Discussion Guide
for Developing the

Regional Transportation Priorities Plan

Citizens Forum
June 2, 2012

TPB
National Capital Region
Transportation Planning Board

Dear Community Member:

Thank you for joining today's discussion about the future of transportation in our region. We greatly appreciate your willingness to spend half a day with other community members talking about regional transportation challenges and priorities.

The Transportation Planning Board (TPB) at the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, which is the sponsor of today's event, is an agency that is responsible under federal law for coordinating the planning and funding of our region's transportation system. As growth in our region continues to place heavier demands on our transportation network, and as funding becomes more limited, decision-makers will be challenged to make critical improvements to roads, public transportation, and pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

The feedback gathered today will influence the development of a new Regional Transportation Priorities Plan (RTPP). The purpose of the RTPP is to identify those transportation strategies that offer the greatest potential contributions to achieving the TPB's goals for economic opportunity, transportation choices, system safety and efficiency, quality of life and environmental stewardship. Ultimately, it is envisioned that 10 to 15 strategies will be identified that the region can agree are the top priorities for meeting our shared goals and addressing regional challenges. The RTPP is expected to be complete in mid-2013.

The TPB hopes to find out from you during today's event if the regional transportation challenges and strategies we've identified are meaningful, and if any additional ones should be considered. This will help us as we move to the next step of communicating with the broader public about regional challenges and garnering feedback on transportation priorities for the Washington Metropolitan area.

So, please tell us what you think! Thank you again for your time and input.

Sincerely yours,

Todd M. Turner

Todd M. Turner
At-Large Councilmember – City of Bowie
Chair, National Capital Region
Transportation Planning Board

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> Background

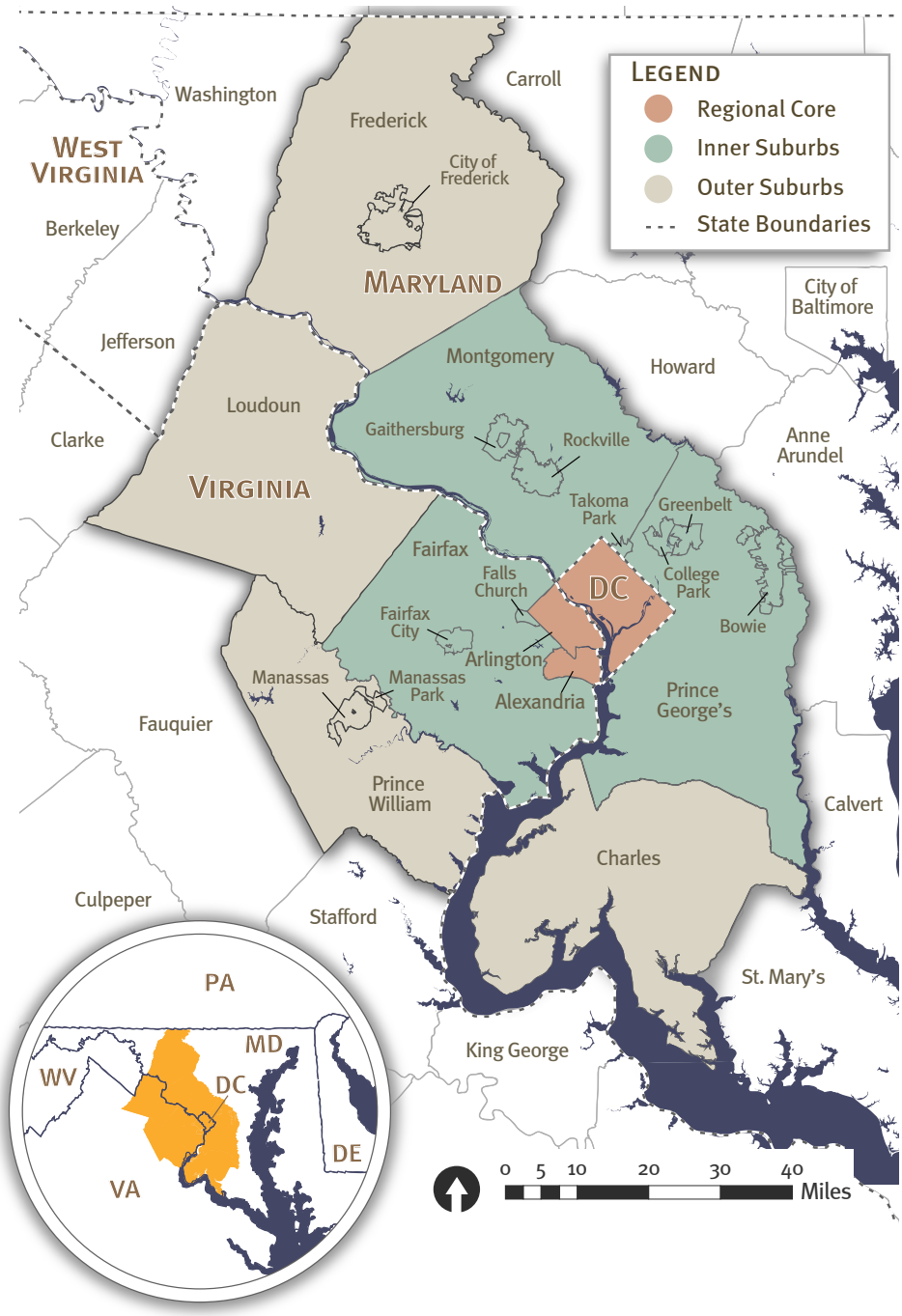
What is our Region?

The metropolitan Washington region is the area where most of us live, work, shop, and play. The region includes the District of Columbia plus parts of Maryland and Virginia. The entire area is approximately 3,000 square miles in size.

