



MEMORANDUM

TO: Transportation Planning Board
FROM: Lyn Erickson, Plan Development and Coordination Program Director
SUBJECT: Public Comment for the May 2022 TPB Meeting
DATE: May 18, 2022

The Transportation Planning Board accepts public comment on a rolling basis. Comments can be submitted via email (tpbcomment@mwkog.org), online (mwkog.org/tpbcomment), and phone. Comments are collected until noon on the Tuesday before the TPB meeting. These comments are compiled and shared with the board at the meeting the following day.

Between the April 2022 TPB meeting and noon on Tuesday, May 17, 2022, the TPB received six comments. All comments were submitted via email.

The comments are summarized below. All full comments are attached to this memo.

Note: Comments received as part of the Visualize 2045 public comment period (April 1 to May 1, 2022) were not summarized for this memo. The public comment period comments and responses were provided for your review under Agenda Item 8.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Bill Pugh and Stewart Schwartz, Coalition for Smarter Growth, Comment for May 18 Board Meeting – Email and Letter – May 17, 2022

Pugh and Schwartz sent an email and letter to consider strong climate goals and strategies for inclusion in Visualize 2045.

Jeffrey Rueckgauer, ANC 2B Mobility Committee, Virtual Comment Opportunity – Email – May 17, 2022

Rueckgauer sent an email advocating for safe accommodation requirements for pedestrians, cyclists, and other personal mobility users.

Paula Posas on behalf of Josh Tulkin, Sierra Club Maryland Chapter – Letter – May 17, 2022

Posas sent a letter reinforcing comments received as part of the Visualize 2045 public comment period regarding Maryland I-495 and I-270 Traffic Relief Plan.

Geoff Segal, Virtual Comment Opportunity – Email – May 17, 2022

Segal sent an email supporting approval of the Visualize 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan.

Carl Plumley, Virtual Comment Opportunity – Email – May 17, 2022

Plumley sent an email supporting approval of the Visualize 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan.

David Birtwistle, Virtual Comment Opportunity – Email – May 17, 2022

Birtwistle sent an email supporting approval of the Visualize 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan.

Public Comment

From: Bill Pugh <bill@smartergrowth.net>
Sent: Tuesday, May 17, 2022 11:59 AM
To: TPBcomment
Cc: Stewart Schwartz
Subject: Comment for TPB May 18 meeting
Attachments: Visualize 2045 Joint Letter 48 groups May 2022.pdf

Dear TPB board members,

- Almost 50 organizations from across your region sent you the [attached joint letter](#), which calls for much stronger action on the climate crisis, including setting specific, numeric targets for reducing per capita Vehicle Miles Traveled and for adopting Electric Vehicles by 2030.
- In addition, you received hundreds of comments from the public last month, asking you to pursue the full slate of climate strategies from TPB's climate study and to prioritize investments in walkable, bikeable, transit-friendly communities over highway expansion.
- Your Voices of the Region survey found that 84% of the region's residents want elected officials - you - to consider climate change in planning transportation.
- Likewise in the April 2021 public comment period on Visualize 2045, 145 out of 229 comments received by TPB specifically said the draft Visualize 2045 project list didn't do enough to meet the region's climate goals. The two other big comment themes were opposition to highway expansion and requests to prioritize sustainability and equity. Only six comments supported a business-as-usual plan.

We applaud your undertaking the Climate Change Mitigation Study of 2021. When the idea for this study was being discussed in late 2020, TPB members specifically wanted more information on how fast the region would need to transition to EVs and how much the region would need to reduce projected VMT growth. Now you have that information, and we ask you today to make these improvements to Visualize 2045:

1. Adopt a strong on-road transportation greenhouse gas reduction goal for 2030;
2. Set specific, numerical targets for adopting electric vehicles (20 to 25% of vehicles on the road by 2030) and reducing per capita passenger vehicle miles traveled by 15 to 20% by 2030; and
3. Commit to pursue the full slate of mode shift and vehicle technology strategies that TPB's climate study shows are necessary, including walkable, bikeable, transit-oriented land use; pricing parking and major roads; providing equitable commuter benefits that enable more sustainable travel; and investing in electric vehicle infrastructure and programs. *As TPB's consultant shows (agenda item 9, May workshop memo), picking only the strategies that had apparent consensus in the member survey, will not achieve the levels of emissions reductions the world needs to avoid catastrophic climate change.*

Only by setting these specific goals for our transportation sector, which are based on the findings of TPB's climate change study, will this region be able to meet its COG-endorsed climate goals.

