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**TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD  
MEETING MINUTES**

May 19, 2021

**VIRTUAL MEETING**

**MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES PRESENT**

Charles Allen, Chair – DC Council  
Mark Rawlings – DDOT  
Lezlie Rupert – DDOT  
Kristin Calkins - DC Office of Planning  
Andrew Trueblood – DC Office of Planning  
Ella Hanson – DC Council  
Charles Allen – DC Council  
Christina Henderson – DC Council  
R. Earl Lewis, Jr. – Maryland DOT  
Marc Korman – Maryland House  
Jason Groth – Charles County  
Reuben Collins – Charles County  
Patrick Wojahn – College Park  
Denise Mitchell – College Park  
Kai Hagen – Frederick County  
Kelly Russell – City of Frederick  
David Edmondson – City of Frederick  
Neil Harris – City of Gaithersburg  
Dennis Enslinger - Gaithersburg  
Emmett V. Jordan – Greenbelt  
Gary Erenrich – Montgomery County Executive  
Evan Glass – Montgomery County Legislative  
Terry Bellamy – Prince George’s County Executive  
Victor Weissberg – Prince George’s County Executive  
Bridget Donnell Newton – Rockville  
Kacy Kostiuk – Takoma Park  
Marc Korman – Maryland House of Delegates  
Maria Sinner – Virginia DOT  
Norman Whitaker – Virginia DOT  
Canek Aguirre - Alexandria  
Christian Dorsey – Arlington County  
David Meyer – City of Fairfax  
Walter Alcorn – Fairfax County  
James Walkinshaw – Fairfax County  
David Snyder – Falls Church  
Adam Shellenberger – Fauquier County  
Matthew Letourneau – Loudoun County  
Robert Brown – Loudoun County  
Kristen Umstattd – Loudoun County  
Pamela J. Sebesky – Manassas  
Jeannette Rishell – Manassas Park  
Ann B. Wheeler – Prince William County  
Victor Angry – Prince William County

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Shyam Kannan – WMATA  
Mark Phillips – WMATA  
Sandra Jackson – FHWA  
Dan Koenig – FTA

MWCOG STAFF AND OTHERS PRESENT

Kanti Srikanth  
Chuck Bean  
Lyn Erickson  
Mark Moran  
Tim Canan  
Nick Ramfos  
Andrew Meese  
Tom Gates  
Stacy Cook  
Andrew Austin  
Sergio Rittaco  
John Swanson  
Abigail Zenner  
Lynn Winchell-Mendy  
Sarah Bond  
Jane Posey  
Deborah Etheridge  
Dusan Vuksan  
Erin Morrow  
Elisa Walton – CAC  
Caryn Brookman – MDOT SHA P3 Program Office  
Christopher Laskowski – DC Council  
Tyson Byrne - MDOT

Materials referenced in the minutes can be found here:  
[www.mwcog.org/events/2021/5/19/transportation-planning-board](http://www.mwcog.org/events/2021/5/19/transportation-planning-board).

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

Vice-Chair Sebesky called the meeting to order and reminded the board that the meeting was being recorded and broadcast. She said the process for asking questions and voting is the same as at past meetings. After each item, members would be asked to comment or vote by jurisdiction.

Ms. Erickson conducted a roll call. Members that were present are listed on the first page of the minutes.

Chair Allen joined the meeting and asked if there was any public comment.

Ms. Erickson said that 103 comments were received from the public. Those comments have been posted to the website, but due to the large number of comments, staff were unable to provide a summary of those comments in time for the meeting. She said three letters were also received. She encouraged board members to review the letters and comment before the June TPB meeting.

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## **2. APPROVAL OF THE APRIL 21, 2021 MEETING MINUTES**

Ms. Mitchell made a motion to approve the minutes from the April TPB meeting.

Mr. Hagen seconded the motion. The board approved the minutes.

## **3. TECHNICAL COMMITTEE REPORT**

Mr. Groth said that the Technical Committee met on May 7. He said that details from the meeting were covered in the report for this item. Highlights included public comment submitted for Visualize 2045, an introduction to the TPB's air-quality conformity work, and a summary of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021. He said there was discussion about the TPB Equity Emphasis Areas and about how well transit is serving traditionally under-served and transit-dependent parts of the region. Finally, he said the committee was briefed on Maryland House Bill 1236.