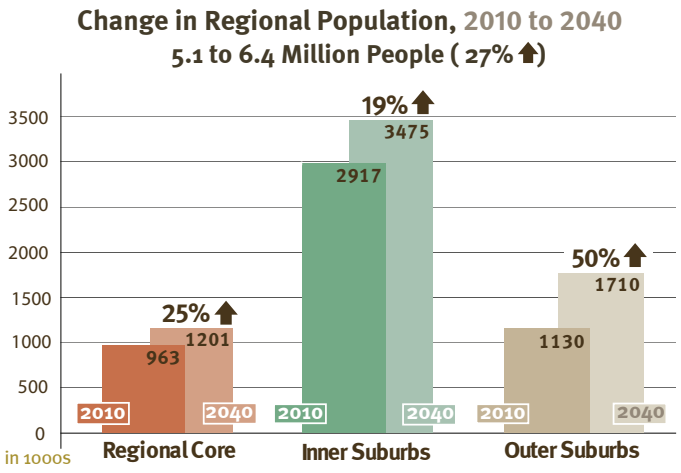
Within this region, there are more than 5.1 million people and 3.1 million jobs in hundreds of communities linked together by a system of roads, transit lines, and bicycle and pedestrian paths. Both population and employment in the region are expected to continue growing over the coming decades. Between 2010 and 2040, the population is expected to increase by 27% to 6.4 million people, while employment is expected to increase by 39% to 4.4 million jobs.

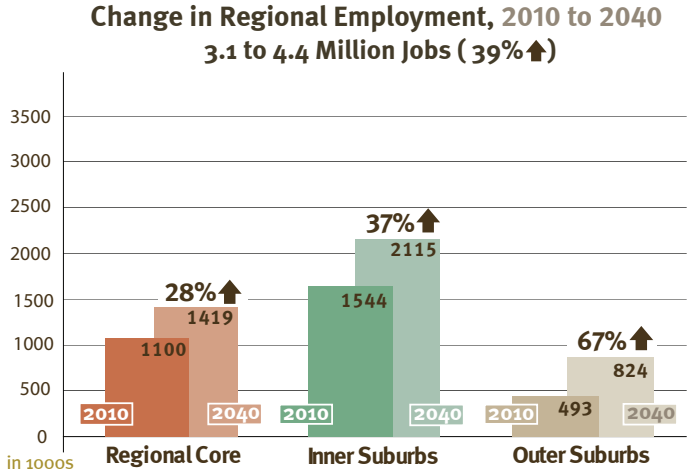
Population and jobs are not evenly distributed throughout the region; inner jurisdictions have the greatest numbers of jobs and housing, but outer jurisdictions are experiencing the most rapid growth. As the region grows to accommodate more people and jobs, greater demand will be placed on the transportation system. Funds will continue to remain in short supply, including for rehabilitation and maintenance of existing roadway and transit systems.

The Metropolitan Washington Region



Growth in population and jobs over the next 30 years will not be uniform throughout the region.





The Transportation Planning Board (TPB)

The National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB) is the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the region, and plays an important role as the regional forum for transportation planning. The TPB is responsible for carrying out a comprehensive, continuing, and coordinated planning process for regional transportation planning in D.C., Northern Virginia, and Suburban Maryland. The TPB prepares plans and programs that must receive federal approval in order for federal-aid transportation funds to flow to the Washington region.

Members of the TPB include representatives of the transportation agencies of the states of Maryland and Virginia, the District of Columbia, local governments, the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, the Maryland and Virginia General Assemblies, and non-voting members from the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority and federal agencies.

The TPB Vision

Adopted by the TPB in 1998, the Vision provides a set of goals, objectives, and strategies to help the region develop the transportation system it needs to promote economic development, environmental protection, and a high quality of life. It is shaped by the following Vision Statement:

"In the 21st Century, the Washington metropolitan region remains a vibrant world capital, with a transportation system that provides efficient movement of people and goods. This system promotes the region's economy and environmental quality, and operates in an attractive and safe setting--it is a system that serves everyone. The system is fiscally sustainable, promotes areas of concentrated growth, manages both demand and capacity, employs the best technology, and joins rail, roadway, bus, air, water, pedestrian and bicycle facilities into a fully interconnected network."

The TPB Vision also includes six broad transportation planning goals that provide policy guidance to shape the region's transportation investments. Identifying challenges – obstacles and shortcomings – in realizing these goals shows us where we must focus and prioritize our efforts. By developing a list of priorities that address regional challenges, we will make great strides toward improving our regional transportation system.

The TPB Goals

The following six goals derived from the TPB Vision provide a foundation for the Regional Transportation Priorities Plan process:

1. Provide a Comprehensive Range of Transportation Options for Everyone

2. Promote a Strong Regional Economy, Including a Healthy Regional Core and Dynamic Regional Activity Centers

3. Ensure Adequate Maintenance, Preservation, and Safety of the Existing System

4. Maximize Operational Effectiveness and Safety of the Transportation System

5. Enhance Environmental Quality, and Protect Natural and Cultural Resources

6. Support International and Inter-regional Travel and Commerce

The Financially Constrained Long-Range Transportation Plan (CLRP)

The CLRP identifies regionally significant transportation projects and programs that are planned in the Washington metropolitan area through 2040. A key feature of the CLRP is that it must be financially constrained: the plan includes only those projects that the region can afford to build, maintain, and operate, with revenues that are reasonably expected to be available in the future. Over 750 projects are included, ranging from simple highway landscaping to billion-dollar highway and transit projects. The projects and programs that go into the plan are developed cooperatively by governmental bodies and agencies represented on the TPB. Some of the projects will be completed in the near future, while others are in the initial planning stages and are scheduled for completion over the longer term. Because the CLRP includes only what we realistically expect to be built by 2040, our region faces limitations in addressing our regional transportation goals.