Bill Pugh, AICP CTP | Senior Policy Fellow
Coalition for Smarter Growth
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Stewart Schwartz | Executive Director
Coalition for Smarter Growth
www.smartergrowth.net | @betterDCregion
stewart@smartergrowth.net

(UPDATED WITH 13 ADDITIONAL SIGNATORIES FOLLOWING THE MAY 1 TPB DEADLINE FOR A TOTAL OF 48)

Coalition for Smarter Growth | Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions | Audubon Naturalist Society | Sierra Club - Maryland Chapter | Virginia Conservation Network | Washington Area Bicyclist Association | Prince William Conservation Alliance | Active Prince William | Citizens Against Beltway Expansion | Fairfax Alliance for Better Bicycling | Northern Virginia Families for Safe Streets | Piedmont Environmental Council | YIMBYs of Northern Virginia | Green New Deal - Virginia | Sierra Club - Virginia Chapter | Center for Sustainable Communities | Audubon Society of Northern Virginia | Southern Environmental Law Center | Friends of Dyke Marsh | TAME Coalition | Lewinsville Faith in Action | Don'tWiden270.org | Lynnhaven River NOW | RVA Rapid Transit | Sustainable Mobility for Arlington County | Indivisible Howard | Conservancy for Charles County | Alexandria Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee | Mobilize Frederick | Bike Loudoun | Audubon Society of Central Maryland | Mattawoman Watershed Society | Chapmans Forest Foundation | Livable Alexandria | Greater Washington Clean Cities Coalition | League of Women Voters of the National Capital Area | ward3vision | Chesapeake Climate Action Network | Central Maryland Transportation Alliance | Clean Fairfax | Envision Frederick | Audubon Mid-Atlantic | Greater Greater Washington | Virginia League of Conservation Voters | DC Transportation Equity Network | Action Committee for Transit | Smart Growth Maryland | Maryland League of Conservation Voters

May 1, 2022 (Resubmitted May 4)

TPB Chair, Hon. Pamela Sebesky
National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board
777 North Capitol Street NE, Suite 300
Washington, DC 20002-4239

Dear TPB Chair Sebesky, TPB members, and other elected officials of the National Capital Region:

The following comments are provided by 35 48 organizations spanning the Greater Washington region. At the start of the Visualize 2045 process, in December 2020, the TPB board voted to craft a different plan that would better reflect the region's adopted policy. The solicitation guide for projects stated this clearly:

TPB requires its member agencies to prioritize investments on projects, programs, and policies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, prioritize the aspirational strategies, and achieve COG's land use and equity goals as they submit their inputs for inclusion in the TPB's LRTP and TIP.

Before finalizing the draft list of projects, TPB members were briefed on the initial results of their [Climate Change Mitigation Study](#). They heard a clear consensus of national research and studies from this region that only by both shifting more travel to transit, biking and walking combined with adopting electric vehicles would they meet their climate targets

Then, a year ago, after looking at the proposed projects, the public overwhelmingly commented to TPB that the draft plan didn't do enough to meet our climate goals and needed to shift its investments to more sustainable transportation options with less emphasis on highway expansion.

Yet the TPB board members made no substantive changes, and the Visualize 2045 plan and its performance on important measures like greenhouse gas emissions and car dependence is largely the same as the last adopted plan from 2018. This is unacceptable.

There are other major developments since the previous plan that we would expect to see reflected in this plan's mix of projects and performance:

- The Council of Governments adopted a new climate plan in November 2020, with multiple transportation recommendations that are relevant to Visualize 2045 – and TPB even endorsed the plan's new 2030 climate target.
- The region's officials made new policy commitments to prioritize planning, development and infrastructure investment around transit stations. Representatives on COG adopted in 2019 the Regional Housing Targets, which seek to focus 75% of new housing near transit, and TPB last Fall voted unanimously to endorse the COG high-capacity transit station planning framework and directed its members to make it a priority.
- TPB board members heard the results of the agency's Voices of the Region scientific survey of 2,400 residents, in which 84% said they wanted their elected officials to consider climate change in planning transportation. The responses to other questions also made clear that residents want to prioritize clean transportation and options to driving and that your investments should reflect that.
- A significant lasting increase in telework is anticipated, reducing the purported need for many road widening projects that are premised on addressing peak-hour vehicle congestion.
- And if those weren't enough, the increasingly dire warnings of scientists on climate change – and effects experienced now in your communities – would be sufficient for decisionmakers to make real changes with some urgency.

