

**NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD**

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**MINUTES OF THE  
TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD  
July 22, 2015**

Members and Alternates Present

Rick Canizales, Prince William County DOT  
James Davenport, Prince William County  
Allison Davis, WMATA  
Marc Elrich, Montgomery County  
Kimberly Fogle, Fauquier County  
Seth Grimes, City of Takoma Park  
Don Halligan, MDOT  
Rene'e N. Hamilton, VDOT  
Neil Harris, Gaithersburg City Council  
Konrad Herling, City of Greenbelt  
Cathy Hudgins, Fairfax County  
John D. Jenkins, Prince William County  
Shyam Kannan, WMATA  
Christopher Lawson, FHWA - DC  
Tim Lovain, City of Alexandria  
Dan Malouff, Arlington County  
Phil Mendelson, DC Council  
Tomika Monterville, Prince George's County  
Bridget Donnell Newton, City of Rockville  
Mark Rawlings, DC DOT  
Kelly Russell, City of Frederick  
Eric Shaw, DC Office of Planning  
Elissa Silverman, DC Council  
Linda Smyth, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors  
Tammy Stidham, NPS  
Jonathan Way, Manassas City  
Victor Weissberg, Prince George's County/DPW&T  
Scott York, Loudoun County  
Sam Zimbabwe, DDOT

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MWCOG Staff and Others Present

Robert Griffiths  
Andrew Meese  
Eric Randall  
Rich Roisman  
John Swanson  
Ron Milone  
Daivamani Sivasailam  
Mark Moran  
Erin Morrow  
Dusan Vuksan  
Eulalie Gower-Lucas  
Douglas Franklin  
Dan Sonenklar  
Michael Farrell  
Andrew Austin  
Ben Hampton  
Bryan Hayes  
Sergio Ritacco  
Lamont Cobb  
Jon Schermann  
Debbie Leigh  
Deborah Etheridge  
Steve Kania                   COG/OPA  
Megan Goodman            COG/OPA  
Bill Orleans                 Resident  
Ian Bean                     MDOT  
John Thomas                Montgomery County DOT  
Gregory Matlesky            Chairman Mendelson  
Faramarz Mokhtari         Prince George's M-NCPPC  
Mike Lake                  Fairfax County DOT  
David Koch                 NVTC  
Jasmine Cummings         Goldblatt Martin Dozen LLP  
Norman Whitaker            VDOT-NOVA  
Jim Miller                  Georgetown University  
Sonya Breehey              VA Resident/CLI Participant  
Patrick Durany              Supervisor Jenkins' Office/PWC  
Mary Chen                  DC RPTAC/TPB CLI  
Erich Kolig                 MTA/MARC  
Doug Allen                  VRE  
Robert Giorgio              AMTRAK  
R. Earl Lewis, Jr.         MTA/RESF-1

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## **1. Public Comment on TPB Procedures and Activities**

There were no speakers present to give comments.

## **2. Approval of Minutes of June 16 Meeting**

A motion was made to approve the minutes of the June TPB meeting. The motion was seconded and was approved unanimously.

## **3. Report of the Technical Committee**

Mr. Rawlings reported that the TPB Technical Committee met on July 10. The committee was briefed on the following: funding recommendations for the FY 2016 Transportation/Land-Use Connections Program; funding recommendations for the FY 2016 Transportation Alternatives Program in Maryland; the Regional Car-Free Day to be held September 22; the federal certification review of the metropolitan transportation planning process for the TPB; a presentation on passenger rail safety initiatives in the region; a presentation on implementation of the TPB's \$58 million TIGER grant; the first draft of the update to the regional freight plan; the work of the multi-sector working group on greenhouse gas emissions reductions; a status report on the development of a regional list of unfunded projects; and highlights of the annual transit form for private providers of public transportation.

Mr. Mendelson requested that the board receiving a briefing on the regional freight plan.

Mr. Griffiths said that staff would provide a briefing in October.