Regional Transportation Priorities Plan (RTPP)

The purpose of the Regional Transportation Priorities Plan (RTPP) will be to identify those transportation strategies that offer the greatest potential contributions toward addressing regional challenges. Ultimately, it is envisioned that 10 to 15 strategies will be identified that the region can agree are the top priorities for meeting our shared goals. Examples of such strategies include expanding bike sharing or dedicating funding to Metrorail rehabilitation and maintenance. An analysis weighing the benefits and costs of potential strategies, referred to as benefit-cost analysis, will be conducted to identify high-pay off strategies. Those high-pay off strategies could then be incorporated into the Financially Constrained Long Range Transportation Plan (CLRP) and implemented.

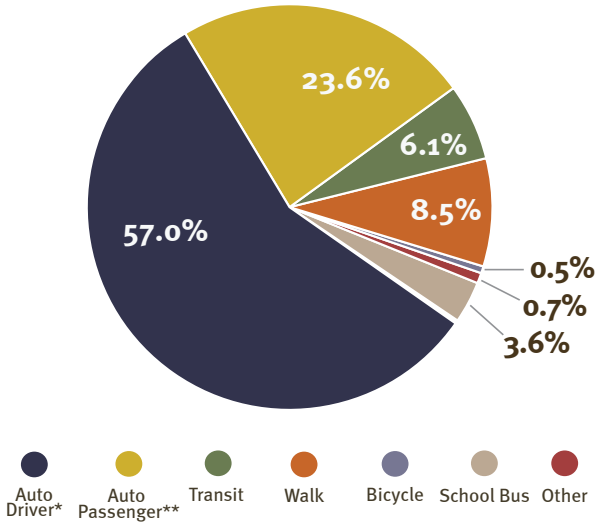
"The purpose of the Regional Transportation Priorities Plan will be to identify 10 to 15 strategies that offer the greatest potential to address regional challenges."

Goal 1: Provide a Comprehensive Range of Transportation Options for Everyone

What are we trying to achieve?

Providing a range of transportation options means giving people a choice of how to travel for work, errands, healthcare, or spending time with family and friends, regardless of their income, age, ability, race, ethnicity or language spoken. The Washington metropolitan area is a top tourist destination, and the transportation system should be easy to use and seamless for visitors and residents alike.

Daily Trip Mode Share , 2007/2008



* **Auto Driver** indicates trips taken as a driver of an automobile

** **Auto Passenger** indicates trips taken as passenger in an automobile

Where are we now and where are we headed?

Our region has an extensive transportation network of roads, rail, bus routes, bike paths and pedestrian infrastructure that provides a number of choices for travelers. Regional data show most daily trips rely on the automobile, and forecasts indicate this trend will continue through 2040. Today, about 6% of all weekday trips in the metropolitan region are taken on transit. While transit use is forecast to grow 43% by 2040, it will still account for less than 10% of all trips. Currently, biking and walking account for 9% of all trips region-wide. Even so, transit use, biking, and walking are significantly more common in denser communities with good access to these modes of travel.

Our region's highway congestion has gained some unwanted notoriety: The metropolitan Washington area ranks as one of the most congested areas in the United States. Our growing economy and population create new transportation challenges as congestion on the region's highway and transit systems is expected to worsen by 2040. Congestion is quite location specific, depending on the time of day and direction of travel: for example, Metrorail's Orange Line in Arlington County, which is popularly referred to as the "orange crush" due to crowding, and westbound morning traffic on I-495 in Montgomery County.

People with disabilities, older adults, and those with limited incomes are currently concerned with rising transit fares and as well as the availability and reliability of high quality bus and paratransit service. Paratransit is public transit service for people with disabilities who are unable to use the bus and rail system for every trip. The rising cost of providing

Photo by Ben Schumin

paratransit services, such as MetroAccess, is a growing regional concern. Shifting demographic trends, such as the expected significant increase in the 65+ population will place greater demands on some components of the transportation system than on others.

Improvements are needed for all modes of transportation, including both maintenance and expansion. Some improvements are relatively small in scale, such as adding curb cuts to sidewalks and bus stops, whereas other improvements are much larger in scale, like adding more rail transit options and highway lanes.

"Regional data show most daily trips rely on the automobile, and forecasts indicate this trend will continue through 2040."

What are some significant challenges to achieving this goal?

The transportation system is too congested:
The region's roadways are among the most congested in the nation, and the Metrorail system has severe crowding problems. Congestion limits travel options, and means that providing transportation choices is even more important.

Many people cannot access affordable and convenient transit:
People with disabilities and those with limited incomes need more comprehensive, cost-effective, and accessible transportation options.

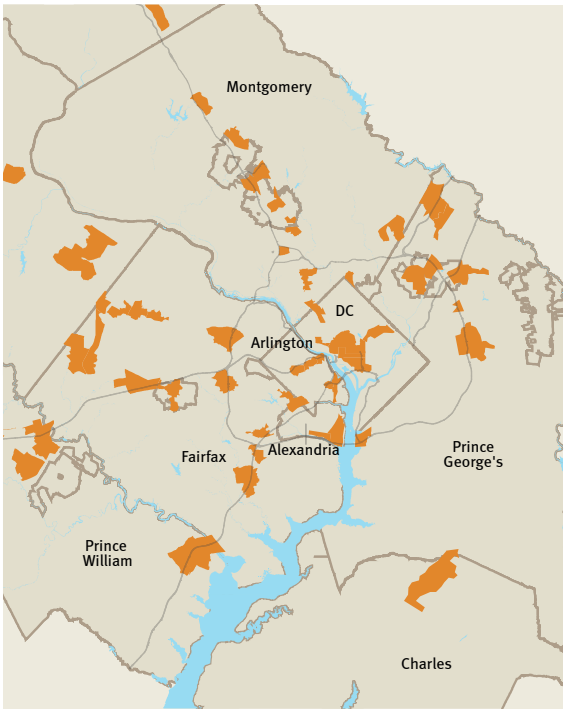
Photo by Ben Schumin

Goal 2: Promote a Strong Regional Economy Including a Healthy Regional Core and Dynamic Activity Centers

What are we trying to achieve?