However, almost no projects changed since the last plan: one major project had a change, one new major transit project was added, and one major new road project was added – a new arterial cutting through a forest. While this Visualize 2045 adds 100 more pages since the last one and devotes ink to worthwhile policy topics, it's the projects that matter and that are reflected in the performance:

- This Visualize 2045 makes no progress in reducing greenhouse gas emissions since the previous plan. Its forecast emissions levels in 2030 and 2045 are far above the region's targets and are essentially the same as those achieved by the 2018 plan.
- Despite more evidence on the impacts of induced demand, this plan devotes far too much to highway expansion, \$28.2 billion, versus only \$14.6 billion for expanding our transit, pedestrian and bicycle networks.
- These project priorities and the land use decisions of various TPB jurisdictions leave too many residents stuck driving long trips for daily needs. The plan only makes a very modest reduction in per capita driving, a 3% change by 2045, no different from the 2018 plan.¹
- The plan maintains and, in the case of Prince George's County and other areas, even worsens the east-west divide of inequitable job access. At a regional level the almost \$30 billion in road expansion leaves job access barely above current levels. While the transit-oriented land use and transit investments in the plan - albeit modest and below the levels the region needs - provide much more improvement in job access at a regional level, at much less cost. This transit-oriented development, infrastructure and housing strategy, which you endorsed, should be the core focus of the projects you are funding and would result in far better outcomes for access to jobs, equity, climate, and overall performance of the transportation network.
- There are worthwhile projects in this plan that we support. However, the plan also commits to adding nearly 900 new lane miles of highways and other major roads, which will result in billions of miles of additional driving per year - on top of that anticipated from population and job growth – and undermining your transit investments.
- Key findings of the TPB's climate study need to be more clearly articulated in the plan's text: that the region can achieve its climate targets but only by shifting more travel to walking, biking and transit; by reducing trip distances through better land use and more housing options near transit; and by rapid adoption of electric vehicles.

We call on you to make the necessary and feasible changes to this Visualize 2045 plan and set the stage for a more comprehensive overhaul of the plan by 2024:

1. Adopt a strong on-road transportation greenhouse gas reduction goal, and set specific, numerical targets for adopting electric vehicles (20 to 25% of vehicles on the road by 2030) and reducing per capita passenger vehicle miles traveled by 15 to 20% by 2030. Only by setting these informative goals, which are based on the findings of TPB's

¹ For passenger vehicles, this translates to a 5.6% reduction in per capita VMT; however, TPB's climate study found that the region needs a reduction of 15-20% by 2030, in addition to quickly adopting electric vehicles, to achieve safe levels of greenhouse gas emissions.

climate change study, will this plan be informative to our decisionmakers and hold them accountable.

2. Endorse the full slate of strategies that TPB's own climate study shows are necessary, including walkable, bikeable, transit-oriented land use; pricing parking and major roads; providing equitable commuter benefits that enable more sustainable travel; and investing in electric vehicle infrastructure and programs.
3. Remove unnecessary and destructive highway expansion projects that induce more driving and sprawl.
4. Commit to a major regional study to develop actions that reduce the east-west jobs and housing divide, put more homes near transit, and more equitably and sustainably price our transportation system. TPB can begin the work as soon as this summer using the climate funding in its adopted FY23 Unified Planning Work Program.

This is the minimum that you must do now toward addressing the failings of the region's major plan for infrastructure investment.

Sincerely,

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Additional signatories after May 1, 2022:

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LWVNCAWebmaster@gmail.com

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Board member, on behalf of
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Public Comment

From: Rueckgauer, Jeffrey (SMD 2B02) <2B02@anc.dc.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, May 17, 2022 11:59 AM
To: TPBcomment
Subject: Item 1 Virtual Comment Opportunity

Please accept the below comment and questions for the May 18th TPB Board meeting. I am happy to answer questions or provide further information. Thank you for the opportunity to participate.

