



TPB REGIONAL PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SUBCOMMITTEE

Meeting Summary: October 23, 2018

ATTENDEES

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|--------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| David Koch, DDOT (Chair) | Christine Wells, WSTC | Matthew Gaskin, TPB |
| Diane Patterson, DHCD | Clinton Edwards, DRPT | Arianna Koudounas, TPB |
| Kyle Nembhard, MTA | Kevin Thornton, DPWT | Cody Christensen, STVI |
| Xavier Harmony, DRPT | Brenden Watts, DPWT | Brandon Brown, TPB |
| Allison Davis, WMATA | Andrew Meese, TPB | Dan Goldfarb, NVTC |
| Melissa Kim, WMATA | Eric Randall, TPB | Michael Farrell, TPB |

AGENDA

- 1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS, *David Koch, Chair***
 - Call to order and introductions.
- 2. PRINCE GEORGES CO: TRANSIT VISION UPDATE, *Kevin Thornton, DPWT***
 - The purpose of this presentation was to provide an update on Prince Georges Co. Transit Vision Plan for The Bus.
 - The Bus has grown greatly from 1996 when it had six routes, 12 buses, and served around 600,000, to now with 95 bus, 28 routes, and providing service for more than three million people.
 - The Bus has 1,600 bus stops, maintained by the county.
 - The Transit Vision Plan update began in September 2017. It is a five-year plan for improving and expanding service in the county.
 - Major objectives of the plan include:
 - Identification of opportunities to improve routes and improvements to complement the service network with Metrobus.
 - Establishing a framework for evaluating new transit enhancements or expansion opportunities.
 - Exploring best practices for improving better access to public transportation services
 - Extensive public outreach has occurred including 14 community meetings, on-board surveys as well as website surveys
 - Feedback included:
 - Weekend service
 - Early and late trips
 - Increased bus frequency and countywide coverage
 - Newer vehicles
 - Non-traditional services, i.e. other than fixed-route

- Other findings included nearly 73% of riders are bus dependent, 53% have been riders for at least two years, 65% use the bus to commute to work, and 65% of riders walk to access The Bus.
- Some themes that arose during interviews with stakeholders included:
 - Providing greater transit access to employment centers
 - Improve level of service particularly to transit dependent individuals
 - Address service concerning non-traditional work hours
 - Supporting business and economic development
 - Improving access to evolving and emerging service centers, i.e. 24-hour clinics
 - Make bus stops more user friendly

Questions:

- Chairman Koch asked whether there is a plan for weekend service? *Yes, we are planning on having weekend service and that will be decided on by route. How does weekend service work now? Currently Metrobus fills in those gaps where The Bus does not run on the weekend. Who maintains The Bus bustops? The county maintains The Bus stops; however, a number of stops are shared with WMATA.*
- Eric Randall asked given the upcoming election for PG County Executives, what will be the timeframe to review the budgeting for the plan? *It will be between 4 to 6 months and will be a part of FY20.*
- Clinton Edwards asked if all of the PG County Executives Pro-Transit? *All the candidates are Pro-Business.*
- Cody Christensen asked whether there was a systematic approach to improving the access for pedestrians? *There is a high-level internal assessment to deal with this concern. The Parks and Planning Department may take a deeper dive on this, and the county in general is involved in this process.*

3. DDOT: RHODE ISLAND AVE TEMPORARY BUS LANE AND SAFETRACK RUSH HOUR PARKING EXTENSIONS, Diane Patterson, DHCD

- The purpose of this presentation was to provide a high-level overview of the recent DDOT actions of extending the peak period parking restrictions, as a result of SafeTrack. And bus performance on Rhode Island Ave. during temporary bus lane placement, due to several red line station shutdowns.
- The research done involving the extension of peak period parking was conducted between 6/4/27 to 6/25/27. The objective was to answer whether extended rush hour parking restrictions during SafeTrack improved bus mobility and reliability.
- The research done involving the placement of temporary bus lanes on Rhode Island Ave occurred between 7/21/18 to 9/3/18. The objective was to answer whether G9 (bus route) operations and ridership improve. Also, did private motorist obey or disobey the bus lane restrictions.
- These studies were done in response to consistent low ridership on Metrobus, and the desire to explore new tactics, projects, and evaluation to obtain DC's mode share and sustainability goals.
- During SafeTrack, one response to improve bus transit, involved the selection of corridors with key transit routes/parking restrictions and extending the no rush hour parking. In most cases by 30 minutes.
- The study involved having both control and variable corridors. And data was collected using AVL on WMATA buses as well as INTRIX general speed data.
- The results from the extended parking study were unclear. There were significant enforcement issues. There was not a significant increase in the level of service of the buses



on these corridors.