Our region's robust economy is supported by the economic activity that occurs in a few dozen significant areas of the region. These areas, which contain concentrations of employment and residential uses, often in a mixed-use, walkable setting, are known as the Regional Core and Activity Centers. The Regional Core consists of neighborhoods in Washington, DC, Arlington, and Alexandria.

Regional Activity Centers



Under-utilized space at the New Carrollton Metro Station

Photo by Prince George's County Planning Dept.

Activity Centers, also areas of concentrated employment and housing, are located throughout the region. Examples include downtown Frederick, Bethesda, College Park, Waldorf, Tysons Corner, and Gainesville.

Strengthening the transportation connections between and within the Regional Core and Activity Centers (including improved mobility with reduced reliance on the automobile) reinforces the significance of these locations as regional economic centers and provides an efficient way to manage and grow the regional economy.

Concentrating development in activity centers provides numerous transportation benefits. Current data shows that transit, bicycling, and walking rates are significantly higher in locations with high-quality transit and supportive bicycling and walking facilities. For example, the Logan Circle neighborhood of Washington, DC, characterized by its walkable, mixed-use environment, has very high rates of walking (56% of all daily trips) and bicycling (6% of all daily trips) compared to the regional average

(8.5% and 0.5%, respectively). Higher rates of non-automotive transportation mean less congestion, more transportation options, and improved air quality. These mixed-use, walkable places provide a range of lifestyle choices in the region where people can live, work, and play within close proximity, with reduced dependence on the automobile.

Where are we now and where are we headed?

The region has some excellent examples of successful land use and transportation integration, ranging from NoMa, located near Union Station in DC, to Silver Spring in Maryland to Virginia's Rosslyn-Ballston Corridor. Still, even with these prime examples, there is significant opportunity to integrate transportation and land-use in more places throughout the region.

Only four out of ten (42%) Activity Centers are currently served by Metrorail. That number will increase to over half (53%) in 2040 due to new investments in transit like the Purple Line and the Silver Line. There are also 37 existing Metrorail stations not located within Activity Centers. These Metrorail stations represent unrealized opportunities to strengthen the regional economy and gain greater efficiency from the transportation system.

Proposed redevelopment of Tysons Corner in Virginia

"Our region's robust economy is anchored by the economic activity that occurs in a few dozen significant areas of the region."

What are some significant challenges to achieving this goal?

Development and transportation are often not well-coordinated: Too many Metrorail stations, especially on the eastern side of the region, are surrounded by underutilized land rather than walkable, mixed-use Activity Centers.

Many residential areas have limited transportation options: Most housing, particularly affordable housing, is located far outside of Activity Centers and has limited options for transit, walking, and biking to jobs, shopping, and other purposes.

Goal 3: Ensure Adequate Maintenance, Preservation, and Safety of the Existing System

What are we trying to achieve?

It is essential that all transportation facilities and equipment be kept in a state of good repair in order to ensure the reliability and safety of the transportation system for all users in the region. Strategically maintaining and repairing existing infrastructure rather than deferring needed maintenance will result in lower overall life-cycle costs for transportation infrastructure.

Flickr/VaDOT

Where are we now and where are we headed?

On Metro, broken escalators and unscheduled delays caused by rail or railcar malfunctions have become a major regional concern. The region's roadways, too, suffer from potholes, bad pavement, and deficient bridges in some locations. These problems are the direct result of insufficient funds and deferred maintenance.

The region is giving priority to operations and maintenance of the existing system over expansion. Of the nearly $223 billion in transportation expenditures expected between 2011 and 2040, approximately 70% of the funds ($163 billion) will go to operations and preservation of the existing and planned system. However, there isn't enough money to pay for all the needed transportation improvements over the next 30 years because traditional revenue streams have not kept pace with growing needs. Stagnant gas tax rates and increasing vehicle fuel-efficiency mean less money is generated from gas taxes, a major transportation funding source. Additionally, recent debate over federal government spending has caused uncertainty about future federal transportation funding.

In response to calls for more funding for maintenance and rehabilitation of the Metrorail system, in 2008 Congress passed the Passenger

Rail Investment and Improvement Act (PRIIA), which together with 50% state matching funds, provides an additional $3 billion in revenues over ten years for WMATA's rehabilitation needs. This legislation is set to expire in 2020, and currently there is no federal legislation in place to extend the measure, nor is there any agreement in place by the state and local jurisdictions to match any future federal funds. As a result, the Metrorail system may be unable to handle projected ridership growth past 2020, limiting the number of transit trips on Metrorail and causing more congestion on the road network.

As funding levels become less dependable, the need for repairs and maintenance of the region's aging transit and roadway infrastructure is growing. Paying for necessary maintenance is a continuing struggle that will only worsen over time if current funding trends continue.

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Twitter/@sheajohnp

As infrastructure ages, maintenance of transit and roadways is becoming more critical.

What are some significant challenges to achieving this goal?

Deferred Metrorail maintenance causes unreliability:
Deferred Metrorail maintenance over the years has lead to unreliability, delays, and safety concerns today.

Aging roadways need repair:
Aging bridges and roads are deteriorating and in need of major rehabilitation to ensure safe and reliable travel for cars, trucks, and buses.

Goal 4: Maximize Operational Effectiveness and Safety of the Transportation System

What are we trying to achieve?

With rapid population and employment growth and financial constraints that limit our ability to expand highway and transit infrastructure, it is crucial that our region get the most out the existing transportation system. Maximizing system effectiveness means utilizing available technologies, techniques, and programs that allow more people to get where they need to be, quickly and safely.

With better coordination and new technology, the customer experience can be enhanced. For example, when road or Metrorail users are aware of major delays or construction, they may be able to adjust their travel routes or travel times. Another way to improve traffic flow and travel time is through better coordination of traffic signals along congested routes. Also, increased public awareness and enforcement of safe driving and pedestrian laws can reduce injuries and fatalities.

