

National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board

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DRAFT Meeting Summary

Regional Bus Subcommittee  
CHAIR: Steve Yaffe, Arlington County

Tuesday September 23, 2008  
Noon – 2 PM

**Meeting Attendees:**

Carrie Anderson-Watters, Frederick TransIT	Christine Leggett, WB&A - Consultant
Howard Benn, Montgomery County	Steve Markenson, WB&A – Consultant
Ramona Burns, WMATA	Jim Maslanka, City of Alexandria
Lora Byala, WB&A	Jeff Miller, National Naval Medical Center
Brlansky Dave, WMATA	Valerie Pardo, VDOT
Gary Erenrich, Montgomery County	Chuck Steigerwald, PRTC
Lyn Erickson, Maryland Department of Transportation	Brooke Taylor, DDOT
Harold Foster, M-NCPPC	Circe Torruellas, DDOT
Scott Gross, Loudoun County	Alexis Verzosa, City of Fairfax
James Hamre, WMATA	Randall White, Fairfax County Dept. of Transportation
Al Himes, Alexandria Transit Company	Steve Yaffe, Arlington County
Pierre Holloman, City of Alexandria, VA	

**TPB Staff in Attendance:**

Michael Eichler, Lead Staff Coordinator	Andrew Meese
Robert Griffiths	Gerald Miller
Wanda Hamlin	Mark Moran
Jim Hogan	

**Agenda Items:**

Welcome and Introductions  
*Chair Steve Yaffe, Arlington County*

Mr. Yaffe called the meeting to order.

Review of Submissions to the Regional Priority Projects List  
*Michael Eichler, TPB Staff*

Mr. Eichler distributed documents summarizing the projects submitted to date to the regional priority projects list. As of September 22, 2008, the following jurisdictions have submitted completed nomination forms: The District, City of Alexandria, Arlington County, Montgomery County, Frederick County, Loudoun County and PRTC. Prince George's County submitted an incomplete, draft form. Staff is will still accept submissions from WMATA, MTA, City of Fairfax and Fairfax County if submitted by October 13. He then asked for feedback from the subcommittee on the selection process.

After a brief discussion, it was decided that a working group of the subcommittee would meet to discuss the prioritization process and make a first cut at determining some criteria by which these projects can be sorted. It was generally agreed that only a subset of these projects should be presented to the board. Gary Erenrich, Circe Torruellas and Steve Yaffe volunteered to participate in the working group. The first meeting of the group will be sometime during the week of October 15, to be arranged by staff.

Ms. Ericson inquired about the timeframe for presenting the priority projects list to the board, noting that the states have project-selection cycles that differ from the TPB's. She suggested that Michael Farrel who manages the TPB's Bike and Pedestrian Subcommittee be consulted, as they also present annual priority lists to the board. She also recommended that jurisdictions/operators suggest possible funding sources for projects on the lists.

Update on the Scenario Study "CLRP Aspirations Scenario" Development  
*Michael Eichler, TPB Staff*

Mr. Eichler reviewed the development of the transportation component of the TPB "CLRP Aspirations" scenario for the subcommittee, and included questions that need to be answered before the networks can be coded and analyzed.

Mr. Maslanka suggested that two City of Alexandria projects were "very real" and should be included in the study network.

Mr. White inquired as to whether costs were being included, suggesting that off-board payment systems, boarding platforms and other BRT technologies would be expensive. Mr. Eichler replied that a cost analysis would be performed and it would be hoped that toll revenue from the network of variably priced lanes could help subsidize bus transit on the toll lanes.

Mr. Foster inquired as to the timeframe for coding, as Prince George's County is working on a new alignment for the Purple Line from New Carrollton to National Harbor.

Mr. Erenrich suggested that many corridors in the proposed toll/BRT network would have low transit demand, and that a minimum ridership threshold (such as 5-thousand boardings per day) should be the criteria for inclusion of bus service

on a toll lane corridor. Mr. Eichler replied that the land use scenario would likely shift jobs and households along the corridors in question and could produce higher transit ridership than he is expecting. Additionally, corridors with low transit demand will indeed be removed from the regional BRT network.

