

National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board

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MEMORANDUM

TO: TPB Regional Bus Subcommittee

FROM: Monica Bansal and Michael Eichler
Department of Transportation Planning

SUBJECT: Outline of Criteria to Determine Corridors for Stimulus-funded Priority Bus Transit Project

DATE: April 28, 2009

The following memo outlines the current process for developing a short-term priority bus transit plan to compete for a discretionary grant under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. The goal of this plan is to quickly enhance existing transit service, improve travel efficiency and accessibility for all modes, and encourage transit-oriented land development through corridor improvements, transit center improvements, information technology, and transit management plans.

1. The planning process:
 - a. A first draft containing five corridors was presented to TPB committees
 - b. Additional routes to be considered have been incorporated to create an ***unconstrained regional bus transit plan***, which will serve as the starting point for a recommended set of corridors.
 - c. Staff has developed criteria for review by TPB committees
 - d. Upon final review of criteria, staff will apply this criteria to the unconstrained regional bus transit plan in order to develop a smaller set of possible corridors
 - e. The possible corridors will be set as the region's recommended corridors for this short-term plan
 - f. Staff will develop recommendations for running-way and service improvements for each recommended corridor
2. The Unconstrained Regional Bus Transit Plan:
 - a. Transit projects are collected from the following sources:
 - i. TPB Regional Bus Priority Projects List
 - ii. WMATA Priority Corridor Network
 - iii. DC Alternatives Analysis
 - iv. NVT A TransAction 2030 Plan
 - v. City of Alexandria Transit Concept Plan
 - vi. VDRPT Studies: I-95/395 TDM Study, I-66 Transit Study
 - vii. Prince George's County Transit Plan
 - viii. Go Montgomery! Plan

- b. Transit centers are an integral component of this plan and short-term proposal, because of their potential role in catalyzing transit-oriented land development, providing a more seamless regional system and identity, and of course creating a more efficient and reliable service.
 - i. The source of the centers in the plan is the WMATA Regional Bus Study, including centers at Metrorail stations, activity centers and major transfer/terminus points. Please see attached table of transit centers for complete list and recommendations.
- c. In addition to running-way improvements and transit centers, other components will be added to the plan to ensure highest level of service to customers and help decongest bus traffic in the core:
 - i. DDOT's commuter bus management plan: This plan recommends specific commuter bus routes through the core as well as dedicated commuter bus layover facilities outside of but near the core. Better management of the existing commuter bus fleet is essential to increasing level of service for existing local and regional bus services.
 - ii. A regional real-time arrivals prediction database: Many bus stops and transit centers provide access to multiple transit operators in the region. Each transit operator can or will have its own real-time arrival predictions system. In order for dynamic message signs at bus stops to display arrival predictions for multiple operators, a single real-time arrivals prediction database is required.
- 3. The criteria to apply to the unconstrained plan:
 - a. Staff received tacit approval on an initial set of overarching criteria based on the stimulus bill, as described in a March 11, 2009 memo to the TPB Scenario Study Task Force:
 - i. Can be completed by 2012
 - ii. Is regionally significant:
 - 1. Benefit to 1+ jurisdictions or Service to core
 - 2. For existing service: meets ridership criteria (5000 per day)
 - 3. For new service: provides service in highly congested corridors, corridors with few multimodal options, or areas that relieve pressure on the Metrorail system
 - 4. Provides access to regional activity centers
 - 5. Enhances regional transit connectivity
 - iii. Is multimodal: Provides synergistic highway/transit improvements
 - iv. Cost is under \$300 million for the total project
 - v. Provides economic benefit and job creation
 - b. Additional criteria based on service potential, land use, demographics, and existing service has also been developed by staff to choose routes that:
 - i. Serve off-peak destinations (shopping and retail employment trips)
 - ii. Serve transit dependent communities
 - iii. Serve dense residential areas
 - iv. Have infrastructure in place such that transit stations can be placed one per mile
 - v. Are not already fully funded from other sources

- vi. Do not require substantial additional operating costs
- c. Criteria is also being developed for the inclusion of transit centers:
 - i. High activity location (such as a regional activity center)
 - ii. High transfer volumes (Circulator to trunk, multimodal transfer point, major terminus)
 - iii. Accessibility to/from
 - iv. Catchment Area of 25,000+ (walk and/or auto access)
 - v. Enhances regional transit connectivity (provides network of hubs to connect corridors)
- 4. Next steps
 - a. Staff will further develop this criteria based on feedback from TPB committees and local jurisdictions
 - b. Criteria will be amended upon release of US DOT grant guidance, expected in mid-May.