



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** TPB Technical Committee  
**FROM:** John Swanson, TPB Transportation Planner  
Nicole McCall, TPB Transportation Planner  
**SUBJECT:** Proposed approach for developing a list of walk-bike access priority station areas  
**DATE:** December 28, 2018

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## OVERVIEW

This memorandum describes a proposed process that TPB staff will use to identify a limited list of transit station areas that will be regionally prioritized for pedestrian and bicycle investments. These locations will be places with significant opportunity to improve walk and bike access to transit. This work activity is being undertaken to advance the TPB's aspirational initiatives and in response to TPB's directive noted in Resolution R10-2019, which is described below.

The product of this effort will be a list of station areas that the TPB expects will receive priority consideration for funding by its member jurisdictions and agencies. In addition, projects at these stations areas will receive priority consideration for funding through the Transportation Land-Use Connections (TLC) Program, grant funding from the Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program (TAP), and other potential regionally-oriented funding programs and opportunities.

## PURPOSE

Out of a long list of transit stations in the region, the TPB has determined that it will be helpful to identify a focused list of transit station areas where pedestrian and bicycle improvements could have a particularly significant impact and therefore should be prioritized. These are places where critical gaps currently exist and opportunities to increase walking and biking are significant. New pedestrian and bicycle facilities are particularly key for providing first- and last-mile connections with high-capacity transit.

Broadly, the list of walk-bike access priority station areas will be used to support the implementation of the TPB's station access initiative, which is described below. More specifically, the TPB will use this list as a tool for project selection for TLC and TAP funding. In the future, it may also be used as the basis for pursuing funding at the regional level, perhaps through a federal TIGER grant application or some other opportunity. Most fundamentally, local jurisdictions and the states will be encouraged to use the priority designations to support efforts to seek funding in capital programs and/or from developers or other sources.

## BACKGROUND

The TPB's seven endorsed initiatives, which are featured in the Aspirational Element of Visualize 2045, include an initiative titled "Improve Walk and Bike Access to Transit." The initiative noted that there are still too many station areas in our region where people drive to transit because walking and

biking are too time-consuming, too unpleasant, or too unsafe. Investments to remedy these conditions should be considered regionally significant because they will not simply serve local circulation needs but will also improve access to regional transit systems, including Metrorail, commuter rail, light rail, and bus rapid transit.

In the fall of 2018, as Visualize 2045 was nearing adoption, TPB Chairman Charles Allen advised staff to work with appropriate subject-matter experts to identify specific implementation actions that TPB members could take—individually and collectively—to move the aspirational initiatives forward. In response, TPB staff engaged subcommittees at the TPB and COG in discussions about how the TPB’s aspirational initiatives can be effectively pursued and implemented.

During these discussions, members of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee and TPB staff noted that the “Improve Walk and Bicycle Access to Transit” initiative was largely conceptual and did not identify specific locations associated with the initiative. They determined that the next step in moving the initiative forward should focus on providing geographic specificity to the concept. Such an effort would build upon the studies that the TPB and WMATA have conducted to promote station access.<sup>1</sup> However, rather than identifying specific pedestrian and bike projects to promote, the Subcommittee determined it would be most appropriate in this new effort to more broadly identify high-capacity station areas where such improvements could have a significant impact. Specific project identification will be left to local and state agencies.

In October, the Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee called upon the TPB to develop a limited list of transit station areas that are regionally prioritized for pedestrian and bicycle access investments. The recommendation explained: “These prioritized locations will be places where critical gaps in pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure currently exist and where demand is great for walking and biking to transit.” This recommendation was included in a memo on November 8 to the TPB that summarized the recommendations of all subcommittees regarding the seven initiatives.

On December 19, the TPB approved Resolution R10-2019 to “take action on recommended project, program, and policy ideas that would implement the TPB’s aspirational initiatives identified in its Visualize 2045 plan.”

