



National Capital Region
Transportation Planning Board

Technical Committee Minutes

For the meeting of
March 1, 2019

Transportation Planning Board
Technical Committee Meeting

Minutes

1. Welcome and Approval of Minutes from the February 1, 2018 Technical Committee Meeting

Attendees at the meeting introduced themselves. A motion was made to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

2. Briefing on the Amendment to the FY 2019 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) to include FY 2019 Carryover Funding for FY 2020 and the Final FY 2020 UPWP

Lyn Erickson, TPB Plan Coordination and Development Director, began by thanking members for their attendance. There are several steps that take place to draft and approve the UPWP. First, an outline is drafted and shared, then a draft document is developed. The last step is to evaluate what program activities will be completed during the current fiscal year and those that will not. These projects and budgets are then identified to be amended and removed from the current FY 2019 UPWP, and “carried over” to the FY 2020 UPWP.

She noted that the board will be asked to take 3 actions. The board will be asked to act to amend the 2019 UPWP to remove the “carry over” funds, then it will take action to “carry over” the funds into the FY 2020 UPWP, and lastly the board will approve the entire FY 2020 UPWP.

She noted that staff is planning to ask the board to carryover \$1.222 million from the current UPWP, which is average for the MPO being around 10% every fiscal year. There are 3 basic activities that this money is being pulled from and the memo describes where it will go in FY 2020. For task 5, Travel forecasting, \$600,000 will be carried over that was budgeted for consultant support services.

Tim Canan, TPB Planning Data and Research Program Director then shared that for Task 7 travel monitoring and data programs, \$350,000 will be carried over to complete the once per decade Regional Travel Survey. For Technical Assistance, funds will be carried over into the FY 2020 UPWP core program to complete the Big Data study. Also, for Maryland and Virginia the carryover will be used for the Marc VRE Run Through Study to be completed under Technical Assistance. Additionally, for Maryland, funding will be carried over to support the Transportation Land-use Connections (TLC) program.

Gary Erenrich, Montgomery County, asked whether the carry over activities will affect jurisdictional local matches and that staff may want to be prepared to answer this question at the upcoming board meeting.

Mrs. Erickson replied in the negative noting that jurisdictional dues are paid to COG and if not used they will also be carried over. Dues to COG will not be increased or decreased but will be used in the future if not spent in the current fiscal year.

Kanti Srikanth TPB Staff Director supported Mrs. Erickson’s statement as accurate.

There are no other changes to the FY 2020 UPWP in addition to reflecting the newly identified carry over projects and funding.

3. Briefing on the Final FY 2020 Commuter Connections Work Program (CCWP)

Nicholas Ramfos, TPB Operations Programs Director referred to the handout that was in the agenda packet and reviewed the information that was released at the TPB on the draft FY 2020 CCWP at the February 22, 2019 meeting and released for public comment. He stated that the current draft document had one small change made to the Bike to Work Day project that showed the sponsorship dollar amount for the state funding agencies which is added to the corporate sponsorship donations to purchase event t-shirts, print collateral materials and run advertisements.

There were no additional comments received or significant changes made to the draft document.

4. Activities to Address Safety Challenges in the Region: Virginia Department of Transportation

Jon Schermann, TPB staff, briefly reviewed the events leading to the TPB's request for quarterly state DOT safety presentations. He spoke to a memo describing the background, presentation themes, and proposed DOT schedule. He then introduced Stephen Read of VDOT.

Mr. Read then spoke to a presentation on the State of Safety Programs in Virginia. The presentation included an overview of the Severe Crash Factors Affecting Safety Performance, Virginia's Safety Programs, SMART SCALE Prioritization Safety Considerations, and the Future of Safety Performance. In terms of crashes in Virginia, Mr. Read noted that there are four major factors, or behaviors that result in over 70% of fatalities (Impaired, Speeding, Distracted, and Unbelted). Improving these behaviors is critical to reducing crashes and fatalities.

