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**TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD  
MEETING MINUTES**

April 19, 2023

MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES PRESENT

Reuben Collins – Charles County  
Charles Allen – DC Council  
Christina Henderson – DC Council  
Heather Edelman – DC Council  
Mark Rawlings – DDOT  
Sakina Khan – DC Office of Planning  
Denise Mitchell – College Park  
Mark Mishler – Frederick County  
Kelly Russell – City of Frederick  
David Edmondson – City of Frederick  
Neil Harris – Gaithersburg  
Dennis Enslinger - Gaithersburg  
Brian Lee – Laurel  
Marilyn Balcombe – Montgomery County  
Gary Erenrich– Montgomery County Executive  
Christopher Conklin – Montgomery County Executive  
Oluseyi Olugbenle – Prince George’s County Executive  
Victor Weisberg – Prince George’s County Executive  
Bridget Newton - Rockville  
Cindy Dyballa – Takoma Park  
Shana Fulcher –Takoma Park  
Heather Murphy – MDOT  
Marc Korman – Maryland House  
Kris Fair – Maryland House  
Canek Aguirre – Alexandria  
Dan Malouff - Alexandria  
Takis Karantonis – Arlington County  
Catherine Read – City of Fairfax  
Walter Alcorn – Fairfax County - Legislative  
James Walkinshaw – Fairfax County Legislative  
David Snyder – Falls Church  
Adam Shellenberger – Fauquier County  
Kristen Umstattd – Loudoun County  
Pamela Sebesky – Manassas  
Jeannette Rishell – Manassas Park  
Ann B. Wheeler – Prince William County  
Victor Angry – Prince William County  
Paolo Belita – Prince William County  
John Lynch - VDOT  
Maria Sinner - VDOT  
Bill Cuttler – VDOT  
David A. Reid – Virginia House  
David Marsden – Virginia Senate  
Allison Davis – WMATA  
Mark Phillips - WMATA  
Julia Koster - NCPC

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MWCOG STAFF – EX OFFICIO/NON-VOTING AND OTHERS PRESENT

Kanti Srikanth  
Clark Mercer  
Lyn Erickson  
Mark Moran  
Tim Canan  
Paul DesJardin  
Andrew Meese  
Leo Pineda  
John Swanson  
Sergio Ritacco  
Andrew Austin  
Christina Finch  
Rachel Beyerle  
Marcela Moreno  
Deborah Etheridge  
Kim Sutton  
Eric Randall  
Dusan Vuksan  
Simone Ellis  
Erin Morrow  
Rachel Beyerle  
Katherine Rainone  
Jane Posey  
Jamie Bufkin  
Charlene Howard  
Nicholas Ramfos  
Richard Wallace – CAC Chair  
Deborah Kerson Bilek – ULI  
Sandra Marks - DDOT  
Kari Snyder – MDOT  
Tyson Byrne – MDOT  
Allen Fye – NOVA Transit  
Raka Choudhury – WMATA  
Amy Mesrobian – WMATA  
Regina Sullivan – WMATA  
Jeff Hiott - WMATA  
Leroy Jones – WMATA  
D. Taylor - WMATA

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

Chair Reuben Collins called the meeting to order. He said the meeting was being conducted in a virtual-only format. He described the procedures for conducting the meeting.

Lyn Erickson conducted a roll call. Attendance for the meeting can be found on the first page of the minutes. She confirmed there was a quorum.

Lyn Erickson said that between the March TPB meeting and noon on April 18, the TPB received 11 comments submitted via email and 13 comments submitted from our Visualize 2045 initial project list

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feedback form. She said a memo with summary of each comment, as well as the entire 63 pages of comments, was posted on the TPB meeting page. She reminded the board that staff has created a project list feedback form on the comment page to help share specific project comments with project sponsors. She summarized the comments, originals of which were included in the posted material.

## **2. APPROVAL OF THE MARCH 15, 2023 MEETING MINUTES**

Denise Mitchell moved approval of the minutes. The motion was seconded by Pam Sebesky and was approved unanimously.