Among other activities, the resolution directed TPB staff to:

“Identify a set of regionally prioritized high capacity transit stations where pedestrian/ bicycle access improvements have the greatest potential to utilize available capacity and increase transit ridership, by building on the previous work by the TPB and WMATA, and report on progress by end of June 2019.”

## **PROCESS**

TPB staff will develop the list of walk-bike access priority station areas in the fall of 2018 and the winter of 2019. The process will include the development and application of a methodology to select

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<sup>1</sup> The TPB’s 2015 study “Improving Bicycle and Pedestrian Access at Select Rail Stations” (funded through the federal Transportation, Community, and Systems Preservation grant program) identified station access improvements at 25 rail stations. In 2016, WMATA followed up with the “Metrorail Station Investment Strategy” which identified station access improvements for all remaining stations (91 total stations).

a draft list of stations and will be followed by targeted outreach to the TPB's member jurisdictions to ensure the list complements the jurisdictions' own policies and priorities.

## TASKS

1. **Develop and apply an initial selection methodology** (November 2018-January 2019)  
Staff will develop and apply a methodology to identify a draft list of walk-bike access priority station areas. This analytical process will seek to select locations with the greatest opportunity and need.
  - **Identify the universe of high-capacity station (HCT) areas for analysis: How many station areas are under consideration?** Staff has preliminarily determined that a total of 193 stations will serve as the starting point for analysis, based on the following baseline factors:
    - *Types of high-capacity transit:* The definition of high-capacity transit typically used by the TPB includes Metrorail, commuter rail, bus rapid transit, light rail, and streetcar lines.
    - *Cutoff year:* The analysis will consider stations that are currently built or will be in place by 2030, according to the Constrained Element of Visualize 2045.
    - *Activity Center designation:* The initial list will only include stations that are within a half mile of one of the region's 141 Activity Centers.
  - **Screen stations for locations with poor pedestrian and bicycle connectivity: Where do deficiencies currently exist?** The initial list of HCT station areas will be screened to identify those with poor intersection density. For this initial analysis, intersection density will serve as a proxy for walkability. An analysis of intersection density typically counts the number of intersections in a given area. Quite simply, a neighborhood with more intersections is generally understood to be more walkable. (The results of this analysis will be ground-checked during the outreach discussions described below to ensure the findings are consistent with reality.)
  - **Screen out stations with low population density: Where is there significant potential demand for walking and biking?** The list will then be screened to eliminate the HCT transit stations within each jurisdiction that are deemed to have low current and forecast population and employment densities. (It is important to note that this project will seek to ensure the final draft list is regionally balanced, i.e., outer jurisdictions will not be expected to have the same levels of population density as core jurisdictions to be included.)
  - **Ensure adequate inclusion of Equity Emphasis Areas: Where are vulnerable populations concentrated?** As a final step, the list will be adjusted to ensure adequate inclusion of Equity Emphasis Areas, which are home to relatively high concentrations of minority and low-income communities, which are likely more transit-dependent than the general population.

2. **Seek jurisdictional buy-in** (February-May 2019)  
After developing an initial list of priority station areas using the methodology described above, staff will meet with key stakeholders from the jurisdictions to discuss how the stations on the draft regional list compare to jurisdiction priorities. Staff will consider adjustments to the list based upon the feedback received.
3. **Seek TPB approval** (June 2019)  
Staff will develop a final draft list of walk-bike access priority station areas, which will be presented to the TPB for approval.

## **NEXT STEPS**

In January, staff will begin to circulate a draft list to our partners and will schedule individual consultations with each jurisdiction. These meetings are likely to be conducted at the beginning of February, although they may be scheduled sooner, if the first tasks are accomplished quickly.