Where are we now and where are we headed?

Whether caused by an overturned truck on the Beltway, roadway construction, a transit station closure, or even a weather event such as a major snow storm, incidents can have impacts on the transportation system far from the scene of the problem, generating major traffic tie-ups or transit delays. Transportation officials from Maryland, Virginia, the District of Columbia, and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) have committed to share information and coordinate incident management through the newly-formed Metropolitan Area Transportation Operations Coordination (MATOC) program. MATOC shares timely and reliable information on incidents with its partner agencies to facilitate better transportation management, such as coordinated announcements on variable message signs or web-based updates on system operations.

New technology can improve operational effectiveness and the transportation user experience. One example of the transportation industry taking advantage of new technology is the Metrobus NextBusDC smartphone application. Metrobus users can now access the NextBusDC application to look up real-time information on arrival times for their bus at their particular stop. This helps users determine whether it is better to wait for the bus or to use another mode of transportation to reach their destinations.

Photo by WMATA

Public education programs are an important means to better manage our transportation system. For example, the TPB Street Smart campaign is an annual public education, awareness, and enforcement activity in the Washington region that aims to reduce pedestrian and cyclist deaths and injuries through more informed motorist and pedestrian behavior. Since its beginning in 2002, the campaign has used radio, newspaper, and transit advertising, and added law enforcement to respond to the challenges of pedestrian and bicyclist safety. The region currently averages about 6 bicyclist fatalities and 80 pedestrian fatalities each year.

"It is crucial that we take full advantage of operational effectiveness techniques and safety programs."

What are some significant challenges to achieving this goal?

Traffic incidents are a major source of delays:
Major incidents on roadways and transit systems cause severe delays and inconvenience.

Pedestrian and bicycle fatalities are a growing concern:
Bicycle and pedestrian fatalities are a growing proportion of total transportation fatalities.

Goal 5: Enhance Environmental Quality, and Protect Natural and Cultural Resources

What are we trying to achieve?

An effective transportation system needs to balance the growing region's mobility needs with the potentially harmful effects that transportation use may have on the environment and the health of our residents. The region addresses these concerns through efforts to preserve and protect natural resources that we all rely on. Meeting and exceeding clean air and clean water standards, as well as increasing energy efficiency, are important contributors to achieving this goal. In addition, ensuring that traffic and development have minimal impacts on communities will help protect cultural and historic resources.

Wiki Commons/ Mariordo

Where are we now and where are we headed?

Currently, jurisdictions in the Washington region have implemented measures to reduce harmful emissions from cars, trucks, and buses; promote the use of renewable resource-based energies for transportation; address stormwater management and water pollution caused by the transportation system; and protect undeveloped green space.

The National Capital Region is currently on track to meet Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) standards on regional air quality. Emissions from motor vehicles, which are directly related to air quality, are forecast to go down over the next 30 years as higher fuel efficiency standards come into effect and automobiles currently on the road are replaced by newer, cleaner models.

Public attention to climate change and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions is increasing. In 2010, the transportation system produced approximately 30% of all GHG emissions generated region-wide. GHG emissions are directly related to fuel efficiency in that the more fuel used, the more greenhouse gases are emitted into the atmosphere. As new technologies emerge that allow cars to use less fuel, GHG emissions will be reduced.

Hybrid and electric vehicle use is on the rise, which also contributes to the reduction in emissions. Today there are over 50,000 hybrid vehicles registered in the region. As these technologies become more cost

Flickr/John Biehler

Charging an electric vehicle

effective, and others, such as hydrogen fuel-cell vehicles come onto the market, it is expected that they may slowly replace vehicles that rely on gasoline.

In the past, the main sources of water pollution were centralized, industrial sources, while today the majority of pollutants in the water system enter by way of rainwater runoff that picks up oil, trash, and chemicals. In addition, new development and roadway construction result in increases in the amount of impervious surfaces that do not allow water to pass through to the soils below. During a storm surge, water moves quickly and in high volumes into the region's streams, causing stream degradation and erosion in addition to pollution. Despite efforts on the part of the local and state agencies to control and manage stormwater runoff and pollution, many of the region's waterways still suffer damage caused by rain water runoff.

"The region strives to exceed standards for clean air, clean water, and energy efficiency."

Economic pressures are causing local jurisdictions throughout the region to allow open space and farmland to be developed. As local and state governments recognize the importance of preserving open space for farming, wildlife habitat, and recreation, they have been putting in place programs to enhance and protect green space. Nevertheless, much of the farmland and open space remains developable and is slowly decreasing.

Photo by Perkiomencreek.com

What are some significant challenges to achieving this goal?

Air quality and public health standards are getting stricter: The region will have to meet increasingly stringent standards for air quality and public health in the future.

Natural resources are threatened by transportation and growth: Wildlife habitat and farmland are at increased risk of being developed, and stormwater runoff negatively impacts the region's waterways.

Goal 6: Support International and Inter-regional Travel and Commerce

What are we trying to achieve?

The Washington region strives to be among the most accessible in the nation for international and inter-regional passenger and goods movement. Strong passenger and freight service and connections by air, highway, and rail provide economic benefits within our region. More businesses will locate here if they are convinced the region can provide good transportation options for international and inter-regional travel and commerce. Supporting inter-regional travel for people and goods, including travel between the Washington metropolitan area and other major places like Baltimore, Richmond, and New York, is critical for an economically strong region.

