



VIRGINIA RAILWAY EXPRESS

January 6, 2016

Mr. Kanti Srikanth  
TPB Staff Director  
Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments  
777 North Capitol Street NE, Suite 300,  
Washington, DC 20002.

Dear Mr. Srikanth,

The Virginia Railway Express (VRE) supports the goals of the proposed work session on January 20, 2016 to discuss process improvements to better address regional infrastructure and congestion and help shape future CLRPs. We would like to suggest the discussion include information about the current project prioritization processes in Virginia (and similar prioritization efforts in Maryland and the District). The prioritization processes are designed to result in highly rated projects getting funded (and ultimately included into the CLRP). This will allow a better understanding of the factors that are currently being considered and prioritized in different parts of the MWCOG region.

Discussion of the various prioritization processes may also result in identification of important factors that are missing or considered lower priority in different parts of the region. In coming months, the TPB can build consensus on the most important factors for the region, while allowing the flexibility to serve the diverse built environment and planning ideologies in the region.

One way to significantly improve the performance of the CLRP is to identify the regional needs that are not being met by the projects that are included in the CLRP. The TPB can play a role in identifying these projects, as well as the impediments to their inclusion in the CLRP. Since funding is often a major factor, it may be beneficial to coordinate or consolidate this effort with that of the Unfunded Capital Needs Working Group that has just begun work but has not fully solidified their work plan.

TPB's role can also go beyond simply identifying critical unfunded or underfunded projects. TPB can leverage the technical expertise of their capable staff to identify ways to overcome the above impediments. The TPB could help match up appropriate funding sources to the need, or support in devising creative non-traditional funding plans. Such staff and technical support would be invaluable to agencies that are always trying to do more with less.

Mr. Kanti Srikanth  
January 6, 2016  
Page 2

Another reason that critical projects may not make it into the CLRP is due to a lack of clear jurisdiction of any one agency. In such cases, the TPB could play a leadership role in bringing together a regional partnership to implement it.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the agenda for the upcoming work session.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Doug Allen". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Doug Allen  
Chief Executive Officer

DA: SS

CC: VRE Operations Board  
Kelley Coyner, NVTC  
Eric Marx, PRTC