
TPB TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY

July 8, 2022

1. WELCOME, VIRTUAL PARTICIPATION PROCEDURES, AND MEMBER ROLL CALL PROTOCOL

Staff described the procedures and protocols for the virtual meeting and conducted a roll call. Meeting participants are documented in the attached attendance list.

2. APPROVAL OF MEETING RECAP FROM THE JUNE 3 TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING

There were no questions or comments regarding the June Technical Committee meeting. The summary was approved.

ITEMS FOR THE BOARD AGENDA

3. REGIONAL CAR FREE DAY 2022 PROCLAMATION

Nicholas Ramfos, COG/TPB staff briefed the group on the Commuter Connections Car Free Day project for 2022. Car Free Day began in Europe in 1995 and is now a worldwide event that is observed in 1,500 cities spanning 40 countries. The event coincides with European Mobility Week which is an annual campaign on sustainable urban mobility celebrated from September 16 – 22. The campaign looks to introduce and promote sustainable transportation measures as alternatives to the use of an automobile. Mobility Week culminates with Car Free Day on September 22nd and many participating cities set aside one or more areas for pedestrians, cyclists, and public transportation users for the whole day.

The event began in 2007 as a DC-only event and expanded regionally through COG in 2008. The regional event is designed to promote alternative forms of transportation including “car-lite” methods such as carpools and vanpools in addition to teleworking.

Mr. Ramfos stated that the event is open to all residents who need to make a trip during Car Free Day and ordinarily travel in a single-occupant vehicle. The goal is to have 5,000 residents pledging to go car-free or car-lite. A first-ever regional Car Free Day participant survey was conducted in 2019. Mr. Ramfos stated that almost 100% of the survey respondents stated that they had used a car-free or car-lite option during the event. The use of transit was slightly less than what was pledged but the travel options used were generally in line with the options pledged. 71% of the survey respondents who changed their commute mode on Car Free Day would most likely have driven alone to work that day. About 33% of respondents increased the use of car-free and/or car-lite options for non-work trips after the event. The average frequency for car-free and car-lite use for work trips slightly increased too.

The TPB will be asked to approve a proclamation for the 2022 Car Free Day event this month.

Mr. Ramfos stated that the call to action will be for local jurisdictions to adopt similar proclamations. The event is usually covered by media although the past two years have not been covered extensively as in the past due to the pandemic. Commuter Connections has also teamed up with the Clean Air Campaign and the American Heart Association to promote the event.

The website for the event is www.carfreemetrodc.org and will be up and running in early August to accept pledges. There will be a leaderboard on the site to show the status of those pledging and the type of mode they pledge to take during Car Free Day.

Promotional materials will include a poster that will be sent to employers and will also be available to download from the Car Free Day website. The event also has Facebook and Twitter pages and both will

be used to promote the event via messages and paid advertising. Digital ads and influencers will also be used to promote the event. Radio support and Spotify as well as sponsored articles and YouTube channels have been used to market the event in the region.

The event also has many corporate sponsors offering prize opportunities for those pledging. Complimentary transit ad space promoting Car Free Days has been donated by Arlington, Fairfax, Montgomery, Prince George's, and WMATA.

Commuter Connections network members also hosted numerous promotions and events to celebrate Car Free Day. The event also includes a "Capital Area Car Free College Campus Challenge" to promote the event on college campuses throughout the region. A promotional tool kit was developed and distributed to colleges and universities throughout the Washington Metropolitan Area. Several hundred pledges were made with an edu email addresses, and 1st place went to the University of Maryland last year.

4. FY 2023 TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES SET ASIDE PROGRAM FOR MARYLAND TPB JURISDICTIONS

Referring to the posted material, Mr. Swanson briefed the committee on the recommendations of a selection panel for funding for the FY 2023 suballocation for of the federal Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program for Maryland. He described the TPB's role in selecting projects using these federal grant funds. He said the TPB has \$5,169,450 available in its suballocation for next year. For our region, seven applications were submitted with a total funding request of \$7,248,053. He said that MDOT rules prohibit partial funding of projects, and therefore the selection panel that reviewed the applications decided to recommend that the TPB fully expend its suballocation on one project – the Frederick and Pennsylvania Line Rail Trail in Frederick County. He said the panel recommended that the TPB request that MDOT use statewide TA Set-Aside funding for four unfunded projects. He said the TPB would be asked to approve the panel's recommendation at its meeting on July 20.

Mr. Srikanth reiterated that MDOT has the opportunity to fund additional projects using statewide TA funds, and the TPB would request that several of our region's unfunded projects be considered for that funding

5. TPB BYLAWS UPDATE

Ms. Erickson explained a TPB Bylaws update was initiated to accurately reflect the virtual options available for conducting TPB meetings. The current bylaws do not provide for all-virtual meetings once the public health emergency ends. The update will emphasize the importance of in person interactions, while recognizing a balance of both hosting in-person and all-virtual meetings.