Virginia's Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) describes the Commonwealth's multiyear strategic efforts to improve safety and identifies countermeasures and actions for young drivers, speeding, intersections, pedestrians & bicyclists, among others. VDOT's Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) implements cost effective infrastructure treatments to improve safety within four focus areas; highway spots and corridors, systemic improvements, bicycle & pedestrian, and rail crossings. One of many aspects of this program includes the Identification of High Crash Locations which is critical to identifying and prioritizing locations for improvements. HSIP funding is provided through the federal government and must be spent only on safety projects.

Safety improvements are also realized through implementation of other engineering and construction activities. These safety benefits are captured through the Smart Scale process. Anticipated safety benefits of a proposed project are quantified as a safety score. The safety score is combined with scores for other benefits such as congestion mitigation, accessibility, and land use impacts (among others) into an overall score for each proposed project.

Mr. Read closed with a look at future safety performance, including efforts to improve forecasting by developing prediction models at the VDOT District level.

Bob Brown, Loudoun County noted that many rural roads in Loudoun and Prince William counties have much more traffic on them than they were designed to handle and that there are many crashes on these roads and asked what could be done about them. Mr. Read recommended that roadway safety assessments should be done to identify what can be done systemically first, and then move on to develop solutions on a long-term scale.

Mr. Erenrich inquired about the status of speed cameras and red-light cameras, and whether there is a distinction on what's available in Virginia compared to Maryland and the District. Mr. Read noted that automated speed device legislation was recently passed by both houses and is expected to be

passed by the governor. Like Maryland it would only apply to work zones, however the devices must be held by a police officer, they cannot be standalone like in the District of Columbia. Mr. Erenrich further noted that it would be helpful to know (from each state) how many tickets are issued as well as other metrics associated with these efforts.

Mr. Srikanth requested that it be made clear for the board that while the HSIP funds are specifically for safety improvements they are not the only way VDOT is addressing safety and that the funding levels for Smart Scale projects, which have safety co-benefits, be noted as well. In addition, it should be mentioned that local funds also contribute to safety projects, particularly with respect to bicyclists and pedestrians.

In response to a question from Mr. Brown, Mr. Read noted that HSIP funding amounts for Northern Virginia will not be available in time to share them with the TPB at their March meeting.

5. Visualize 2045: Addressing the Region's Capacity for Additional Housing

Paul DesJardin, COG Community Planning and Services Director, briefed the Committee on the joint effort of COG's Planning Directors Technical Advisory Committee (PDTAC) and Housing Directors Advisory Committee (HDAC) to determine if and how local plans and zoning can accommodate an additional 100,000 housing units beyond those currently forecast. This effort is being undertaken in response to the COG Board of Directors' initiative to address the region's housing shortfall, which aligns with the Visualize 2045 aspirational initiative to move jobs and housing closer together.

Mr. DesJardin provided the background and context of the series of recent previous efforts that ultimately led to the COG Board of Directors taking action to examine the region's ability identify additional housing needed to accommodate future job growth identified in most recent Cooperative Forecasts. These efforts included the work of the TPB Long-Range Plan Task Force, inclusion of the "Bring Jobs and Housing Closer Together" initiative in the Aspirational Element of Visualize 2045, and consultations between TPB staff and the PDTAC to identify ways to advance the land use-based LRPTF initiative, among others.

Mr. DesJardin demonstrated how the forecasted growth in housing will fall short of what would be needed to supply workers for the new jobs also forecasted for the region. As a result, a critical component of this effort is consideration of housing affordability as demand for future housing among new regional workers would understandably increase. Mr. DesJardin reviewed the work plan of the joint PDTAC and HDAC effort, which focuses on three key milestones in addressing these needs: 1) Amount, 2) Accessibility, and 3) Affordability. This included a discussion of the need to not just identify whether or not additional housing is achievable, but what hurdles may need to be overcome in order to achieve these results.

