit planning and Intermodalism.

Federal Discussion Leader: Deborah Burns, FTA, D.C. Metro Office  
Tony Tarone, FTA Region 3  
Resource: Brian Glenn, FTA, D.C. Metro Office

11:30 a.m. Lunch

12:00 p.m. **Public Involvement Process, Title VI and Environmental Justice, Americans with Disabilities Act**

Discussion will be in three parts:

1. The over-all public involvement processes by TPB and partners.
2. The required elements of Title VI and Environmental Justice.
3. Planning to incorporate requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Federal Discussion Leader: Tracey France, FHWA, D.C. Division  
Sandra Talbert-Jackson, FHWA, Maryland Division  
Ivan Rucker, FHWA, Virginia Division  
Resource: William Lyons, U.S. DOT/Volpe Center

2:00 p.m. **Travel Demand Forecasting**

Discussion will include requirements for Congestion Management Systems (recurring and non-recurring congestion) and travel demand modeling issues.

Federal Discussion Leader: Steve Rapley, FHWA, Maryland Division  
Sandra Jackson, FHWA, D.C. Division  
Resource: Bruce Spear, FHWA, Headquarters

**2:45 p.m. Concluding Remarks/Adjourn**

**3:00 p.m. Meeting of Federal Review Team to prepare preliminary observations and close-out issues**

**DAY 3, WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2002**

**Noon TPB Board Meeting**  
FHWA/FTA will brief the Board on the preliminary observations of the Federal Review Team

**Federal Review Team Members**

Steve Rapley, FHWA  
Ivan Rucker, FHWA  
Sandra Jackson, FHWA  
Tracey France, FHWA  
Sandra Talbert-Jackson, FHWA  
Deborah Burns, FTA  
Brain Glenn, FTA  
Tony Tarone, FTA

**Resource Team Members**

Brian Betlyon, FHWA Eastern Resource Center  
Bruce Spear, FHWA Headquarters  
Gary Jensen, FHWA Headquarters

William Lyons, U.S. DOT/Volpe Center

## Attachment C

### Discussion Questions and Background for Citizens Advisory Council Meeting

#### U.S. DOT Certification Review of the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Area Transportation Planning Process

#### Federal Team Meeting with the 2002 Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) to the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board

**Time:** 6:00 p.m. during scheduled CAC meeting  
September 12, 2002

**Location:** Training Center  
777 North Capital Street, NE  
Washington, D.C. 20002  
(202) 962-33200

**Purpose:** The Federal review team will participate in the CAC scheduled meeting and engage in open dialogue with members.

The discussion will address how successfully the public is able to participate in the transportation planning process in the metropolitan area.

- What methods and procedures are available to the public to participate?
- How successful are these methods?
- To what extent does the public contribute to: the transportation planning process, development of policies, and regional decision making?

**Format:** The Federal review team will distribute discussion questions in advance to the CAC. The Federal Team introduced each question and lead an informal discussion with CAC members. Note the focus is on the planning and decision making process and not on the merits of specific projects or decisions.

**Background:** Every three years the U.S. DOT, FHWA and FTA conduct a Certification Review of the metropolitan transportation planning process. The Certification formalizes continuing oversight and evaluation of the planning process by U.S. DOT to ensure that the planning requirements of 23 U.S.C. 134 and 49 U.S.C. 5303 to 5305 are being satisfactorily implemented.

The Certification provides an opportunity to provide advice and guidance to enhance the planning process and improve the quality of transportation decisions. Although FHWA and FTA routinely interact with the metropolitan planning organization and its partner agencies in reviewing and approving planning products and providing technical assistance, this formal external review can be a catalyst to improve the effectiveness of the planning process and its ability to address major issues facing the metropolitan area.

The Federal team will use the following questions to guide discussion.  
Please identify yourself and, if applicable, what organization you represent.

1. How effective is public involvement in transportation planning conducted by the National Capital Region TPB and its partner transportation agencies?
2. What methods to encourage involvement are working and what are not?  
Please provide examples and explanations.
3. How does public involvement assist the region to reach consensus on difficult and controversial issues related to transportation?

How can public views successfully be communicated to decision-makers in an area as large and complex as this?

4. Please describe situations where public involvement has had an impact on the planning process and decisions reached and where it has not.

For example, consider how involvement contributes to developing strategies in the long range plan, selecting investments in the TIP, or any other activities.

5. How might the TPB improve public involvement?

For example, consider changes to the structure of advisory groups, use of media, use of facilitators, or efforts to reach a broad range of groups, including minority and low income communities.

For additional information contact Sandra Jackson, FHWA (202) 219-3521

## Attachment D

### 1999 Certification Review Findings

#### 1999 - Summary of Findings and Recommendations

The Federal team identified several areas where the TPB and the participating agencies in the local transportation planning process have successfully implemented comprehensive and coordinated planning practices. In particular, these include the following areas:

**Cooperation between the States and among local jurisdictions with the TPB**

Vision planning process-- this process should continue to build public support for the priorities and for committing additional funds to transportation investments.

**Strong Congestion Management Efforts**

**Strong Travel Demand Modeling work** The improvements will enhance the ability of the modeling process to fully meet the modeling requirements contained in the conformity rule.

**Assessment of Public Involvement** conducting this type of work is excellent one to move forward, we commend TPB on its efforts to continue to improve its public involvement.

- **Air Quality Planning** transportation conformity issues and requirements appear to be well integrated into the region's transportation planning process. Conformity milestones are clearly regarded as one of the area's primary challenges if not the most critical of many. Awareness is maintained of general developments in the air quality arena, such as the NOx transport SIP, and other Clean Air Act issues both in the local area and around the country.

Better integration of transit plans into the transit planning appears to off-line from the planning process, conducted independently by individual operators separately within jurisdictions. WMATA presents its regional transit plan to the MPO for consideration in the CLRP, after developing it off-line from the MPO process, rather than as part of a collaborative regional process.

Conversely, the Federal team identified specific areas of activity where continued progress should improve the transportation planning process. These include the following areas:

Improved efforts in public involvement with the TPB and the CAC are needed. Careful consideration should be given to the public view of the new process.

- Continue the work to provide proactive the Public Involvement - We should compliment them for recognizing issues and addressing them through the consultant study. We should encourage them to engage the broad community in dialogue on the recommendations, with an eye to speedy implementation - in time for the next Plan update.



- **Strategic view of public participation. The focus is on improving techniques rather than on making public involvement a working part of decision making. Another area of concern is how to get real minority, senior citizens and low income groups involved**
- **Recommendation is to get continuity and consistency in the public involvement area is to hire someone or long term consultant contract in collaborative processes not in public relations.**
- **Maybe a milestone could be a look-back in mid stream to see how it's working.**
- **Don't rely on 45-day comment period for new procedures.**
- **Better coordination between TPB and early planning in local jurisdiction before TIP.**
- **Focus on need problems in developing consensus not a technique.**
- **Intermodal planning related to freight and goods movement could be improved. Greater opportunity for freight industry involvement in the process should be considered.**