The update will also include revisions to the rest of the bylaws to bring them up to the 21st century, as the other sections had not recently been reviewed. Staff are making sure the latest federal regulations are accurately reflected, the utilization of Roberts Rules will be included now, and other administrative updates like referencing our master funding agreement have been added. The edits are currently with our attorney and will be shared with the TPB when they are completed.

Kari Snyder from MDOT asked if staff are planning to take this to the board's approval for the September timeframe? Ms. Erickson replied that it is a notice item on the TPB is agenda this month and we will be asking for the TPB to approved them in September. If we receive substantial changes, we can revisit the schedule.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ANALYSIS PHASE 1: UPDATE EQUITY EMPHASIS AREAS

Mr. Ritacco briefed the committee on, in preparation for, the Environmental Justice analysis of Visualize 2045, staff applied TPB-approved methodology to update the Equity Emphasis Areas using the most recent American Community Survey data. The resulting map was shared.

Key takeaways from the 2022 update:

- 364 of the region's 1,330 census tracts are designated EEAs
- Number of tracts designated as EEAs has increased by four percent
- EEAs represent 27 percent of all tracts in the region (compared to 29 percent in 2018)
- No significant change in the overall pattern of distribution of EEAs in the region
- No significant change in the overall composition of population groups within the EEAs

Ms. Khan, District of Columbia Office of Planning Deputy Director of Citywide Strategy & Analysis, commented that she looks forward to the next phase of the analysis and implications for the District.

Mr. Erenrich noted an irregularity to project extents particularly for Maryland managed laned projects on I-495. Mr. Ritacco note that staff will double-check to ensure the final interactive is inclusive of the projects approved in June 2022 as part of the constrained element of the 2022 update to Visualize 2045.

Ms. Kostiuk asked what mitigation steps would take place if an issue is found during the environmental justice analysis. Mr. Srikanth provided additional information about mitigation. Large projects, particularly those that require federal approval or that rise to the level of needing environmental impact statements, require assessments to determine what impacts the projects might have. As part of these assessments, mitigation efforts must be identified. The EJ analysis assesses the impact of the plan and looks at the combination of highway, transit, and non-motorized transportation projects and determines whether there is a disproportionate impact on mobility and accessibility for low-income and traditionally disadvantaged racial and ethnic population groups in the region. Mr. Srikanth noted as TPB member jurisdictions develop projects for the plan, they also have an opportunity to think about potential inequities before projects are finalized.

INFORMATION ITEMS

7. 2022 CONGESTION MANAGEMENT PROCESS (CMP) TECHNICAL REPORT

Mr. Mr. Meese presented. The draft 2022 Congestion Management Process (CMP) Technical Report was included in the mailout materials for today's meeting. The draft report was unchanged from what the committee reviewed at its June 3, 2022 meeting (except for the report date and an "unchanged" note on the report cover), since no comments had been received on the report during the June comment period.

Mr. Meese followed up on a question raised by Mr. Weissberg at the June meeting, regarding the report's inclusion of two Prince George's County locations (on the Baltimore-Washington Parkway and on US 301), for the first time among the region's top ten bottlenecks. As background, Mr. Meese noted that for the 2022 report, staff used the "built-in" bottleneck tool in the Regional Integrated Transportation Information System (RITIS) Probe Data Analytics Suite instead of the COG/TPB "in-house" methodology previously used, and that staff had recommended caution in comparing the 2022 report bottlenecks to previous years.

However, as a sensitivity analysis, staff was able to apply the current bottleneck methodology/tool to previous years' data, back to 2010. In this analysis, the two bottlenecks in question did appear in all prior years back to 2010, meaning that any change in the report was due to the changed methodology rather than a change in actual travel demand on those facilities. Although uncertain, the reason may be rooted in the methodologies' differing treatment of facilities' "free-flow" speeds (i.e., the old methodology may have discounted bottlenecks on roads with relatively lower speed limits).

As a further follow-up, staff planned to undertake a stand-alone, multi-year bottleneck analysis, to present to the committee in a future month, to look at overall and more detailed bottleneck trends for the years since vehicle probe data became available circa 2010.

Mr. Weissberg thanked staff for the analysis. He recommended that methodologies such as these be kept compatible with previous years to help with consistency of jurisdictional priorities. Mr. Meese replied that staff would try to do this as much as possible, but the reliance on external/private sector big data sources means this may not always be possible.

Without objection, the committee accepted the 2022 CMP Technical Report as final.