Mr. Srikanth noted that the ability of the region to provide adequate future housing is not simply a question of supply only, as defined as capacity remaining in adopted land use plans and zoning. He emphasized that there are complex obstacles, including market conditions, that may result in the region not achieving its housing forecasts.

Discussion included a recommendation to show separately how much future growth may be accommodated in existing transit station areas as well as future transit station areas. Another comment also observed the difficulty in how to treat approved, but unbuilt housing units in the Cooperative Forecasts. These units, although approved and unbuilt, may be better included in the out years of the forecast period. Finally, there was a question concerning how this process considered recent significant announcements like Amazon HQ2. Mr. DesJardin explained that part of the conversation under way is to explore these issues and consider the extent to which current forecasts already include this future growth.

6. Air Passenger Survey

Arianna Koudounas, TPB staff, briefed the committee on the Washington-Baltimore Regional Air Passenger Survey 2017 Geographic Findings Report. Ms. Koudounas noted that the report will be finalized later this month and presented to the Transportation Planning Board in April 2019 - along with key findings from the Washington-Baltimore Regional Air Passenger Survey 2017 General Findings Report. Throughout her presentation she highlighted key trends relating to how - and in what frequency and volume - locally originating air passengers travel to the region's three major commercial airports. Her presentation featured analyses on modes of access, trip originations by type, as well as travel purpose. Ms. Koudounas was asked by one Technical Committee member if the survey asked air passengers about the role that flight pricing has on their airport selection - which she confirmed was one option on the survey question related to airport preference. Another member asked whether the Geographic Findings Report includes data on the mode share split by airport; she indicated that this information is included in the [General Findings Report](#).

7. Briefing on an Evaluation of TPB Public Involvement Activities

Referring to the mailout material, John Swanson, TPB staff briefed the committee on an evaluation of the TPB's public participation activities which was conducted by the firm Rhodeside and Harwell. He said that TPB staff contracted this study to review the TPB's regular practices as well as recent activities related to Visualize 2045. He said the report will be used to inform future public outreach activities and will also provide a resource for the upcoming federal certification review. He emphasized that staff believed it was valuable to receive an outside review of its work, and rather than trying to perfect this report, it was more important at this point to figure out how to use the report's findings to make improvements in the TPB's work.

Mr. Swanson described the evaluation's methodology and went through each of the report's recommendations. He also handed out a draft dashboard developed by the consultants that depicted data regarding outreach, such as number of website visits and number of people who attended meetings.

Ms. Erickson asked Committee members to review the dashboard and provide feedback, particularly if they have any similar systems for tracking public participation.

Mr. Erenrich said he thought the study's perspective was too narrow. He said that public participation is part of many TPB activities, including Commuter Connections, TLC, and various outreach activities of TPB committees. He said the report seemed incomplete.

Mr. Srikanth said the report focused largely on the TPB's federally mandated planning activities.

Mr. Swanson said he appreciated Mr. Erenrich's comments and reiterated that the report was not intended to be comprehensive, although he noted that much of the TPB's communication work does provide information about the programs that he mentioned. He said there might be things missing from the report, but again, at this point, staff was most concerned with focusing on whether and how the report's recommendations should be addressed.

Mr. Srikanth added that this effort is intended to improve our work activities and he invited committee members to read the report and make suggestions to staff.

Ms. Snyder said she appreciated that this evaluation activity was not focused on barely meeting federal requirements, but rather was seeking to make the best use of TPB resources. She asked if there would be any detailed follow-up from staff.

Mr. Swanson said that staff still needed to digest the findings of the report and identify steps to enhance the TPB's public participation work.

Mr. Brown suggested that staff might work more closely with public information officers at the local jurisdictions.

Ms. Zenner said she would like to develop ties with public information staff, particularly those focused on transportation.