Ms. Kostiuk asked when the board will be briefed on the Equity Emphasis Area analysis.

Mr. Srikanth said staff will brief the board on this topic in the coming months.

## **4. COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT**

Ms. Abeles said that the CAC met on May 13. At the meeting the committee was briefed on the May TPB agenda and COG's plan for re-entry to the building. The committee was informed that partial in-person meetings may resume as soon as Fall 2021. She said that the remainder of the meeting was set aside for an in-depth discussion about Visualize 2045. The committee divided into small groups for discussion. The committee then shared their discussion with staff. She said that the committee is most concerned about equity and climate change. They said that equity should be a part of all elements of Visualize 2045 and said that the plan should do a better job at addressing climate change. Other discussion topics included: educating the public about the importance of Visualize 2045, maintain road changes implemented in response to the pandemic, and using federal funding to advance Visualize 2045 Aspirational Initiatives. More detail on this discussion can be found in the CAC Report.

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

Mr. Srikanth said that the Steering Committee met on May 7. It did not approve any amendments to the TIP at that meeting.

Mr. Srikanth referred to letters sent and received. He said that page 3 of the report included a copy of a letter requested by the board asking that the FHWA and FTA extend the date for adopting the TPB's updated long-range transportation plan, TIP and the associated air quality conformity analysis. He said he has not received a response. He then noted three project status letters, on pages 5 to 7, sent on behalf of the TPB for specific projects proposed for funding under the new federal Community Projects funding program.

Mr. Srikanth referred to the announcements and updates portion of his report. He said that on page 10 there was a notice for the second round of pandemic relief funding that is being made available under the TPB's Enhanced Mobility grant program using supplemental funds provided under the Federal American Rescue Plan Act. On page 14 was an announcement that Bike to Work Day was scheduled for May 21. On page 16 was an announcement that the TPB will provide technical assistance grants to help jurisdictions with preliminary engineering or design projects that will improve walk and bike connections

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to high-capacity transit stations. He added that in June the TPB will launch a public outreach campaign to champion the TPB's Aspirational Initiatives.

Mr. Lewis said that MDOT submitted a letter that included a new recommended preferred alternative to provide two HOT managed lanes in each direction. He said a colleague was prepared to share a presentation on this alternative.

Mr. Srikanth said that Item 10 would be the appropriate time to address the contents of this letter.

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

Chair Allen referenced the work session that was held before the TPB meeting. That session reviewed projects proposed for inclusion in the regional air-quality conformity analysis that staff will begin in June. He said it is helpful that additional time was set aside so members can collectively discuss their views and ask their questions on projects that may eventually become part of the long-range transportation plan. He said that as the board moves towards approving these projects for analysis at the June meeting, there are several policy priorities that have become more urgent than they were in the past. These include equity, safety, and climate change. He looks forward to working with the board and members to work through these issues.

## **7. ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATE TO THE 2004 TPB/FAMPO AGREEMENT**

Ms. Erickson said that the Fredericksburg Area MPO (FAMPO) and TPB share federally prescribed responsibilities for conducting the metropolitan transportation planning process for the urbanized area within Stafford County. She said that the TPB is responsible for conducting these activities in DC, Maryland, and Virginia. She said that at the most recent federal certification review, USDOT requested that the TPB and FAMPO update memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the organizations, since the last update was in 2004. She said that FAMPO's board approved the updated MOU in March 2021. She said that staff recommends approval of Resolution R18-2021. She said the resolution approves the 2021 TPB/FAMPO MOU and it authorizes the TPB chair to sign the letter.

Chair Allen made a motion to adopt Resolution R18-2021 to approve the 2021 TPB-FAMPO MOU and authorize Chair Allen to execute the agreement on behalf of the TPB.

Mr. Dorsey and Ms. Sebesky seconded the motion. The motion was approved by the board.

## **8. TPB CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION STUDY OF 2021**

Mr. Moran Introduced Ms. Morrow's presentation and provided some background remarks on the Phase 1 Technical Report.