Pedestrian & Cyclist safety efforts are routinely undermined, short-circuited, by failure of the transportation agencies, such as DDOT, to require and enforce Safe Accommodation for all planned road work or construction in public space. For decades I have seen firsthand how DDOT and other local agencies routinely fail, even refuse, to require projects they are responsible for to comply with Safe Accommodation requirements. Twitter, other social media, routinely document unsafe conditions in work zones and construction sites, especially by planned transportation agency and utility projects; and the struggle to get their attention much less correction of the conditions.

As chair of ANC 2B's Mobility Committee, it is my responsibility to identify these issues and advocate for improvements to safety and processes in my ANC and to collaborate with other ANCs and the DC Council to effect positive change across the District.

How will the TPB and the COG work to ensure that Safe Accommodation for pedestrians, cyclists, and other personal mobility users of our streets, are universally required as part of the project planning and public comment process, not an afterthought or only considered as a result of safety mishaps?

Will TPB and COG commit to establishing a region-wide compact for mandatory Safe Accommodation requirements for all planned work affecting pedestrian and cyclist travel spaces; that include mandatory hard-stop of work where accommodation is not present until acceptable provision is in place?

--

Jeffrey Rueckgauer (He/Him/His)
Commissioner, Single Member District 2B02
Chair, ANC 2B Mobility Committee
Dupont Circle Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2B
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202.630.1455
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Newsletter Signup: <https://eepurl.com/hRGTe5>

Public Comment

From: gfsegal@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Geoff Segal <gfsegal@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 17, 2022 12:19 PM
To: TPBcomment
Subject: Item 1 Virtual Comment Opportunity

Dear Transportation Planning Board,

As a resident of the DC area, I am asking that you please support approval of the Visualize 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan without removing any projects.

Our region is expected to gain 1.3 million new people and 1 million new jobs by 2045. We need to take an all-of-the-above approach to transportation solutions that keep our region moving including investments in roadways, transit, bike, pedestrian, airport, and technology infrastructure.

Visualize 2045's smart, holistic approach reduces traffic congestion and delays; dramatically increases transit, bike, and pedestrian travel; increases population density in transit and activity centers by 40%; and meets all federal requirements to reduce air pollution in our region by 2045.

Removing roadway projects from this plan will jeopardize the quality of life and access to opportunity for the 92% of people in the DC region who own a vehicle and rely on automobile travel to live, work, and play. That includes households in our region making \$60,000 or less who are twice as likely to drive than take any other form of transportation to get to work.

Please support approval of this balanced, forward-thinking transportation plan that helps everyone throughout our community.

Sincerely,
Geoff Segal
23705 Sweetbells Ct Ashburn, VA 20148-1715 gfsegal@gmail.com

Public Comment

From: bubkus1@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Carl Plumley <bubkus1@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 17, 2022 1:15 PM
To: TPBcomment
Subject: Item 1 Virtual Comment Opportunity

Dear Transportation Planning Board,

As a resident of the DC area, I am asking that you please support approval of the Visualize 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan without removing any projects.

Our region is expected to gain 1.3 million new people and 1 million new jobs by 2045. We need to take an all-of-the-above approach to transportation solutions that keep our region moving including investments in roadways, transit, bike, pedestrian, airport, and technology infrastructure.

Visualize 2045's smart, holistic approach reduces traffic congestion and delays; dramatically increases transit, bike, and pedestrian travel; increases population density in transit and activity centers by 40%; and meets all federal requirements to reduce air pollution in our region by 2045.

Removing roadway projects from this plan will jeopardize the quality of life and access to opportunity for the 92% of people in the DC region who own a vehicle and rely on automobile travel to live, work, and play. That includes households in our region making \$60,000 or less who are twice as likely to drive than take any other form of transportation to get to work.

Please support approval of this balanced, forward-thinking transportation plan that helps everyone throughout our community.