## **3. TECHNICAL COMMITTEE REPORT**

Referring to the posted material, Mark Rawlings, 2023 chair of the Technical Committee, said the committee met on April the 7. He said that four items were reviewed for inclusion on the TPB agenda:

- A briefing on the TPB's upcoming approval of the Regional Bike to Work Day 2023 proclamation.
- A briefing on the Visualize 2050, specifically including the updated schedule approval, comments received to date, and the March listening sessions takeaways.
- A briefing on the TPB's upcoming approval of the FY 2024 Transportation Land Use Connections (TLC) program technical assistance recipients.
- A briefing on the TPB's coordinated human services transportation plan update.

He said that three items were presented for information and discussion.

- A briefing on Ride On Reimagined, a comprehensive assessment of the bus network in Montgomery County based on current and future needs.
- A briefing on the carbon reduction program, which was established by the bipartisan infrastructure law and provides funds for projects designed to reduce carbon dioxide emissions from on-road transportation.
- A briefing on staff efforts to develop new motor vehicle emissions budgets which are required for use in the air quality conformity analysis for long-range transportation plans and transportation improvements program.

## **4. COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT AND ACCESS FOR ALL ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT**

Referring to the posted material, Richard Wallace, 2023 chair of the CAC, said the committee met on April 13. He said the committee received a briefing on the Coordinated Plan. Members asked clarifying questions about the Enhanced Mobility grant program and expressed enthusiasm for sharing the plan with the community.

Richard Wallace said the committee also received a briefing about the TPB and CAC roles in the long-range planning process. He said the committee had a robust discussion about a variety of topics, including anticipated land use and travel patterns, the need to pay attention to communities that are more reliant on automobiles, the need to rethink how we build infrastructure, uncertainty around the future of telework, clarifying questions about exempt and non-exempt projects, and WMATA's role in the plan.

## **5. STEERING COMMITTEE ACTIONS AND REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR**

Referring to the posted material, Kanti Srikanth said the Steering Committee met on April 7 and approved four amendments to the FY 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The first, at the request of DDOT, added about \$432 million total for three separate projects. The second, requested by DDOT on

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behalf of the TPB, programmed \$100,000 for a federal grant that the TPB received from FTA's Innovative Coordinated Access and Mobility (ICAM) program. The grant will be used to make improvements to a tool that the TPB created a few years ago that provides information on transportation services available for older adults and people with disabilities. The third amendment, requested by MDOT, added about \$1.9 million for a new transit-oriented development project along the Purple Line corridor. The fourth amendment, requested by VDOT, added about \$59 million for the ongoing project, the Northstar Boulevard extension.

Under "Letters Sent and Received" materials, Kanti Srikanth noted letters of support issued by the TPB on behalf of member agencies, including Charles County, WMATA, and Montgomery County. He also drew attention to a comment letter from the Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee (MWAQC) to the U.S. EPA regarding updated guidance on developing contingency measures in State Implementation Plans (SIPs) for attainment of federal air quality standards. Finally, Kanti Srikanth drew attention to a letter from WMATA announcing that on April 17, Metro unveiled its draft visionary bus network which is part of the WMATA bus network redesign project, and this proposed bus network has been released for public comment. He said this last letter, from WMATA, had been received after the official posting date for the meeting material, but it was posted on the website.

Under "Announcements and Updates" materials, Kanti Srikanth said that TPB staff would be conducting a public webinar on April 20 to showcase some of the recent examples of the TPB's TLC and RRSP programs. He said a recording of the webinar would be posted on the TPB website. He also announced that the application period for Maryland funding from the Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program (TAP) was open between April 14 and May 15. In addition, he said that MDOT is currently seeking public input for the 2050 Maryland Transportation Plan and VDOT is seeking input for their Six-Year Transportation Program (SYIP). He noted that a public input session on the SYIP in Northern Virginia was scheduled for May 1. He said TPB was invited to this session.

Highlighting a few other points not included in the posted material, Kanti Srikanth said the most recent COG podcast addressed the topic of roadway safety, and TPB member Kelly Russell was a featured speaker. He also said that on April 12, EPA announced proposed new rules for more stringent emissions standards for light-duty and medium-duty vehicles pertaining to greenhouse gases as well as emission standards and greenhouse gases for heavy-duty vehicles for model years 2027 through 2032. In addition, EPA is proposing standards for nitrogen oxides and non-methane organic gases. He said TPB staff is working with MWAQC staff to develop comments on these proposed rules.