Ms. Morrow referred to the memo and presentation on the Phase 1 Technical Report for the Climate Change Mitigation Study. In the briefing, Ms. Morrow reviewed previous studies and scenario studies that the TPB and COG have completed over the years. The briefing provided a detailed analysis of past work, including the Multi-Sector Working Group and the work of the TPB's Long-Range Plan Task Force that led to the adoption of the Aspirational Initiatives in the 2018 Long-Range Transportation Plan. She said that this review of past work will set the stage for further work on scenario analysis looking at climate change mitigation strategies.

Mr. Allen asked about a slide in the presentation showing 2040 numbers and 2050 numbers and asked if the slides were showing a reduced impact as it went from 2040 to 2050.

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Ms. Morrow explained that the slide shows the percent reductions from 2005 level which were forecasted based upon current policies. She explained that the slight uptick between 2040 and 2045 was a forecast of the reduced effect of fuel efficiency in those out-years while there would continue to be an increase in travel demand due to increases in population and employment.

Mr. Allen noted the different strategies that jurisdictions and individuals can pursue to mitigate climate change impacts and he cited examples from the District of Columbia including parking cash outs. He noted that there are debates about other strategies that could also be used. He asked if there was a breakdown in the work that Ms. Morrow cited by recommendation and what the impacts of those recommendations could be.

Ms. Morrow reviewed the slides covering some of the greenhouse gas reduction strategies and noted that some of them were combined but others were broken out in the technical report.

Mr. Srikanth explained that staff looked at certain assumptions to test the effectiveness of different strategies. He explained that potential policy actions that were analyzed would not show up as individual projects, but these assumptions and resulting analysis showed what could be expected.

Ms. Rishell asked if there was any consideration given regarding the impact of a VMT tax or a carbon tax on low-wage workers.

Ms. Morrow said that was not part of the original Multi-Sector Working Group report but will be addressed in the upcoming study.

Ms. Umstattd asked about energy sources and whether they were from solar power or from coal-fired power plants and how those sources and locations of power plants could affect the analysis when looking at electric vehicles.

Ms. Morrow responded that the previous analysis done by the Multi Sector Working Group had assumed the prevailing sources of electricity for the EV scenarios. She explained that examination of alternative sources of energy is more under the purview of COG's Department of Environmental Programs and a briefing on the topic could be scheduled. She said that the TPB's forthcoming climate change mitigation study will be considering energy sources for electric vehicles.

Mr. Srikanth explained that the Multi Sector Working Group Study had accounted for increased electricity usage due to the transition to electric vehicles and how that switch could reduce the net reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from this strategy. He noted that increasing renewable and clean energy will be critical to efforts to reduce greenhouse gases.

Mr. Letourneau asked about assumptions about lightweight and heavy-duty vehicles and the move towards electric vehicles and fuel economy.

Ms. Morrow explained that those assumptions in the upcoming TPB's climate change mitigation study will be based on the literature review and includes national policies.

Mr. Srikanth noted that electric vehicles are a critical element of the manufacturers' ability to meet federal fuel economy standards. He said that some past analysis was based on higher national standards on fuel economy, which were reduced by the previous federal administration and that the new study will take these policy changes into account.

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Ms. Wheeler noted that these past studies were not only focused on VMT but on multiple strategies. She noted that it is important to look at many different strategies. She asked if there has been any thought about extending electric infrastructure to the outer suburbs to make it easier to use electric vehicles.

Ms. Morrow noted that electric charging infrastructure would be an important part of this strategy.

Mr. Srikanth noted that there will need to be collective action to accomplish many of these strategies. He noted that the American Jobs Plan also has proposed \$124 billion to build up energy infrastructure but it will be up to the region to work together to identify locations and the gaps that need to be filled.

Mr. Harris said that he was struck by the difference in magnitude of effectiveness of some of the strategies noting that clean energy shows up as a big contributor to reducing greenhouse gases while mode shift will contribute a very small amount. He asked if mode shift reductions are small because the potential for reduction is small, or if it is because they are not effective compared to the rest of the items on the list.

Mr. Srikanth explained that the previous analyses looked at long-term periods out to 2045 and 2050 and were based on a high federal fuel efficiency standard with an average of 54.5 miles per gallon. Over the longer term, as vehicles get more fuel efficient and as more of the vehicle fleet uses electric or other clean fuel, the rate of reduction achieved by reduced travel will decrease. However, he noted that strategies that reduce VMT are also important since their contributions can be high for reducing greenhouse gases in the short term while fleet turnover will take a long time.