8. Briefing on the TPB's Community Leadership Institute

TPB Communications Specialist Abigail Zenner briefed the committee on the Community Leadership Institute (CLI). She noted that CLI is an education program that provides tools for community leaders to think regionally and act locally when seeking to influence decisions about transportation planning. CLI participants learn to be regional transportation leaders connecting the interests of their local communities, constituencies, and elected officials with the planning issues facing the entire metropolitan Washington region. CLI 2019 will be held over three consecutive Thursdays in 2019 - April 18, April 25, and May 2. Participants are required to attend the entire series of workshops. It is free to attend. More information can be found at mwcog.org/cli. Technical Committee members were asked to help recruit participants to apply. The deadline to submit applications is March 22.

9. Other Business

Federal Certification Review-

Lyn Erickson, TPB Plan Development and Coordination Program Director Noted that every four years after the approval of the long-range plan, because we are a "Transportation Management Area" MPO, federal partners come and review our entire program and all products. Currently the desk review is underway for the federal review team to engage on our website. From the desk review areas of risk will be determined followed by a site visit based on the findings of the desk review. Beforehand staff is unaware of what findings will be made, but she assumes that the TIP will be one area of interest given the program's inability to determine fiscal constraint to the level of detail that is preferred by the federal reviewers. Also, PBPP will likely be on the table because it is a new criterion for MPOs. She will share more information concerning what will be anticipated as the information is forthcoming.

The dates for the site visit will be on all day April 10th and technical committee members are not required to attend save for the state agency representatives. She welcomed members with interest to attend. It will take place in the Kirby Training Center. There will be a following meeting on April 11th with a meeting with the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC). She noted that because TPB outsources the MPO planning process to Stafford County, the Fredericksburg MPO (FAMPO) will be participating as well, concurrently and also separately.

StreetSmart

Michael Farrell, TPB staff shared that this year's StreetSmart campaign will begin in April with advertisements starting on April 16th. The kickoff press event is going to take place on Tues. April 23rd in Fairfax County at the corner of Lockheed and Richmond Hwy at 10:30am. He also announced that he is aware that partner agencies are looking for other activities to promote safety outside of the StreetSmart budget and he reminded members of the virtual reality training events that StreetSmart sponsored in the previous fall and that if any jurisdictions are interested in using this vendor that staff can make the connection to the contractor. He noted that each event cost around \$5K per event and a suitable location would need to be identified and that shopping malls have been a good venue for this sort of event.

Transportation Land Use Connections Program solicitation

Sarah Bond, TPB staff, intern thanked those who had already submitted abstracts for consideration by the program that abstracts are currently under review. She shared that applications are still being accepted for the program until April 2 and encouraged interested jurisdictions to submit their applications by this date.

Ensuring TPB & Tech committee members are receiving email notices

Abigail Zenner, TPB staff, shared that staff is making the continued effort to ensure that all members are receiving our mass mailing meeting notices. There are various technical reasons as to why some members may have not been receiving meeting notifications including external agency firewalls and staff will have to work with agency IT departments to reconcile any issues. She encouraged members who have had any issues with receiving notices to inform TPB staff member Brandon Brown in order to troubleshoot potential solutions.

Request for presentations on local projects which exemplify the seven endorsed initiatives and TPB news article submissions

Lyn Erickson briefly mentioned that staff is always interested to receive ideas or updates on projects of this nature and to please reach out to her if an agency or jurisdiction is interested in sharing with the technical committee or TPB.

Ridership Forecasting with STOPS Training

Dusan Vuksan, TPB Principal Transportation Engineer, shared that notified the committee that MWCOG will be hosting Federal Transit Administration (FTA) / National Transit Institute (NTI) Ridership Forecasting with STOPS Training on May 7- 9. He noted that the course is already full, and that many of the TPB member jurisdictions and their consultants have registered. Mr. Vuksan also reminded those who have registered that if the course participants are forced to cancel their participation due to unforeseen circumstances, to notify the NTI coordinator as soon as possible as there is a wait list for the course.

Building Access Passes

Lyn Erickson informed members that reminded members that building access passes are available now and to contact staff member Brandon Brown if you have not already received an assigned identification card.