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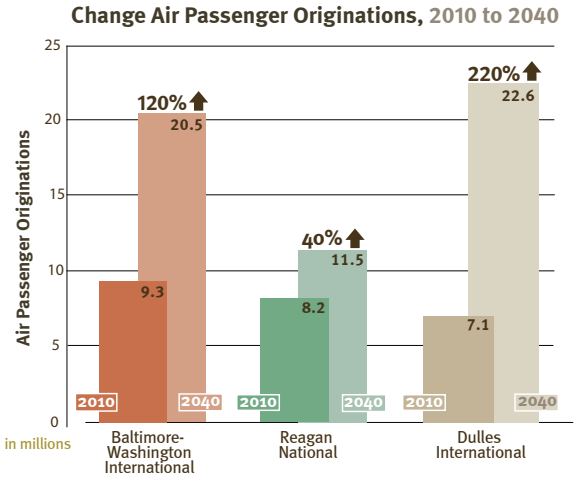


Where are we now and where are we headed?

The Washington region is among the fastest growing areas in the country. More visitors, businesses, and general population in the region will result in more demand for air passenger travel. For example, growth at Dulles International Airport between 2010 and 2040 is forecasted to be 220 percent. Similar growth patterns are happening at Baltimore Washington International Airport. With less room to expand, Reagan National Airport anticipates more limited growth.

Highway and railway bottlenecks, both within the region and along the I-95 Corridor, currently cause delays and unreliable travel times for people and goods, and these bottlenecks are expected to worsen in the future. The trucking industry is inextricably linked to the region's economy; as the region and its economy grow, there are more trucks on the roads making deliveries. At present, trucks carry the majority –

Virginia Ave. railway tunnel in Washington, DC - owned by CSX

approximately 76 percent – of goods to, from, and within the region, and they face growing congestion problems.

Our region is primarily a through corridor for freight rail. Ninety-five percent of freight rail traffic travels through the region on CSX Transportation or Norfolk Southern railroads. In anticipation of the Panama Canal expansion in 2014, both railroads have major infrastructure improvement programs in place. For example, CSX is working to rebuild the Virginia Avenue tunnel in Washington, D.C., which as a single track and single stack freight rail tunnel, is a chokepoint that delays freight and passenger trains traveling through the Washington region.

Domestic and international air freight is a fast-growing but relatively small niche market serving high-value, light-weight, and time-sensitive commodities. However, since the air cargo sector is dependent upon trucks to make initial and final deliveries, regional congestion is a major challenge for attracting new air cargo markets.

"An economically strong region will provide transportation options to move people and goods in and out of the region."

What are some significant challenges to achieving this goal?

Travel times to & from airports are increasingly unreliable: Travel times to and from the region's airports have become less reliable for people and for businesses that rely on the movement of goods.

Bottlenecks are causing delays of inter-regional movement: Bottlenecks on the highway and rail systems cause delays in inter-regional travel for both freight and passengers.

> Regional Strategies

Designing Strategies to Address Regional Challenges

The objective of the Regional Transportation Priorities Plan is to ultimately come up with a list of 10 to 15 regional strategies that the region can agree are top priorities for meeting our shared goals and addressing regional challenges.

Each strategy will undergo a benefit-cost analysis. Benefit-cost analysis attempts to summarize the overall value of a proposal. This is done by adding up the financial costs of a project and putting monetary value to the potential benefits of the project. The final list of 10 to 15 strategies will be those that are found to have higher benefits than costs and have broad regional appeal.

Potential Regional Strategies

For the purpose of today's forum, six sample regional strategies are presented. These strategies are representative of the types of regional strategies that could be included as part of the priorities plan because they address goals and challenges at the regional scale.

Strategy A: Expand Bike-Sharing Throughout the Region

Strategy B: Improve Pedestrian Facilities and Safety Around Bus Stops

Strategy C: Create a Dedicated Regional Funding Source to Ensure "State of Good Repair" for Metrorail trains and facilities

Strategy D: Secure Dependable Sources of Funding to Ensure "State of Good Repair" for Highways and Bridges

Strategy E: Connect Existing Metrorail Lines with High-Quality, Circumferential Transit

Strategy F: Expand the Region's Highway Network, Possibly Including New Potomac River Crossings

How to Read the Strategy Descriptions:

A "$" sign is used to show the approximate costs

The costs described would be above and beyond what the region currently expects to spend on transportation.

$	**Millions**
$$	**Hundreds of Millions**
$$$	**Billions**

Strategies can address multiple goals

While some strategies will help make progress toward achieving one goal, many strategies can help the region achieve multiple goals and challenges. The goals addressed by the strategies are illustrated by the icons for each particular goal.

The time frame for each strategy varies

Strategies can be near-term, on-going, or long-term.

Near-Term:	**1-5 Years**
Long-Term:	**20+ Years**
On-Going:	**Focus is Near- & Long-Term**

> Strategy A: Expand Bike-sharing Throughout the Region

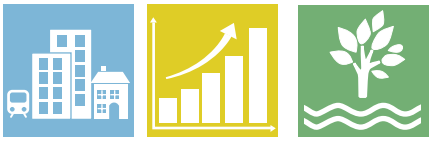
Capital Bikeshare, the region's existing bike-sharing system, has successfully increased bicycling in areas where it operates by making 1,200 bicycles at over 140 stations available for on-demand rental to residents and visitors. Expanding this program to other jurisdictions in the region would provide more residents the ability to access the system, and promote a promising alternative to driving.

Cost:
$

Time Frame:
Near-Term

Primary Goals Addressed:

Secondary Goals Addressed:



Pros:

1. **Low cost to implement and self-sustaining to maintain and operate**
2. **Provides another option for accessing jobs, goods, services, and recreation**
3. **Could be effective at reducing automobile dependence**
4. **Contributes to reductions in greenhouse gases and other harmful emissions**

Cons:

1. **Not a viable option for long commutes**
2. **Limited number of people will benefit**
3. **Usefulness in very low-density areas is questionable**

985 Photography

> Strategy B: Improve Pedestrian Facilities and Safety Around Bus Stops Throughout the Region

Sidewalks, protective shelters, curb ramps, lighting and appropriately-located bus stops are essential to making the bus system accessible, safe, and attractive to everyone. Persons with disabilities, older adults and low-income populations are especially reliant on bus service. However, missing sidewalk connections and access ramps or inaccessible bus shelters make the bus system unsafe or inaccessible for too many people. About 1/3 of the region's 20,000 bus stops are not readily accessible to people with disabilities. Improving critical pedestrian facilities will increase access to our region's extensive bus network and will make areas around bus stops more pedestrian friendly for everyone.