## **4. Report of the Citizens Advisory Committee**

Mr. Summersgill reported that the Citizens Advisory Committee met on July 16. TPB staff briefed the committee on the TLC program, the TAP program, and the Improving Transit Access at Opportune Rail Stations project. The committee also received briefings on the TPB agenda, and convened its subcommittees for small working sessions.

## **5. Report of Steering Committee**

Mr. Griffiths reported that the Steering Committee met on July 10. The committee approved the following amendments to the FY 2015- 2020 TIP:

- Resolution SR1-2016, requested by Maryland, which included an update to the I-495/I-270 spur highway reconstruction, \$52 million in additional funds for the I-270 interchange project, and a shift in funding for the MD-4 interchange at Suitland Parkway.
- Resolution SR2-2016, requested by Virginia, which included an additional \$10 million in funding for the Richmond Highway multimodal improvements, and an additional \$500,000 for the Claremont Avenue connector projects.

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- Resolution SR3-2016, requested by Maryland, which included \$100,000 in funding for standard details and drawings for low-cost bridge and culvert projects.

Mr. Griffiths referenced letters sent/received. These letters include two joint letters from the Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration, one regarding the certification of the MPO's planning process and another approving the Unified Planning Work Program for FY 2016 as adopted by the TPB in March. Another letter was sent from WMATA that committed \$150,000 in funding for the 2016 Street Smart campaign. Two letters were received in regards to the agenda item on passenger rail safety—one from Norfolk Southern on their emergency preparedness and positive train control efforts in the National Capital Region, and one from CSX on their emergency preparedness and positive train control efforts in the National Capital Region. A letter was received from the Federal Highway Administration documenting that the TPB included a 2008 non-attainment area of Culvert County in the region's Air Quality Conformity Analysis.

Mr. Griffiths said that the D.C. Office of Planning sent a letter that made suggestions on how the TPB could enhance the environmental justice analysis of the CLRP and TIP. He added that the federal certification made similar recommendations that could strengthen environmental justice analysis in the future. He also said that staff had already begun work on the environmental justice analysis, and will start conducting best practices research which will include reaching out to other MPOs and doing an initial analysis of the technical methods and data and costs. He said that staff will also consult stakeholders including state departments of transportation, WMATA, and the D.C. Office of Planning on new methods to improve the analysis. Staff will brief the TPB on the environmental justice analysis at a future meeting.

Mr. Griffiths also called attention to the memoranda: one from Nick Ramfos on the results of the 2015 Commuter Connections employee recognition awards; another from Eric Randall that updated the Board on follow-up activities related to the January 12 Metrorail L'Enfant Plaza smoke incident; and one from Kanti Srikanth with staff recommendations for the establishment of the Unfunded Capital Needs Working Group. In this last memorandum, Mr. Srikanth recommended that Bridget Newton and that Johnathan Way serve as the vice-chair chair the group. Members would include state transportation agencies, public transportation agencies, WMATA, the chairs or a designee from the Citizens Advisory Committee, representatives of all TPB member jurisdictions, and TPB Staff.

Chairman Mendelson appointed Ms. Newton as chairman and Mr. Way as vice-chairman of the Unfunded Capital Needs Working Group. He clarified that he also approved the other staff recommendations included in Mr. Srikanth's memorandum.

Mr. Shaw noted that the letter from the DC Office of Planning mentioned both transit equity and environmental justice. He requested that TPB staff also consider transit equity planning in that review.

## **6. Chairman's Remarks**

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Mr. Mendelson noted that the Board would receive information on WMATA activities in September. He also acknowledged members of the June 2015 Community Leadership Institute (CLI) in attendance at the meeting.

Ms. Breehey, a resident of Falls Church, expressed her enthusiasm in the CLI Program as a recent participant. She mentioned the program helped give clarity and structure to the regional policy process and showed that community leaders can be involved in the decision-making process. She commented on the lessons and activities of the program and thanked the Board for offering the program to help give community leaders a better understanding of the process and be more effective within it.