Brian Lee asked about the app providing links to transportation services for people with disabilities, which was being enhanced with the FTA grant. He asked if the app could be included in apps provided at the municipal level.

Kanti Srikanth said staff would be happy to work with local jurisdictions to include the regional app on their local websites and apps.

David Snyder said he recently heard a report on the radio that was critical of the region's air quality. He said he believes the region has made significant progress on air quality in the past decades and he asked if COG could prepare information that board members could use in speaking with constituents and with media to share information on this progress.

Kanti Srikanth said he agreed that, while there is more work to be done, the region has made a lot of progress on air quality. He said he would work with MWAQC staff to respond to Dave Snyder's suggestion.

Allison Davis emphasized that WMATA is seeking public input for the next 50 days on their proposed visionary bus network. She thanked everyone for pushing out information about this work.

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## **6. CHAIR'S REMARKS**

Chair Collins said the work session that morning featured presentations and discussion about how the region's bus services can be improved. He said he was particularly interested in the efforts to implement bus priority treatments.

## **7. APPROVAL OF REGIONAL BIKE TO WORK DAY PROCLAMATION**

Chair Collins introduced Nicholas Ramfos to present the Regional Bike to Work Day Proclamation.

Nicholas Ramfos, referring to the slide presentation, provided details on the history of Bike of Work Day, details about this year's event, and data demonstrating participation over the years. He shared results from the Bike to Work Day survey including participant demographic information and general feedback about the event. He said that TPB members would receive an invitation to register, and that more information is available online or through social media channels.

Chair Collins thanked Nicholas Ramfos for the presentation and asked for any nays or abstentions from the board.

The board unanimously consented to approve the proclamation for Bike to Work Day 2023.

Nicholas Ramfos thanked Chair Collins and asked local jurisdictions to pass similar proclamations.

## **8. WMATA REQUEST TO AMEND THE FY 2023-2026 TIP**

Chair Collins recognized WMATA's TPB Representative, Allison Davis, to provide information about WMATA's request to amend the FY 2023 - 2026 TIP.

Allison Davis, VP of Planning for WMATA, provided background on WMATA's request to amend the FY 2023-2026 TIP to align it with the Metro budget and capital improvement program. She said that the WMATA board adopted their budget on Friday, April 14. She added that there were no public comments received nor changes from the amendment shared at the March TPB meeting.

Allison Davis moved approval of TPB Resolution R10-2023 to amend the FY 2023-2026 TIP. Takis Karantonis seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

## **9. VISUALIZE 2050: UPDATED SCHEDULE APPROVAL**

Chair Collins introduced the item, an updated schedule for Visualize 2050. He noted that at the March meeting, staff informed the board of a proposal to provide additional time to accommodate the internal processes for the WMATA financial plan and Maryland Opportunity Express Lanes project. He said that he would support the updated schedule if it did not hinder meeting federal guidelines. He introduced Lyn Erickson to present the item.

Lyn Erickson introduced a new TPB staff member, Cristina Finch. She shared a brief overview of Cristina's background and welcomed her to the TPB.

Lyn Erickson, referring to the slide presentation, provided an overview of the proposed Visualize 2050 schedule. She summarized two major changes. She said the first change includes an additional six months

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to the planning schedule, and the second updates the TIP years to 2026–2029. She asked the board to approve the attached schedule.

Chair Collins called for questions from the board.

Christopher Conklin asked for additional information about the need for a revised schedule.

Kanti Srikanth noted that the Maryland Opportunity Lanes and Metro are two of the largest projects in Visualize 2050 in terms of financial cost and impact on infrastructure scope. He added that in discussion with Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT), TPB staff understood that the MDOT would benefit from additional time to conduct their review of the current project and complete outreach to stakeholders and the public before determining revisions to the project. He said that the additional time would ensure that the new administration and staff at MDOT had the additional time they needed. He said that the second project, Metro public transportation - WMATA is facing a significant budget deficit starting with fiscal year 2025. He shared that WMATA leadership advised that they needed additional time to consult with its members, and perhaps the region, on ways to balance the operational costs and revenues. The additional time would allow for this.

Cindy Dyballa asked for clarification about the public input opportunities.

