



MEETING FINE PARTICLE POLLUTION STANDARDS

At its meeting on March 21, the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB) continued its review of the proposed request by the Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee (MWAQC) to EPA for redesignation of the Washington non-attainment area to attainment status for fine particle pollution (PM 2.5), along with a Maintenance Plan demonstrating compliance with PM 2.5 standards through 2025.

After a briefing and a lengthy discussion, the TPB voted to send a letter to MWAQC supporting the development and submission of the PM 2.5 redesigna-

tion request and Maintenance Plan. However, the TPB's letter notes that there are significant uncertainties in 2017 and 2025 motor vehicle emissions projections due to potential future changes in the age and composition of the vehicle fleet and possible revisions to EPA's emissions estimation model. In its letter, the TPB recommends that safety margins of 20 percent of the 2017 inventory levels and 30 percent of the 2025 inventory levels be included in the budgets for both precursor NOx and primary PM 2.5. The letter states that the recommended safety margins can be included in the plan while still ensuring maintenance of the PM 2.5

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TPB APPROVES FY 2013 WORK PROGRAMS

On March 21, the TPB approved two critical work programs for fiscal year 2013 – the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), which defines the work conducted by transportation planning staff at COG, and the Commuter Connections Work Program, which outlines and funds the work efforts through the Commuter Connections Program.

Ron Kirby, Director of Transportation Planning at COG, said that the FY 2013 UPWP is built upon a flatline placeholder budget. He said that the TPB may not know the final federal funding level until after the federal fiscal year 2012 has concluded in October of 2012. He said it is likely that the TPB will be asked to review the FY 2013 UPWP again once those figures are known.

David Snyder of the City of Falls Church spoke to the \$1.3 million allocated for Coordination and Programs in the UPWP, noting that "it's the smallest portion of the budget..., but it's literally where the rubber meets the road in terms of the things that our constituents see related to better service...and these programs should not be cut." Kirby noted that the budget for programs within this element has been growing over the past decade, in part because federal planning funds have increased under the SAFETEA-LU legislation. He added that he believed the TPB will be fortunate to maintain a flat-line budget and it may have to discuss some cuts in the fall should the anticipated funding be reduced.

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Upcoming meetings and items of interest:

TPB Meeting, April 18

- Approval of Regional Bike to Work Day 2012 Proclamation
- Briefing on Comments Received and Proposed Responses for Revising the Regional Complete Streets Guidance and Policy Template

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SPRING STREET SMART CAMPAIGN UNDERWAY

The TPB's Spring 2012 Street Smart pedestrian and bicyclist safety campaign kicked off March 18 and will run through April 14.

The multi-jurisdictional effort aims to educate motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists about the region's traffic safety laws. The campaign uses a variety of mass

media outlets—including radio and television, the Internet, and outdoor advertising—to communicate with its target audience. It also calls on local law enforcement to increase enforcement of safety laws, especially in areas with higher-than-normal accident rates.

At a media event on March 28 in District Heights, Maryland, numerous Prince George's County police and emergency response officials were on hand to promote Street Smart and to participate in "live enforcement" of local traffic safety laws.



TPB Chair Todd Turner of the City of Bowie spoke at the Street Smart kickoff media event on March 28. He was joined by numerous police and emergency response officials in promoting the campaign.

Since it began in 2002, Street Smart has relied mostly on federal funds made available through various state agencies interested in promoting bicycle and pedestrian safety. Several local jurisdictions have also supported the campaign on a voluntary, although sometimes inconsistent, basis. Recently, the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments voted to establish a dedicated funding source for Street Smart beginning in 2013 by including funding for the program as part of the annual dues paid by its member jurisdictions. ♦

TPB terminology

AFA	Access for All Advisory Committee
ARRA	American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009
CAC	Citizens Advisory Committee
CLRP	Constrained Long-Range Transportation Plan
COG	Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
DDOT	District Department of Transportation
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
MDOT	Maryland Department of Transportation
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization
NVTA	Northern Virginia Transportation Authority
TIP	Transportation Improvement Program
TPB	Transportation Planning Board
VDOT	Virginia Department of Transportation
WMATA	Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

Bids and Solicitations

For current COG solicitations available for bids and proposals, please visit "Doing Business with COG:" www.mwcog.org/doingbusiness/cogbid/

COMPLETE STREETS GUIDANCE AND POLICY TEMPLATE

The TPB held a work session prior to its March 21 meeting to review the draft Complete Streets Guidance and Policy Template for the National Capital Region compiled by staff. During the work session, TPB staff and representatives of Arlington County and the District Department of Transportation (DDOT) presented Complete Streets concepts, work on Complete Streets taking place across the nation, existing policies in the Washington Region, and the development of a regional Complete Streets template.

In summarizing the work session for his fellow members, Chair Turner told the TPB that the TPB's Complete Streets Template "would not be a mandated policy to the local jurisdiction, but rather a guide. It would be an opportunity for the TPB to establish a tool for evaluating some of the projects that may come through in the future as part of the TIP and CLRP process."