Mr. Mendelson thanked Ms. Breehey and handed out certificates to the CLI participants in attendance.

## **ACTION ITEMS**

### **7. Approval of Technical Assistance Recipients Under the FY 2016 Transportation/Land-Use Connections (TLC) Program**

Referring to the mailout material, Mr. Swanson briefed the Board on the projects recommended to receive funding in FY 2016 for the Transportation/Land Use Connections (TLC) program. He described the origin and history of the program. He described this year's solicitation and project selection process, including a description of selection criteria and the selection panel.

Mr. Swanson briefly described each of the nine recommended projects: Arlington County, Low Stress Bicycle Network Mapping (\$45,000); District of Columbia, K Street/Water Street Bikeway and Pedestrian Connectivity Enhancements (\$60,000); College Park, Citywide Bicycle Boulevards (\$30,000); Fairfax County, Parking Demand and Trip Generation in Multifamily Developments (\$60,000); Fairfax County, Vienna Metrorail Station Area Bicycle Improvements (\$45,000); Gaithersburg, Improving Access to Transit (\$30,000); Prince George's County, Central Avenue Connector Trail 30% Design (\$80,000); Prince William County, Safety and Connectivity in a Planned Community (\$30,000); Takoma Park, Parking Takoma Park (\$40,000). In summary, he noted that total funding for the program in FY 2016 is \$420,000, with \$260,000 coming from the TPB's general Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and \$160,000 from the UPWP account that is set aside for technical assistance in Maryland.

Chairman Mendelson clarified that the Board was being asked to approve the recommendations, but there was no resolution included in the action.

Mr. Griffiths reiterated that there are two sources of funding for this program— general UPWP funding and Maryland technical assistance funding in the UPWP. He said that in the past, because there was additional funding for projects in Maryland, the TPB received more applications from

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Maryland jurisdictions because there was more money to support them. However, he said that as this program has grown in popularity, more competitive applications have come from the District of Columbia and Virginia jurisdictions, so that in terms of funding from the basic UPWP, more projects from the District of Columbia and Virginia were proposed for funding this year than in past years. He said that staff intends to revise the program in the coming year to establish a more equitable distribution of the funding of the projects based on the contributions through the technical assistance program. He said that staff would be working with MDOT and the Maryland agencies to accomplish that. He asked Board member Halligan if he would like a chance to comment.

Mr. Halligan said that Mr. Griffiths had articulated Maryland's concern well. He said that Maryland is happy to support the program and was not concerned with the projects themselves. However, he said he understood that the process this year was abbreviated. He said he understood that in years past, the process had included more iteration between the solicitation and the selection of the projects. He said he looked forward to working more closely with staff and jurisdiction staff to enhance the process in the future.

Mr. Mendelson said the minutes would reflect Mr. Halligan's concerns.

A motion was made to approve the TLC projects recommended for funding in FY 2016. The motion was seconded and was passed unanimously.

#### **8. Approval of Projects for Funding under the MAP-21 Transportation Alternatives Programs for FY 2016 in Maryland**

Mr. Cobb briefed the panel on the funding recommendations for the FY 2016 Transportation Alternatives Program for TPB jurisdictions in Maryland. He outlined the federal legislation behind the program, described the review criteria, and the schedule for project selection. The TPB works with the Maryland State Highway Administration to administer the process. The selection committee included members of VDOT, DDOT and COG staff. Seven projects were funded in five Maryland jurisdictions for \$3,228,958. The mailout memorandum provided details on the projects: City of College Park, Hollywood Road Sidewalks (Safe Routes to School) (\$36,000); Frederick County, Mount St. Mary's-Emmitsburg Multi-Use Path (\$128,839); Frederick County, East Lincoln Ave Sidewalks (Safe Routes to School) (\$46,000); Montgomery County, North Branch Hiker-Biker Trail (\$2,000,000); Montgomery County, MD 355-Clarksburg Shared Use Path (\$523,416); City of Rockville, Falls Road East Shared-Use Path (\$99,703); City of Takoma Park, Lincoln Ave Sidewalks (Safe Routes to School) (\$395,000).