Lyn Erickson shared several opportunities for public comment. She said the first is the 6 months of rolling public comment period that precedes the project input deadline in December. She noted that MPOs are only federally required to include one thirty-day public comment period, but TPB has two. She added that the first official public comment period on all project inputs will take place in March 2024.

John Lynch asked if there was an opportunity to maintain the December 2024 deadline, noting several projects may be impacted by the delay.

Kanti Srikanth said that because of the additional time needed to address unresolved issues with two major projects, staff is supportive of the schedule extension. He said that adding six months for project inputs and maintaining a deadline of December 2024 to complete all of the activities after the board approves the project inputs would be very challenging. He said that he believes a December 2024 completion with the additional time needed for the uncertain inputs was not feasible, but that staff would try to finish the analysis before June 2025. He added that a possibility would be amending Visualize 2045 for time-sensitive projects. He said any amendment would still require an emissions analysis that passes the federal emissions test, and that he would follow up with VDOT or other agencies with time-sensitive projects to explore the need to amend Visualize 2045.

Bridget Newton moved approval of the updated Visualize 2050 schedule. Kelly Russell seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

## **10. APPROVAL OF FY 2024 TLC TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE RECIPIENTS**

Chair Collins introduced Deborah Kerson Bilek, the Chair of the FY 2024 TLC selection panel and John Swanson, TPB Transportation Planner, to present this year's project selections for the TLC program.

Deb Bilek provided an overview of the FY 2024 TLC selections and background on the TLC program. She added that the selections include initiatives such as multimodal corridor plans, trail designs, bus stop access studies, and others. She noted that some projects directly address current issues such as the pandemic and resilience.

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John Swanson, referring to the slide presentation, provided an overview of the TLC program and detailed information about the ten selected projects. He noted that the solicitation received sixteen total applications, eight from both Maryland and Virginia. He noted new features to the program including that funding availability increased to \$80,000 per project, and that the solicitation was coordinated with the Regional Roadway Safety Program.

Julia Koster commended the selection group and staff, as well as the jurisdictions for proposing great projects. She added that the TLC program drives innovation and builds capacity for jurisdictions to achieve TPB goals.

Dave Snyder motioned to approve the TLC selections for FY 2024. John Lynch seconded the motion and was approved unanimously.

## **11. COORDINATED HUMAN SERVICES TRANSPORTATION PLAN UPDATE**

Chair Collins recognized Sergio Ritacco, TPB Transportation Planner, to present an update on the Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan.

Sergio Ritacco, referring to the slide presentation, defined the TPB's role, the purpose of the Coordinated Plan and reviewed the key elements in the updated draft. He said that the plan is out for public comment from April 13 – May 13, 2023, and TPB will be asked to approve the plan at their May meeting. He added that the next solicitation for Enhanced Mobility grant applications will occur in summer 2023.

Kanti Srikanth added that because of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the funding available has doubled and TPB will award up to \$10 million in projects that provide services to older adults and people with disabilities.

## **12. WMATA BETTER BUS WORK SESSION RECAP**

Chair Collins introduced Eric Randall, TPB Transportation Engineer, to recap the Better Bus work session that preceded the April TPB meeting.

Eric Randall provided background on the work session, noting that TPB received a presentation on Better Bus at their November 2022 meeting. He said that the work session was intended to provide an opportunity for members to ask questions about the initiative.

Eric Randall, referring to the slide presentation, gave an overview of the work session presentations from NVTC and WMATA. He added that the discussions covered three topics: bus priority/BRT, bus stops and customer amenities, and transitioning to a zero-emission fleet. He summarized actions that TPB and its members can take to support bus initiatives such as implementing bus priority lanes/BRT, supporting a common level of bus stop standards, and collectively addressing infrastructure needs for zero-emission buses.

Eric Randall said that questions raised from the work session will be addressed in more detail in a memorandum in the coming months.

Allison Davis said that because there are few rail projects in the immediate future, bus service is the best way to move people from their cars and all TPB members have a role in Better Bus.

Kanti Srikanth added that staff has budgeted for TPB led studies that will be resources for members interested in the Better Bus initiative. He said one study would be about transitioning to cleaner buses. He noted the interest in bus stop standards and said there was an opportunity to develop a resource on the topic.

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### **13. ADJOURN**

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:50 P.M. The May 17 TPB meeting will be a virtual meeting.