Harriet Tregoning of the District of Columbia Office of Planning asked why the TPB is proposing a template and not an actual policy, noting that the TPB Citizens Advisory Committee had requested a regional policy and not a template for a policy.

Ron Kirby said that "policies have to be adopted at the local level." He added that the TPB has tried to develop "a template that we hope individual state and local agencies will use in developing their own policies."

Catherine Hudgins of Fairfax County said she believes that "a policy makes a lot more sense than a template." She added that adopting a policy "does not mean that the TPB will contradict or reject projects, but it better affirms the fact that localities are putting in place something that really is going to be meaningful for them by which to judge projects."

Chris Zimmerman of Arlington County spoke to the utility of having a regional policy from the perspective of soliciting compelling projects for inclusion in regional transportation planning documents. He said he would like to see "something that at the very least is an endorsed best practice, something that can be pointed to by project sponsors...when demonstrating that they have planned their projects in accordance with a policy's guidance."

David Snyder of Falls Church added that if the TPB decides to move towards adopting a policy over a template, it needs to ensure flexibility for local jurisdictions within the established guidelines. He said that "if we're going to talk about policy, I think we need to make clear that not every street needs to have everything the same way."

Chair Turner said the TPB will review a revised draft of the Complete Streets document at its April meeting and continue the discussion on the content of the document. ♦

UPCOMING APRIL AGENDA ITEMS

The TPB's April 18 agenda is expected to include the following items:

- Approval of Regional Bike to Work Day 2012 Proclamation.
- Briefing on Comments Received and Proposed Responses for Revising the Regional Complete Streets Guidance and Policy Template.
- Briefing on Household Travel Characteristics and Behavior in Six Focused Geographic Subareas of the Region.

- Briefing on the Results of the Recently Completed Projects under the Continuous Airport Systems Planning (CASP) Program.
- Update on Reauthorization of Federal Surface Transportation Legislation.

Information and materials for the monthly TPB meeting are posted on the TPB website one week prior to the meeting: www.mwcog.org/transportation/tpb. ♦

FY 2013 WORK PROGRAMS

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During the public comment period, Stewart Schwartz of the Coalition for Smarter Growth suggested that the TPB amend the UPWP to “sponsor a study of a transit link at the American Legion Bridge connecting Montgomery County and Fairfax County’s major job centers, as well as a transit connection between the Red Line and the Orange/Silver Line.” He referenced the 2005 Origin and Destination Study as an impetus for the need for this type of connection.

Linda Smyth of Fairfax County said that “Montgomery County and Fairfax County might be interested in the suggestion about

that transit study linking Tysons Corner and Montgomery County, including White Flint and Bethesda. Certainly it really could have some benefits to that corridor, and perhaps even build on the HOT lanes project that ends just north of Tysons.”

Kirby responded to this suggestion by proposing that TPB staff review Schwartz’s request, discuss the concept with agency partners, and develop a response to the TPB for next month. He referred to the earlier point that the TPB will likely amend the UPWP in the fall given the final federal funding amount and suggested that might be the appropriate time to address this item. ♦

FY 2012 TPB TIGER APPLICATION UPDATE

On March 15, the TPB submitted an application to the US Department of Transportation (USDOT) for funding under the FY 2012 TIGER Discretionary Grant Program (see the February issue of TPB News for detailed project information).

The overall cost of the TPB’s proposal is \$32.1 million. The TPB is seeking \$19.9 million in federal TIGER funding, with the remaining \$12.2 million coming from local, state, and developer match. Following publication of the slate of project components in the February issue of TPB News, the Maryland Department of Transportation and Montgomery County increased the match for the Forest Glen project, the largest project in the TPB’s application. These \$1.3 million and \$700,000 contributions, respectively, helped the TPB reduce the request for federal funding to less than the \$20 million maximum grant provided in the FY 2011 TIGER awards.

The proposal has received several high-profile endorsements, including Maryland Governor Martin O’Malley, Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) General Manager Richard Sarles,

and a joint letter of endorsement from members of the region’s congressional delegation: Gerald Connolly (VA-11), Donna Edwards (MD-4), Jim Moran (VA-8), Eleanor Holmes Norton (DC-At Large), and Chris Van Hollen (MD-8).

The proposed project seeks to support high-density, mixed-use development around underutilized station areas in the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia by making it easier for people to access rail stations by bicycling and walking. ♦

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FINE PARTICLE POLLUTION

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standards for the region. Safety margins are explicitly defined and provided for in EPA's Conformity Regulations, and the use of safety margins is common practice in maintenance plans approved by EPA.

TPB members discussed the need for safety margins for motor vehicle emissions, and if the 20 and 30 percent margins proposed by staff were necessary. TPB staff explained that while hypothetically a lower safety margin could be acceptable, staff used the example of the aging of the vehicle fleet to show that we could need a margin in the range of 20 percent.