A motion to approve the recommended projects for the FY 2016 Maryland TAP program was seconded and was approved unanimously.

#### **9. Approval of Regional Car Free Day 2015 Proclamation**

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Mr. Ramfos briefed the Board on the 2015 Regional Car Free Day and asked members of the TPB to help raise awareness for the event. Referring to his presentation, he said that although cities across the planet have been holding Car Free Day since 2000, the Washington region's first car free event occurred in 2007. He said that organizers will use social media such as Facebook, Twitter, together with some traditional marketing to raise awareness and encourage people to pledge to go "car free" or "car-lite" at [www.carefreemetrodc.org](http://www.carefreemetrodc.org). The goal is to get 10,000 pledges.

Mr. Herling suggested that public access television be utilized to raise awareness about Car Free Day.

Mr. Ramfos said that he would work with the COG Office of Communications to explore this possibility.

A motion was made to approve the Regional Car Free Day 2015 Proclamation. That motion was seconded and was approved unanimously.

## **INFORMATION ITEMS**

### **10. Briefing on the Transportation Planning Certification Review of the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Process for the Washington, DC-VA-MD Transportation Management Area**

Mr. Lawson, the Federal Highway Administration's District of Columbia Division Office Division Administrator, briefed the Board on the report of the Federal Certification Review. He thanked federal agency staff and the TPB staff for their work on this review. He said that every four years the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration must jointly certify the adequacy of the transportation planning process in the designated transportation management areas. He said the final certification report was transmitted to the Board on June 8, 2015. He said the report found the TPB's transportation planning process to be in compliance and has been certified as meeting all applicable federal laws, regulations, and policy requirements. He said there were no corrective actions.

Mr. Lawson said the report included commendations and recommendations. He briefly summarized the report's commendations, which included the performance analysis of the region's Constrained Long-Range Plan (CLRP), the development of the Regional Transportation Priorities Plan, the Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, the Congestion Management Process, and the public involvement evaluation work of the Fredericksburg Metropolitan Planning Organization, which was included in the federal agencies' review of the TPB. He said he viewed the federal agencies as partners in the region's planning process and he thanked the TPB and staff for their work.

Mr. Shaw noted that the District of Columbia Office of Planning had sent a letter to TPB staff seeking enhanced analysis related to environmental justice and equity. He asked if the federal agencies might provide technical assistance or support regarding this request.

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Mr. Lawson said that FHWA staff would be available to provide technical assistance with environmental justice matters.

### **11. Briefing on National Capital Region Passenger Rail Safety and Preparedness Initiatives**

Mr. Mendelson said that he had requested that passenger rail agencies provided presentations to the TPB describing how the National Capital Region would respond to an emergency like the May 2015 train derailment north of Philadelphia. This panel of regional rail passenger providers had been convened to brief the TPB on positive train control, travel contingencies, and related issues. He said that first responders might speak at a future meeting.

Mr. Meese said that Norfolk Southern and CSX were not able to come to the meeting, but each of the freight rail operators sent a letter to the Board. He said that the panel includes representatives from MARC, VRE, and Amtrak. He referred to his memorandum and said that it covers more information than could be included during this panel discussion.

Mr. Meese referred to his presentation as he described the passenger rail services in the Washington region. He said that Amtrak, MARC, and VRE all operate trains in the area. He added that Amtrak, Norfolk Southern, and CSX own the tracks on which these passenger trains operate. He said that the panelists will discuss their rail line's experience with installation of positive train control (PTC), which brings together different technologies to automatically stop or slow a train before accidents occur. He said that the Rail Safety Improvement Act (RSIA) of 2008 called for the implementation of PTC by 2015. He said that there are two standards for PTC—one is called ACSES II and the other I-ETMS—and that different railroads are choosing different systems based on their own operating characteristics, and that some will need to build systems that are compatible with both.