Mr. Benn added two points. First, that the new off-board payment system in then Bronx, NY is very successful, resulting in significant time savings, but can also be expensive to maintain due to security/proof-of-payment inspections and the need to protect the street-mounted TVMs (Ticket Vending Machines) from vandalism. Secondly, that the span of frequent service is very important. He suggested that 30-minute off-peak headways on the BRT network were much too high, and that something as low as 15-minute headways should be provided. Further, he stated that the lengthier mid-day service frequencies should be both shorter in duration (not the standard 6- 7 hours from about 8:30 AM to 3:30 PM but possibly 4 hours, 10 to 2) and reflective of higher usages than during other off-peak periods, i.e., late evenings. Mr. Hogan stated that the TPB Travel Demand Model only works on peak and off-peak periods and does not model mid-day travel differently than other off-peak periods.

#### Discussion of Upcoming Coordination between the Subcommittee and the MOITS Committee

*Andy Meese, TPB Staff*

Mr. Meese had to leave the meeting before this agenda item was reached. Mr. Eichler stated that the subcommittee will be working with the MOITS policy task force and technical subcommittee in the future to provide a regional discussion on the implementation of transit signal priority (TSP) and possibly other bus priority treatments throughout the region. This item will be revisited at the October meeting.

#### Presentation of Regional On-Board and Fairfax Connector Survey Results

*Robert Griffiths, TPB Staff; Lora Byala, ATCS; WB&A*

Ms. Byala, a consultant with ATCS, in addition to Steve Markenson from WB&A presented on the status of the Fairfax County on-board bus survey and home travel survey. Following their presentation, Mr. Griffiths provided an update on the TPB Regional Bus Survey. A draft report of the TPB Regional Bus Survey should be completed by October 20 and presented to the subcommittee at the October meeting.

#### Transit Operator Discussion: Bus Stops

*Ramona Burns, Bus Stop Guidelines Project Manager, WMATA*

This item was deferred to the next subcommittee meeting.

#### Policy Discussion: Shared Use of Bus Stops at Metrorail Stations, Transit Centers, and On-Street Locations

Steve Yaffe

Mr. Yaffe handed out a draft copy of Arlington County's draft policy on the "Use of Public Transportation Designated Transit Stops by Private and Non-Local Public Transit Providers." This policy is intended to formalize a strategy for working with additional bus transit providers accessing stops. This is partially a reaction to a recent FTA regulation preventing public transit operators from operating charter bus service. He stated that other jurisdictions might be interested in establishing similar policies, and offered Arlington's draft policy statement as a starting point for others.

Mr. Gross inquired about enforcement, stating that policies are useful but that enforcement mechanisms should be in place to ensure they have the desired outcome.

Mr. Erenrich inquired about the fees specified in the draft policy statement, and to whom they applied. Mr. Yaffe replied that they would apply to private operators, and that they would be associated with related costs and not used as a way to earn revenue. He also suggested that Mr. Yaffe consider school transportation, including daily school buses and university shuttles.

Mr. Hamre suggested that the timing of this initiative was good, as WMATA is working on similar issues.

Mr. Benn added that jurisdictions should ensure that they are not discouraging the use of multi-occupant vehicles through such policies.

### New Business

#### *Discussion on Paperless Transfer Initiative*

The subcommittee briefly discussed the upcoming deadline for eliminating paper bus transfers in the region. Many members stated that the lack of a marketing plan for this initiative is lacking. Others shared their experience with the success and challenge of loading SmartTrip farecards on-board. Many members expressed disappointment with the lack of availability of Compact Point of Sale (CPOS) machines available in public places (Giant grocery stores, for example).

#### *"Moving Forward" Brochure Finalized*

Mr. Eichler handed out a final version of the subcommittee's brochure titled "Moving Forward" which summarizes the results of the Status Report of the Region's Bus Systems which was released by the subcommittee in February, 2008. Anyone wishing to have additional copies of the brochure can contact him at [meichler@mwcog.org](mailto:meichler@mwcog.org) or at 202-739-1901.

### Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 2:00 PM.

The next meeting of the TPB's Regional Bus Subcommittee will be held on October 28, 2008.

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10/20/2008

All meeting materials are available for download from the subcommittee's website: <http://www.mwcog.org/TPB/RBS/docs/>