Cost:
$

Time Frame:
Near-Term

Primary Goals Addressed:

Secondary Goals Addressed:

Pros:

1. **Improves everyone's ability to accomplish their daily travel needs on the bus system**
2. **Provides a viable transportation alternative to expensive paratransit services (MetroAccess)**
3. **Improves neighborhood pedestrian access**

Cons:

1. **Improvements around bus stops would place a cost burden on local jurisdictions, which own and maintain the region's bus stops**
2. **These improvement may require acquisition of privately owned land**

Bus stop before accessibility improvements

Bus stop after accessibility improvements

> Strategy C: Create a Dedicated Regional Funding Source to Ensure "State of Good Repair" for Metrorail Trains and Facilities

Maintaining Metrorail in a "state of good repair" is necessary for preserving a world-class transit system in the region. To accomplish this, an on-going and dependable source of revenue must be identified to fund the continuing maintenance that is necessary to sustain the system now and in the future. One possible funding option is a regional sales tax increase that would be explicitly dedicated to Metrorail maintenance.

Cost:
$$

Time Frame:
On-Going

Primary Goals Addressed:

Secondary Goals Addressed:

Pros:

1. **Greater reliability, fewer delays, and safer conditions**
2. **Makes transit a more attractive option**
3. **Preventative maintenance is much cheaper and less disruptive than significant repairs or replacement**

Cons:

1. **Continued, proactive maintenance is costly**
2. **An increase in sales tax would make goods and services more expensive**

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Flickr/ Elvert Barnes

> Strategy D: Secure Dependable Sources of Funding to Ensure "State of Good Repair" for Highways and Bridges

Maintaining the extensive network of highways and bridges in a "state of good repair" is crucial to providing safe and reliable automobile, bus, and truck travel in the region. Maintenance must be on-going in order to ensure the preservation and safety of the system both now and in the future. A focus on both management and financial resources are needed to ensure the "state of good repair" for state and local roads and bridges. One possible option is identifying a combination of revenues from fuel taxes and vehicle registration fees at the state or local levels that would be devoted exclusively to funding maintenance on roads and bridges in our region.

Cost:
$$

Time Frame:
On-Going

Primary Goals Addressed:

Secondary Goals Addressed:

Pros:

1. **Ensuring a "state of good repair" will provide greater reliability and fewer delays for people and goods, and safer conditions**
2. **Preventative maintenance is much cheaper and less disruptive than significant repairs or replacement**

Cons:

1. **Additional fees and taxes will add expense to family budgets**

Flickr/VaDOT

> Strategy E: Connect Existing Metrorail Lines with High-quality, Circumferential Transit

Metrorail currently provides high-quality transit that connects the suburbs to the regional core, primarily through radial corridors. However, jobs and housing are increasingly spreading out from the center and, subsequently, there is more need to travel from suburb to suburb. Adding high-quality circumferential transit such as light rail or high speed buses that connect existing radial transit corridors would help link suburban communities that are currently difficult to reach quickly and efficiently. The planned Purple Line connecting Montgomery and Prince George's Counties is a good example. The new transit could be paid for by a combination of developer fees around future stations and tolls on nearby roadways.

Cost:
$$$

Time Frame:
Long-Term

Primary Goals Addressed:

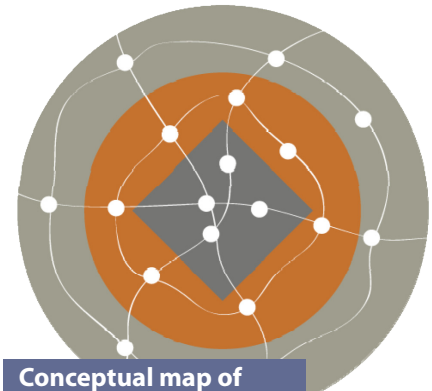
Secondary Goals Addressed:

Pros:

1. **Makes transit a more attractive option for more people in the region**
2. **Provides opportunities to support mixed-use suburban communities with transit**
3. **Shorter travel times between Maryland and Virginia**

Cons:

1. **Could come at the expense of adding core transit capacity or extending Metrorail to further-out areas**
2. **Construction will likely cause delays and other inconveniences on nearby roadways and communities**
3. **Tolls to cover construction costs could be high**



Conceptual map of circumferential transit

Illustration of a Purple Line Stop

Flickr/ RethinkCollegePark

> Strategy F: Expand the Region's Highway Network, Possibly Including New Potomac River Crossings

The region currently has an extensive highway network that provides connections within the region. However, expanding the region's highway network, possibly including additional Potomac River crossings outside the Beltway, could provide strategic new linkages to better connect our region and Activity Centers. Tolls on the new facilities could pay for and manage congestion on the facilities, and rapid bus service could provide new transit options for residents and visitors.