Mr. Kolig, of the Maryland Transit Administration and MARC, referred to his presentation as he described the three train lines that MARC runs in Maryland, West Virginia, and the District of Columbia. He said that MARC is a tenant railroad, which means that they do not operate tracks, so that they only have to install the equipment on trains and not the tracks. He said that MARC trains operate on Amtrak and CSX tracks. He said that MARC would meet the mandate to have equipment in place by the end of 2015. He added that MARC has a number of other safety features in place. Those features include speed restrictions and train-to-train restrictive operating systems, and a dead-man switch that will stop a train if the conductor does not respond to a signal. He said that MARC has implemented many lessons learned from a 1996 Silver Spring accident that include on-board safety equipment as well as system-wide emergency procedures and response plans. He said that MARC conducts random testing and monitors conditions from the MARC operations center. He said that contingency plans for loss of service include honoring tickets on WMATA and other forms of transportation.

Mr. Allen, from Virginia Railway Express (VRE), referred to his presentation as he described the two rail lines that VRE operates. He said that the lines are tenants on Norfolk Southern tracks. He



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said that VRE has similar safety features to MARC. He said that VRE tests train crews regularly on procedures and operating rules. He said that if there is an incident, VRE will communicate with the host railroad and other providers from their communications center, while arranging bus transit to cover the lapse in service. He said that VRE also conducts regular training sessions with jurisdictions, and holds an annual large disaster drill. He said that VRE would have all the required PTC equipment installed by the end of 2015. He said that CSX and Norfolk Southern, which operate tracks, are installing the trackside components of PTC. He said that they would not be done with the installation by the end of the year.

Mr. Giorgio, with Amtrak, said that Amtrak seeks to provide for the safety and security of customers and employees by hosting multi-hazard planning with jurisdiction partners and through emergency preparedness and protection activities with staff and host railroads. Amtrak employs regional emergency managers who are tasked with building relationships with state, local, and federal partners to ensure smooth emergency response operations. He said that Amtrak provides emergency response training to help first responders develop their skill set so they are prepared to intervene in a train accident. He said that Amtrak manages active and immediate communications with partners to solve problems as they arrive from their 24-hour operation center.

Mr. Lewis, chair of COG's Emergency Transportation Committee, said that each of the commuter rail lines is responsible for having an up-to-date emergency preparedness plan that is capable of responding to all hazardous situations. He said that commuter rail providers work with their host networks to develop these plans.

Ms. Silverman asked if CSX was installing the wayside PTC equipment that would work with MARC trains.

Mr. Kolig said that both Amtrak and CSX are both required to install PTC systems.

Ms. Silverman asked about the status of the Amtrak's wayside PTC installation.

Mr. Giorgio said that Amtrak would be compliant by the end of the year.

Ms. Silverman asked how Amtrak coordinates with regional transportation providers in the case of an accident.

Mr. Giorgio said that the communications work occurs at Amtrak's Consolidated National Operations Center in Wilmington. He said that from there, Amtrak could host conference calls with participants from every department within Amtrak and with partner agencies. He said that Amtrak passenger services also notifies passengers of delays and alternate travel modes.

Ms. Silverman asked what improvements Amtrak is going to make following the Philadelphia train derailment.

Mr. Giorgio said that the Philadelphia incident is currently being analyzed and that results are not

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ready.

Ms. Silverman asked about the role that the COG Emergency Transportation Committee play in regional coordination.

Mr. Lewis said that the committee is a forum where transit agencies and transportation-related entities can discuss issues that can benefit the region. He said that the committees is not involved in immediate emergency communications.

Ms. Silverman asked if there is a regional coordinating entity.

Mr. Lewis said that rail providers in the region operate according to the National Incident Management System Incident Command System. In the case of an emergency in the Washington region, incident response will be managed by the fire department that operates in the jurisdiction in which the accident occurred. The fire department would coordinate response and collaborate with the train operator and the host railroad as well as local governments to resolve the issue safely and provide transportation options to keep people moving.