For more information, contact:

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# BIKE-WALK ACCESS PRIORITY STATION AREAS

## Prioritizing transit stations for pedestrian & bicycle investments

John Swanson  
TPB Transportation Planner

TPB Technical Committee  
January 4, 2019

Agenda Item #8



## In a nutshell

The TPB will identify a list of transit station areas that will be regionally prioritized for pedestrian and bicycle improvements



# Purpose

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- Support implementation of the Visualize 2045 initiative “Improve Walk and Bike Access to Transit”
- Use the list as a tool for TLC and TAP project selection
- Potentially seek other funding (e.g., TIGER)
- Encourage local, state, and private funding for high-impact bike/ped improvements

# Follow-up to Visualize 2045

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- “Improve Walk & Bike Access to Transit” was one of 7 aspirational initiatives in Visualize 2045



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A LONG-RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN FOR THE NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION

- In November, the TPB’s Bike/Ped Subcommittee recommended the TPB prioritize station areas for ped/bike improvements
- In December, TPB Resolution R10-2019 directed staff to:

*“Identify a set of regionally prioritized high capacity transit stations where pedestrian/ bicycle access improvements have the greatest potential to utilize available capacity and increase transit ridership, by building on the previous work by the TPB and WMATA, and report on progress by end of June 2019.”*

# Building on past work

- 2015: TPB study “Improving Bicycle and Pedestrian Access at Select Rail Stations” (TCSP funded) – Identified station access improvements at 25 rail stations
- 2016: WMATA “Metrorail Station Investment Strategy” – Identified station access improvements for all remaining stations (91 total stations)

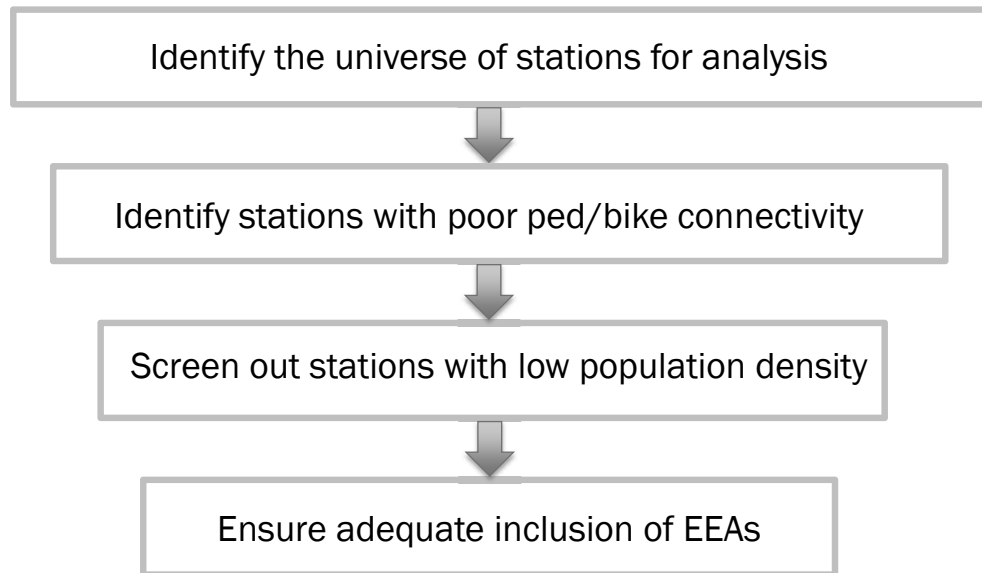


# Starting principles

- Key criteria for selection:
  - Deficiencies – Where is it difficult to walk and bike to transit?
  - Demand – Where is there significant potential demand for walking and biking?
- Places, not projects
  - We will identify opportune station *areas* for improvements, not specific projects
- Regional balance, local priorities
  - All jurisdictions with high-capacity transit will have at least one priority station area
  - Jurisdictions will provide input about their locally determined priorities

# Task 1: Regional Analysis

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# Task 2: Jurisdictional Outreach

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- Meet with local jurisdiction staff individually to compare the draft regional list with each jurisdiction's priorities
- Adjust the list, as appropriate



# Task 3: TPB Approval

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- TPB will be asked to approve a final list of bike-walk access priority station areas
- Target date: June 2019



The Ride Starts (Joe Flood, flickr.com)

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