Sam Zimbabwe of the District Department of Transportation said he "recognizes the need for some safety margins to deal with the uncertainty, but I'm uncomfortable with the idea that they need to be this great." He suggested removing the precise safety margins and working with MWAQC and other stakeholders to set more appropriate levels. The TPB voted against removal of the precise safety margins from the letter.

Ron Kirby of TPB staff highlighted several key issues supporting the need for emissions safety margins. The motor vehicle fleet emissions estimates assume a certain rate for vehicle turnover, which provides for a decline in emissions due to cleaner vehicle technologies coming into the fleet. However, if the fleet does not turn over as quickly as anticipated, the emissions will not decline at the projected rate. Kirby also said that the "inventories include assumptions about major transit investments in this region occurring and opening for customers on certain dates. For example, the second phase of the Dulles

Rail extension is currently scheduled to be open in 2016. That is a critical assumption impacting the emissions estimates for 2017. If the project is delayed and extension is not going to be open until 2018 or 2019, then the 2017 emissions are going to be higher than projected." He said this is also the case for a number of other transit projects around the region, which are assumed to contribute to a reduction in motor vehicle emissions based on currently projected completion dates. The Maintenance Plan must be built on current projections and the adopted 2011 CLRP, and the region will be held firmly to those emissions projections unless safety margins are included.

Gary Erenrich of Montgomery County took this idea a step further and discussed the impacts of not meeting the estimated levels outlined in the Maintenance Plan. He reminded the TPB that all regionally significant transportation highway and transit projects would be brought to a halt if the region fails to meet the levels approved by EPA in the region's Maintenance Plan.

Lyn Erickson of the Maryland Department of Transportation acknowledged that both perspectives have legitimate concerns. She suggested adding an amendment to the letter that would indicate the TPB is willing to continue discussion on the safety margin levels. Erickson's amendment, which was added to the motion, stated "Be assured [the TPB] would be happy to participate in further discussions to reach the most appropriate resolution for this region."

The TPB approved sending the letter to MWAQC with the inclusion of Erickson's amendment. ♦

OTHER MARCH AGENDA ITEMS

The TPB's March 21 meeting also included the following items:

- Approval of Amendments to the FY 2012 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), and Approval of FY 2012 UPWP Carryover Funding to FY 2013.
- Update on Reauthorization of Federal Surface Transportation Legislation.

Information and materials for the monthly TPB meeting

are posted on the TPB website one week prior to the meeting: www.mwcog.org/transportation/tpb. ♦

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

All meetings are at COG unless otherwise indicated. If you are in need of special assistance to participate in meetings, please call (202) 962-3315 or (202) 962-3213 (TDD). Bicycle racks are located in the parking garage at 777 N. Capitol St., N.E. (Enter from 1st St., N.E.).

April 2012

- 6 TPB Technical Committee (9 am)
- 6 TPB Steering Committee (noon)
- 10 Management, Operations and Intelligent Transportation Systems (MOITS) Policy Task Force and Technical Subcommittee Joint Meeting (12:30 pm)
- 12 TPB Citizens Advisory Committee (6 pm)
- 17 Employer Outreach Committee (10 am)
- 18 Transportation Planning Board (noon)**
- 24 Regional Bus Subcommittee (noon)
- 26 TPB Access for All (AFA) Advisory Committee (noon)

May 2012

- 4 TPB Technical Committee (9 am)
- 4 TPB Steering Committee (noon)
- 8 Management, Operations and Intelligent Transportation Systems (MOITS) Policy Task Force and Technical Subcommittee Joint Meeting (12:30 pm)
- 9 Bike to Work Day Steering Committee (10 am)
- 9 Car Free Day Steering Committee (11:30 am)
- 10 Freight Subcommittee (1 pm)
- 10 TPB Citizens Advisory Committee (6 pm)
- 15 Commuter Connections Subcommittee (noon)
- 15 Bicycle & Pedestrian Subcommittee (1 pm)
- 16 Transportation Planning Board (noon)**
- 18 Bike to Work Day
- 18 Travel Forecasting Subcommittee (9:30 am)
- 22 Annual Transit Forum (11 am)
- 24 Aviation Technical Subcommittee (10:30 am)

June 2012

- 1 TPB Technical Committee (9 am)
- 1 TPB Steering Committee (noon)
- 12 Management, Operations and Intelligent Transportation Systems (MOITS) Policy Task Force and Technical Subcommittee Joint Meeting (12:30 pm)
- 14 TPB Citizens Advisory Committee (6 pm)
- 19 Commuter Connections Ridematching Committee (10 am)
- 19 Regional TDM Marketing Group (noon)
- 20 Transportation Planning Board (noon)**
- 26 Regional Bus Subcommittee (noon)

Dates and times subject to change.
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for up-to-date information.

This document is available in alternative formats upon request. Please contact Sarah Crawford at (202) 962-3237, scrawford@mwcog.org, or (202) 962-3213 (TDD). Allow seven working days for preparation of material.

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