8. BUS EQUITY ANALYSIS RESULTS

Eric Randall briefed the committee on a new analysis of transit equity in the region, looking specifically at local bus service coverage and frequency in relation to the travel needs of traditionally disadvantaged populations. Last year, consultants were tasked to write a white paper and conduct a technical analysis on inform regional decision makers about bus service and equity considerations when restoring bus transit service and improving bus transit service equity in the longer-term post-pandemic. This spring, with most local bus service restored and with new data available, consultants ICF Consulting and Foursquare Integrated Transportation Planning were re-hired to update the analysis, producing a new webmap and an updated summary of analytical findings.

Eric spoke to a memo in the meeting documents, with an introduction by himself and then a summary of the new transit equity analysis findings by the consultants. Eric then opened the webmap tool and walked the committee through the various features of the tool. Categories of data layers include Distribution of Transit Service, Network Job Accessibility, Current Transit Service, Pandemic Impacts, and Index Analyses, the latter combining key factors to make it easier for use. Eric demonstrated the webmap, clicking on representative layers across the categories. In general layers are color-coded, with darker colors indicating higher density or need.

In conclusion, Eric thanked the consultants for their work. He also noted that WMATA will shortly kick off a regional bus network restructuring effort which will provide an opportunity to re-imagine bus service in the region.

Vic Weissberg asked if RTA of Central Maryland bus services were included in the analysis. Eric said they were not, though RTA does provide some bus service in the eastern portion of Prince George's County, But the focus of this analysis was on TPB member bus services.

Nick Ruiz noted that Burke has a large area of transit need and asked if future analysis could look at the job locations of people without transit service. Eric responded that looking at origin-destination flows was not part of this analysis and the data would have to come from other sources. However, it is a possible issue for analysis, which could look at travel demand model outputs and even latent demand for transit or need for improved transportation connections.

Eric added that this analysis has been distributed to the TPB Regional Public Transportation Subcommittee (RPTS). The RPTS has also been sent the 2021 draft State of Public Transportation report for comment, which will be reviewed at the September TPB Technical Committee meeting.

9. IJA GRANTS

Mr. Kanti Srikanth briefed the committee on a memorandum summarizing federal funding grants and program updates as enacted by the federal surface transportation reauthorization of November 15, 2021 when the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) was signed into law.

Kanti noted that this was a very large bill which affected multiple federal agencies and programs beyond just reauthorization of the federal surface transportation act, succeeding the FAST Act which was due to expire. Federal funding will now continue through FY 2026, with the act also authorizing the funding for FY 2022 this year. More money has been added to existing federal funding programs and also new programs have been created, with additional funds for discretionary grants. The memo tried to capture all these changes and has links for additional information to provide a reference for members. It's a challenge for staff to add details and brief all this information. The White House guidebook is one of the most useful references and Kanti recommended that staff review. A FHWA slide deck is also good for highway provisions.

At the staff level, Kanti noted that local jurisdictions, regional organizations, and even nonprofits are eligible applicants for these new programs. For TPB staff, each subject matter lead is looking at grants for their field, for instance within the bike and pedestrian field looking at new grant opportunities. TPB staff stand ready to assist with any relevant technical resources and of course letters of support. He noted that MPOs are eligible applicants, but any such application would require regional consensus while MWCOC doesn't have the staff resources itself to prepare grant applications or the funds to provide a local match. Competitive grant applications also often need more than the minimum level match. Kanti noted in particular the Reconnecting Communities grant program as a new and unusual opportunity.

There were no questions from the committee.

10. OTHER BUSINESS

Staff wanted to remind everyone that on July 15 from 2:00 to 3:30 there will be our 4th four-part webinar series on resilient transportation resiliency and building our capacity as a region. We will post a link to where you can also register.

Staff announced Chuck Bean and Jon Scherman will be departing from the COG family.

11. ADJOURN

The next Technical Committee meeting is scheduled for Friday, September 9, 2022.

No other business was brought before the committee.

ATTENDANCE

MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES PRESENT	
Mark Rawlings – DDOT Rebecca Schwartzman - DCOP Eric Graye – Montgomery County Gary Erenrich – Montgomery County Kari Snyder – MDOT Victor Weissberg – Prince George’s Co Dan Malouff – Arlington Co Malcolm Watson – Fairfax Co Robert Brown – Loudoun County Matthew Arcieri – City of Manassas Chloe Delhomme – City of Manassas	Sree Nampoothiri – NVTA Sophie Spiliotopoulos - NVTC Meagan Landis – Prince William County Amir Shahpar – VDOT Regina Moore – VDOT Ciara Williams- VDRPT Katherine Youngbluth - VDRPT Nick Ruiz – VRE Mark Phillips – WMATA
OTHERS / MWCOG STAFF PRESENT	
Kanti Srikanth Lyn Erickson Kim Sutton Tim Canan Andy Austin Mark Moran Leo Pineda Andrew Meese Nick Ramfos	Sergio Ritacco Stacy Cook Andy Meese Eric Randall Bill Bacon Jane Posey Erin Morrow Andrew Austin Charlene Howard John Swanson