Ms. Silverman asked about the interoperability between different jurisdictions and emergency responders in the region.

Mr. Lewis said that the rail passenger providers in the area conduct full-scale exercises to test system and emergency response.

Mr. Freudberg said the region held a mass casualty training exercise in June. He added that all emergency radio communication in the region is interoperable. He said that the D.C. Homeland Security has a 24/7 operations that tracks emergencies in the area.

Mr. Way observed that he understood the host railroads in the region will not be able to comply with RSIA's requirement to have wayside PTC installed by the end of 2015. He suggested that the TPB ask Congress to extend the deadline.

Mr. Mendelson asked that TPB staff look into Mr. Way's suggestion.

Mr. Allen said that there is an active effort to encourage the Virginia delegation to Congress to extend the PTC deadline. He said that VRE feels that a one- or three-year delay is necessary.

Mr. Mendelson asked why it is important that the deadline be extended.

Mr. Allen said that if the deadline is not extended, VRE would not be permitted to operate because their host networks will not have PTC installed.

Mr. Mendelson asked if Amtrak would be compliant.

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Mr. Giorgio said that Amtrak would be compliant on the northeast corridor.

Mr. Mendelson asked if MARC would be compliant.

Mr. Kolig said that MARC would have installed PTC on all its trains by the end of the year, but that MARC would be required to cease operations because the host rails run by CSX will not have PTC installed on time.

Mr. Mendelson asked why it is taking host railroads so long to install PTC.

Mr. Allen said that there are several reasons, including: there has been issues with acquiring the necessary radio spectrum; it took longer than anticipated to develop the PTC technology which did not exist when the law was passed; and that the host networks are so large that it is taking longer than anticipated to install the technology.

Mr. Mendelson asked if a three-year extension would be sufficient.

Mr. Allen said that VRE only needs two years, but other regions in the country may need more time.

Mr. Mendelson said that it seems like the technology is good, but that the Congressional mandate got ahead of itself.

Mr. Allen said that the technology is good, and that host railroads just need a little more time.

Mr. Mendelson asked about what happens when rail traffic is shut down in the region.

Mr. Kolig said that the host railroad would lead the investigation and plan operations.

Mr. Mendelson asked if MARC has bus service if the rail cannot operation.

Mr. Kolig said that there is commuter bus service, but that it could not replace all the trips lost in the case of a rail closure.

Mr. Giorgio said that the bus bridge is the most common strategy for continuing service during a shutdown.

## **12. Briefing on the Implementation of the TPB Regional Priority Bus Project under the Transportation Investments Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) Program**

Mr. Randall briefed the Board on the Implementation of the Regional Priority Bus Project, funded by a \$48.8 million TIGER grant that the TPB received in 2010. He stated that there are 16 project components currently in implementation by five state and local agencies, with TPB staff assisting with project coordination and federal reporting. He said that almost half the money has been

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expended, though there are several million dollars of pending invoices that are being processed. He said that completed phases of projects include the purchase of buses for PRTC; the Alexandria Transitway; minor bus stop improvements along corridors in the District and at Metro stations in Maryland; an uninterrupted power supply for traffic signals in the District; and signal optimization in the downtown core. He said that the following projects are nearing completion: real-time passenger information displays in the District, Maryland, and Virginia; a system employed by PRTC so that customers know where busses are and when they are expected to arrive. He said that construction on a bus-only lane on Georgia Avenue in the District should be completed by May. He said that the Takoma Langley transit center is making progress, with the steel structure completed in July. He said that signal priority testing is expected to begin on Virginia 7 Leesburg Pike. Eventually, this will also be installed on U.S. 1 in Maryland and corridors in the District. He said that construction work has begun at the Pentagon transit center. He added that it may not be possible to install some of the proposed bus bays at the Pentagon, and that conversations are underway about how to reallocate the money set aside for that project. He said that the next update on TIGER would be delivered as a memorandum to the TPB at the September meeting.

## **OTHER ITEMS**

### **13. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 2:00 p.m.