



MEMORANDUM

TO: TPB Freight Subcommittee
FROM: Jon Schermann, TPB Transportation Planner
SUBJECT: Responses to Recent Comments Received on the Draft Freight Policy Statements
DATE: April 28, 2016

This memo summarizes the input received on the preliminary draft freight policy statements after solicitations to (1) members of the Access for All Committee via a memo distributed on March 7, and (2) participants at the March 10 TPB Freight Subcommittee meeting.

Three comments were received. TPB staff have reviewed the comments and have made some changes to the draft freight policies as described in the table below.

TABLE OF COMMENTS RECEIVED AND STAFF RESPONSES

Organization	Comment	TPB Staff Response
Virginia Railway Express	Recommended using “increase capacity” rather than transportation options with respect to draft policy number 4, particularly as it relates to passenger rail.	The draft policy statements specifically mentioning rail transportation (policies 4 and 15) were worded to be acceptable to those Board members who are supportive of expanding rail capacity as well as those Board members who are particularly concerned about the noise, safety, and other impacts on residents and businesses located near rail facilities. The current draft language attempts to strike an acceptable balance and has, to the best of our knowledge, earned the support of Board members with differing views on this issue.
Access for All Committee Member	Recommended adding language emphasizing the need for safe pedestrian crossings, well maintained tracks, lights and/or gates at all designated public crossings to ensure the safety of people with disabilities.	A new draft freight policy statement has been added that reads: “ <i>The Transportation Planning Board supports the use of best practices for safety, engineering, and maintenance of freight-related transportation infrastructure.</i> ” Also, TPB staff have modified draft freight policy number 5 to read: “The Transportation Planning Board supports the consideration of potential social, economic, and environmental effects of freight-related programs, policies, and activities on minority populations, low-income populations, <i>and people with disabilities.</i> ”

Organization	Comment	TPB Staff Response
Access for All Committee Member	Suggested emphasizing that the potential positive social and economic impacts of freight-related programs, policies, and activities be broadly distributed so that both minority and low-income populations can benefit.	The current wording addresses the concern expressed by some Board members about the environmental justice issues related to concentrating freight facilities in parts of the Region with higher proportions of minority and/or low-income people thereby exposing them to more of the negative externalities of freight transportation (e.g., noise and pollution). The policy as written can also be read to favor the positive impacts of freight transportation noted in the comment.

Two documents are attached to this memo. The first contains the most recent set of draft freight policy statements sent out for review and comment. The second contains the revised set of draft freight policy statements with changes highlighted. This latest set of draft freight policy statements, together with additional technical materials currently under development, have been incorporated into the draft National Capital Region Freight Plan for review and comment by the Freight Subcommittee and the Technical Committee. The revised draft Freight Plan will then be brought to the TPB for their review and action for approval later this spring.

Staff Developed Freight Policy Statements

March 9, 2016

PRELIMINARY DRAFT

The Transportation Planning Board...

1. supports the prioritized advancement of freight-related transportation projects that provide maximum value, efficiency, and safety with particular emphasis on those that improve freight access to activity centers.
2. supports investments that maintain a state of good repair for the Region's freight transportation system.
3. supports the alleviation of roadway bottlenecks where feasible to improve travel times and reliability for trucks and passenger vehicles.
4. supports maximizing opportunities to expand transportation options, address roadway congestion, and reduce pollution by increasing the use of passenger and freight rail.
5. supports the consideration of potential social, economic, and environmental effects of freight-related programs, policies and activities on minority populations and low-income populations.
6. recognizes freight's role in economic development and supports efforts to maximize the use of important economic drivers, including airports, ports, and intermodal facilities serving the Region's residents and businesses.
7. supports the safe and community-friendly accommodation of freight deliveries within the Region's activity centers.
8. supports improvements in truck safety using education, enforcement, and engineering strategies.
9. supports efforts to route hazardous materials away from the National Capital Region; for hazardous materials that must be transported to, from, within, and through the Region, the TPB supports the selection of the safest and most secure modes and routes.
10. encourages information sharing on explosive, toxic by inhalation, and radioactive materials being shipped to, from, within, and through the Region, including real-time notifications and long-term planning information.
11. supports robust first responder training and exercise activities regarding freight in general and hazardous materials transport in particular.
12. supports collaboration among agencies and with the private sector on freight planning and operations concerns to support mutual goals.

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13. supports the proactive analysis of freight-related performance measures in the context of overall regional performance measurement to identify lessons learned and promote regional goals.
14. promotes sustainable methods of freight operations that are sensitive to environmental, cultural, and community resources.
15. encourages collaboration among transportation planners, land use planners, private railroads, elected officials, and other stakeholders to find creative ways to facilitate community-beneficial land use development (residential, commercial, or industrial as appropriate) while providing space for necessary future rail expansion along key rail corridors.
16. supports the review and study of new freight-related technologies, emerging business practices, and evolving commodity mixes and mode shares to advance regional goals.

Staff Developed Freight Policy Statements

April 11, 2016

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