- In terms of the bus lane study, a lack of enforcement was cited as preventing buses on this corridor to fully utilize the bus lane. However, despite that reliability did increase, as did ridership after the station reopening.

Discussions/Questions:

- Arianna Koudounas asked how did Boston manage to enforce the bus lane compliance? (During the presentation, an example of Boston using pop up bus lanes was discussed) *The transportation agency used transportation planning staff to spread information and awareness of the temporary bus lanes.*
- Michael Farrell stated that this information could provide helpful lessons in the development of full permanent bus lanes on some corridors.
- Cody Christensen, referring to the temporary bus lanes in Boston, asked what is DDOT doing to coordinate with transit agencies like WMATA? *DDOT is currently working on a Bus Priority Plan, and WMATA is currently working on the Bus Transformation Project. Both of which have had coordination.*
- Andrew Meese stated that COG is using INRIX data and noted concerns about the overall reliability of some of the data. An example would be INRIX inability to track speeds that are below 15 mph. He suggested for future studies employing other tracking methods such as field counts, or Bluetooth counters.
- Allison Davis asked whether these studies would influence future decisions made at DDOT. *The studies do not provide clear results. Regarding the parking study there weren't positive outcomes. However, based on some of the takeaways from the bus lane study, it have some influence. Overall it is clear that enforcement is an issue, and these studies serve as a great starting point to raise awareness.*

4. **TPB ENDORSED INITIATIVES: ROUNDTABLE/RECOMMENDATIONS**, *Matthew Gaskin, TPB*

- This presentation had the objective of finalizing the RPTS final recommendations from the TPB Endorsed Initiatives.
- The main purpose of this presentation was for the finalization of a recommendation for “Metrocore Capacity” initiative, now rebranded as “Move More People on Metro” as in the Visualize 2045 document.

Discussion/Suggestions:

- Allison Davis brought up the recommendation that there be an elimination of the rail-bus transfer, creating a seamless transition for the customer. This would be more in alignment of having a more customer focused experience on Metro.
- Chairman Koch suggested faster implementation of ATO and extending the usage from not just during peak-hours, but for all hours. He also suggested applying the recommendations from the 2014 Nigh Owl Service study.
- Allison Davis went on to speak about the focus of the Bus Transformation Project, mainly that while the improvement of multi-agency bus service is important, equally important is the role and commitment in improving the customer experience.
- The focus of the conversation then shifted towards BRT improvements. Xavier Harmony suggested that bus agencies should strive towards implementing “BRT-like” infrastructure into all bus service routes.
- Andrew Meese suggested expediting the permitting process around Metro stops, increasing TODs, increasing density. He went on to suggest that parking lots near Metro stations might investigate providing more information to customers, in terms of parking availability. This could increase usage and ridership.
- Michael Farrell mentioned ways to advertise parking availability, via radio ads or dynamic



signage.

- Cody Christensen mentioned that VRE is now implementing a parking counter that pushes that information, parking availability, to customers on the mobile app.
- Brandon Brown brought up information from the Prince Georges Co. presentation, that focusing on improving the access to high capacity transit stations needs to be a priority. Specifically, sidewalk improvements.

5. FEDERAL RULEMAKING AND WORK PROGRAM UPDATE, *Eric Randall, TPB*

- An update of the TPB Transit Planning Activities was given which included draft 2019 Regional TAM targets.
- The next work program undertaking will be the State of Public Transportation Report. Surveys and data collection will occur during the month of November.
- Agenda items for next month were also discussed.

6. ADJOURN

- David Koch adjourned the meeting at 2:00 PM.
- The next meeting is scheduled for November 27, 2018.

All meeting materials are available for download from the subcommittee's website:

<https://www.mwcog.org/events/2018/10/23/tpb-regional-public-transportation-subcommittee/>