Cost:
$$$

Time Frame:
Long-Term

Primary Goals Addressed:

Secondary Goals Addressed:

Pros:

1. Potentially less traffic on the Beltway
2. Shorter travel times for people and goods between Maryland and Virginia
3. Possible expanded bus service
4. Variable tolling could minimize congestion on the new facility

Cons:

1. Encourages sprawl on undeveloped land
2. New facilities could increase congestion on nearby roadways
3. Tolls could be expensive to cover the high costs of construction

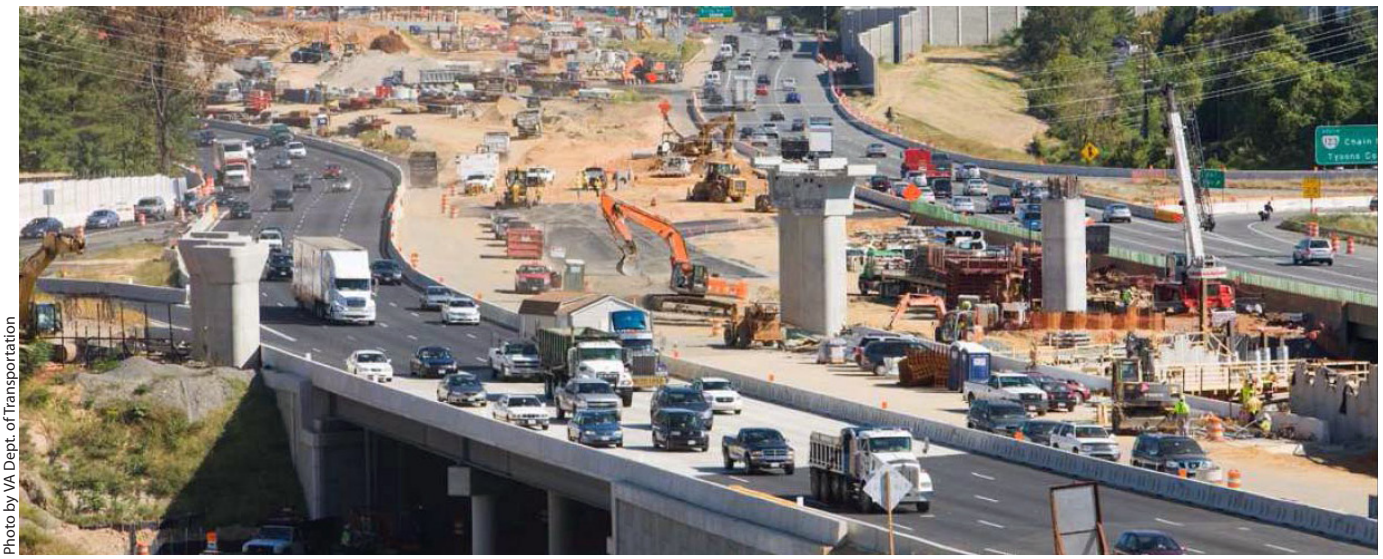


Photo by VA Dept. of Transportation

> Next Steps

The information gathered today will be used for the next steps in the development of a Regional Transportation Priorities Plan: a more comprehensive review of how well the region is meeting its goals and its most pressing challenges, followed by an assessment and prioritization of strategies designed to address the challenges. Potential strategies will be analyzed using benefit-cost analysis. Ultimately, it is envisioned that 10 to 15 strategies will be identified for the final Regional Transportation Priorities Plan, which is expected to be complete in mid-2013.

For More Information Visit our Website:
www.mwcog.org or www.mwcog.org/transportation/priorities

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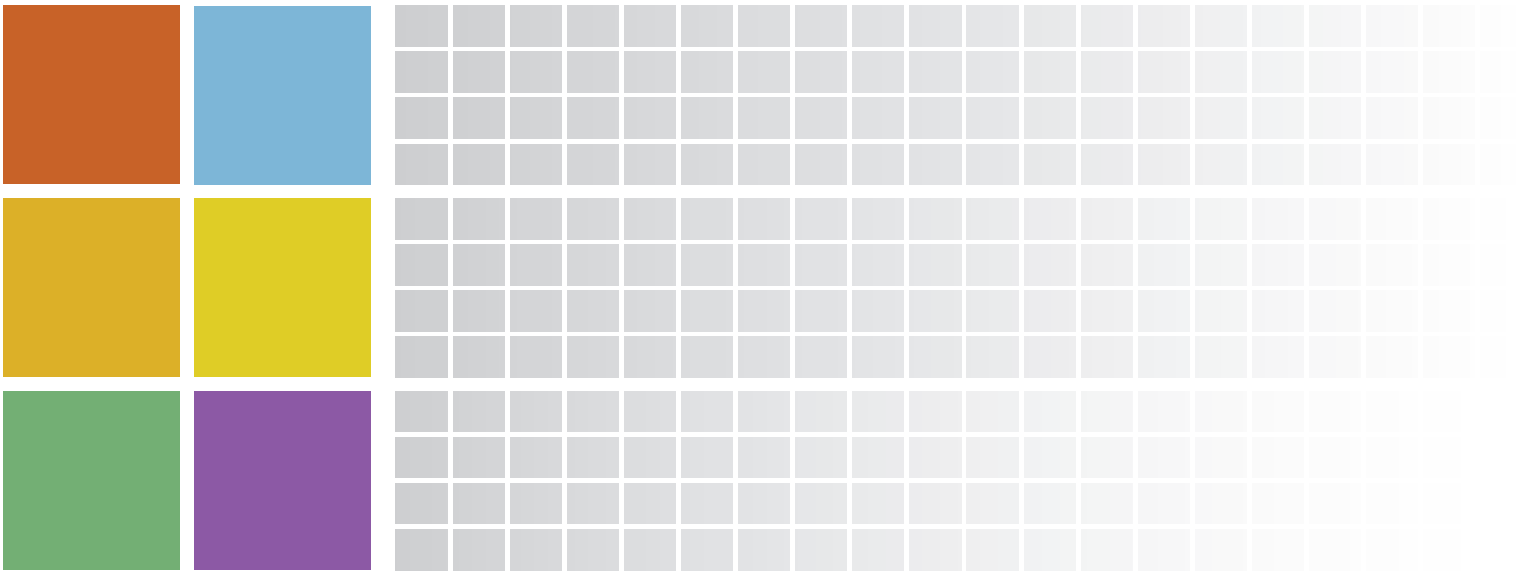
Thank you for your participation in today's discussion about regional transportation challenges and priorities for the National Capital Region.



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