Sincerely,
Carl Plumley
19909 Wild Cherry Ln Germantown, MD 20874-1015 bubkus1@verizon.net



May 17, 2022

Chair Pamela Sebesky
Transportation Planning Board
777 North Capital Street
Suite 300
Washington, DC 20002

RE: May 18, 2022 TPB Meeting, Agenda Item #8

Dear Chair Sebesky and Members of the Transportation Planning Board,

The use of the term “Op Lanes Maryland” in the draft Constrained Long Range Transportation Plan (CLRP) is ambiguous and remains problematic since it denotes toll lane expansion along a more extended footprint than was voted on by the TPB in June or July 2021. Toll lanes have not been approved by the TPB for Maryland I-495 east of the I-270 spur, yet toll lanes on that stretch all the way to the Woodrow Wilson Bridge are part and parcel of Op Lanes Maryland. So, the use of the Op Lanes Maryland terminology in both the main body of the CLRP and in one of the appendices could be interpreted to mean that the entire footprint of Op Lanes Maryland has been approved by the TPB.

Despite the fact that ambiguous language remains in the draft CLRP, we appreciate that the TPB has now clarified that the draft CLRP does not include any money for construction or predevelopment of toll lanes on the Beltway east of I-270 and has promised to make appropriate corrections in the draft plan.

The TPB has received as of today at least 663 petitions requesting that the private toll lanes plan for Maryland be removed from the CLRP. This was not made clear in the powerpoint in the Agenda Item #8 document which combined the responses for and against the toll lanes.

Some of the text from the 663 messages follows:

“Please remove the entire I-495 and I-270 toll lanes project from the region’s long range plan, Visualize 2045.

The I-495 and I-270 toll lanes project would privatize our highway system, lock in decades of fossil fuel infrastructure, and make residents pay

outrageously high tolls (as much as \$50 each way). It would also hamper our region's efforts to reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled and meet critical climate targets.

After enduring years of construction, Marylanders and our neighbors would suffer the consequences of more sprawl, unhealthy air pollution, and greenhouse gas emissions. We'd see 1,200 trees cut down on our precious national parkland and more runoff pollution pouring into our local waterways and the Chesapeake Bay. Instead of reversing our highway system's racist legacy, the toll lanes plan would deepen racial and economic inequities.

Please do the right thing for Maryland's future and remove the entire I-495 and I-270 toll lanes project from the region's long range plan."

As is well known, the Maryland private toll lanes project does not enjoy regional consensus. This was emphasized last year by hundreds of comments as well as [letters](#) signed by 77 Maryland legislators and members of the Maryland U.S. Congressional delegation.

We would like to reiterate that *Visualize 2045* should identify not just an overall greenhouse gas reduction target for transportation but also identify specific numeric targets for electric vehicles and vehicle miles traveled.

We appreciate the leadership of TPB members who are making climate goals a priority, and we continue to encourage removing the Maryland toll lane project from the CLRP.

Sincerely,

Josh Tulkin, Director
Sierra Club Maryland Chapter

Public Comment

From: dbirtwistle@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of David Birtwistle
<dbirtwistle@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 17, 2022 1:34 PM
To: TPBcomment
Subject: Item 1 Virtual Comment Opportunity

Dear Transportation Planning Board,

As a resident of the DC area, I am asking that you please support approval of the Visualize 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan without removing any projects.

The entire region continues to work very hard to attract quality employers. We all want this, right? Our infrastructure investment must contribute to the region's ongoing and expected growth or it will not happen. All aspects of our transportation infrastructure must receive the investment needed according to projected needs, not according to some wishful utopian plan.

Visualize 2045's smart, holistic approach reduces traffic congestion and delays; dramatically increases transit, bike, and pedestrian travel; increases population density in transit and activity centers by 40%; and meets all federal requirements to reduce air pollution in our region

Anything short of approving a complete and all inclusive plan will jeopardize the quality of life and access to opportunity for the 92% of people in the DC region who own a vehicle and rely on automobile travel to live, work, and play. That includes householdss in our region making \$60,000 or less who are twice as likely to drive than take any other form or transportation to get to work.

Please support approval of this balanced, forward-thinking transportation plan that helps everyone throughout our community.

Sincerely,
David Birtwistle
8260 Greensboro Dr Mc Lean, VA 22102-4901 dbirtwistle@verizon.net