

National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board

777 North Capitol Street, N.E., Suite 300, Washington, D.C. 20002-4290 (202) 962-3310 Fax: (202) 962-3202 TDD: (202) 962-3213

MEMORANDUM

TO: TPB Scenario Study Task Force

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: May 20, 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 a ***comprehensive list of potential regional priority bus transit corridors***, which will serve as the starting point for a final 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 comprehensive list of potential bus corridors:
 - a. Transit projects are collected from the following sources:
 - i. TPB Regional Bus Priority Projects List
 - ii. WMATA Regional Bus Study
 - iii. WMATA Priority Corridor Network
 - iv. DC Alternatives Analysis
 - v. NVT A TransAction 2030 Plan, Long-Range Bus Transit Proposals:
 - vi. Arlington Master Transportation Plan
 - vii. City of Alexandria Transit Concept Plan
 - viii. VDRPT Studies

- ix. Prince George’s County Transit Plan
 - x. Go Montgomery! Plan
 - xi. Loudoun County
 - xii. Montgomery County Master Plan
 - xiii. ICC Enhanced Transit Plan
 - xiv. PRTC Bus Strategic Plan
 - xv. Capital Beltway South Side Mobility Study
 - xvi. Capital Beltway Corridor Rail Feasibility Study
 - xvii. PRTC Long Range Bus Transit Plan
 - xviii. VDOT/VDRPT Bus Rapid Transit in Northern Virginia
 - xix. Prince William County Transportation and Transit Plan Update to the Comprehensive 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. Criteria for route and transit center inclusion in final project submission:
- a. **General priorities:**
 - i. Have “significant impact on the Nation, a metropolitan area, or a region”
 - 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. Enhances regional transit connectivity
 - ii. Can be completed by February 17th, 2012 and can immediately begin construction
 - 1. Route/center does not need additional right of way

- 2. Route/center is in adopted transportation plan for jurisdiction or agency strategic plan
- iii. Project leverages private or other funding outside of the ARRA grant
- iv. Cost between \$20 million and \$300 million
- b. Primary Criteria:**
 - i. Long-term outcomes:
 - 1. Improvement of the facility or system's condition, performance and/or long-term cost structure
 - a. Provides synergistic highway/transit improvements
 - 2. Economic competitiveness: Improve long term efficiency, reliability, or cost-competitiveness in the movement of workers or goods.
 - a. Route/center improvement will improve person throughput
 - b. Route/center improvement does not require substantial additional operating costs
 - c. Route/center addresses current inordinate bus delays
 - 3. Livability
 - a. Serves at least one regional activity center
 - b. Serve off-peak destinations (shopping and retail employment trips)
 - c. Serve transit dependent communities
 - d. Serve dense residential areas, specifically a high number of jobs and households within ¼ mile of the investment
 - e. Have infrastructure in place such that transit stations can be placed one per mile
 - f. Route/center adds new intermodal connection
 - g. Route/center adds new connection to non-motorized transport facilities
 - h. Adds new mode or major service improvement to existing mode to increase multimodal choices in corridor
 - 4. Environmental sustainability:
 - a. Improvement directly reduces VMT
 - 5. Safety:
 - a. Route/center improvements will generally result in a safety improvement
 - ii. Immediate economic benefit through job creation and increases in economic activity, particularly in economically distressed areas:
 - 1. Route/center creates or preserves a high number of jobs
 - 2. Route/center is in an economically distressed area
- b. Secondary criteria:**
 - i. Innovation:
 - 1. Route/center can utilize innovative bus priority technologies, such as TSP, real time bus information and displays, smartcard/off-board payment technology, among others.
 - 2. Route can use innovative bus priority policies, such as pricing or HOV policy changes

ii. Partnership:

1. Route/center has some financial commitment from relevant public agencies.
2. Route/center has support of or potential to partner with community organizations to connect disadvantaged populations with economic opportunities.
3. Route/center connects/serves multiple jurisdictions and exhibits collaboration among regional jurisdictions
4. Route/center includes land use/environmental considerations and are supported by relevant public housing agencies, energy or environment agencies, and other non-transportation public agencies.

4. Next steps

- a. Staff will further develop this criteria based on feedback from TPB committees and local jurisdictions
- b. Staff will apply this criteria to the comprehensive list of potential corridors and transit centers