Mr. Lewis agreed with Mr. Srikanth that there would have to be a portfolio approach to mitigating climate change. He noted that all these strategies need to be carefully thought out and considered with an equity lens to understand how they may impact all people in the region.

Ms. Kostiuk asked about the big picture and how the study will be used, considering that each jurisdiction may take different policy approaches. She asked if there was a role for the TPB or another regional body to coordinate different actions.

Mr. Srikanth noted that that was a good point and that the consultant has been asked to conduct different scenarios that would identify potential approaches the region could take that would have the greatest impact. The study will also identify implementation strategies that can be taken.

Mr. Kannan noted that it will take a long time for electric vehicles to make an impact. He also asked if the TPB should monitor these indices over the coming years to track progress.

Mr. Srikanth noted that the Regional Public Transportation Subcommittee has conducted an inventory of public transportation fleets to monitor electric vehicle adoption in that sector. He also noted that the TPB could conduct surveys and other analysis to track these indices.

## **9. ENHANCED MOBILITY SOLICITATION**

Ms. Winchell-Mendy provided an update on the Enhanced Mobility program and the TPB's solicitation process. She reminded the board that pre-application conferences for the funding will start in June and continue through July of 2021. The solicitation will be open from July 1 to September 1. She provided more information about eligibility and requirements to apply, as well as information on the selection process and selection committee. She said the plan is expected to go to TPB for action and approval of the projects in November or December.

There were no questions or other remarks.

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## **10. VISUALIZE 2045: SUMMARY OF COMMENTS ON THE DRAFT INPUTS TO THE PLAN AND AQC ANALYSIS**

Ms. Cook provided a review of the morning work session and an update on the Visualize 2045 comment period. She reminded the Board of what is available in the comment period packet. She shared the comments received by number and type. She reported that there were 206 comments in total, including a series of letters from organizations and individuals. She summarized the themes of the comments received. There were examples shown in the presentation and meeting materials. She noted that updates in the air quality conformity tables will be made once information about any technical changes to the Traffic Relief Plan and the associated I-270 and I-495 projects are provided by MDOT.

Ms. Brookman from MDOT made a presentation on the “American Legion Bridge I-270 to I-70 Relief Plan,” including recent changes. She said that the project phases that are on I-495 east of Maryland 187 to the Woodrow Wilson Bridge are going to change from construction to study status, which means that they will not be included in the air quality conformity analysis. She said that the new estimated cost of the project is now approximately 6 billion. She said that the commitments will remain for transit, bicycle, pedestrian, and environmental enhancements. She further said that the revisions to the project submissions for inclusion in the air quality conformity analysis remain unchanged.

Mr. Glass said that the significant highway expansion projects that are proposed for inclusion in the long-range plan are causing concern about how those projects will allow the TPB to meet climate goals. He proposed an alternative package for consideration that does not assume that all the significant highway projects will come to fruition. He introduced a resolution for the June meeting, to direct TPB staff to create a model that would look at climate-friendly ideas and projects in parallel with modeling the transportation agency submissions and the technical inputs currently captured in Visualize 2045.

Chair Allen asked that the resolution could be shared with board members to give them a chance to review it before making a decision.

Chair Allen clarified that action on this resolution will not be taken until the next meeting.

Ms. Newton expressed opposition to MDOT’s plan for I-270 and she urged that it not be included in Visualize 2045 update.

Ms. Rishell urged board members to not be swayed by special interests. She reminded the board there is no substitute for good decision-making based upon accurate data.

Chair Allen said that the disparagement of motions and what they are trying to propose was not encouraged.

Mr. Snyder said he supports a planning process that is outcomes-based. He said that he wants to encourage and support economic growth in the region and deal with equity as well as climate change, but that he did not want to vote for a plan that admits that the region may pursue some of those objectives and not all of them. He said the TPB has set climate changes goals and is either serious about meeting them or not. He said he did not want to have to vote on one approach or another at the next meeting. He said he hoped the different positions could be constructively combined.

## **11. ADJOURN**

No other business was brought to the board. The meeting adjourned at 2:04 P.M.