

## National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board

777 North Capitol Street, N.E., Suite 300, Washington, D.C. 20002-4290 (202) 962-3315 Fax: (202) 962-3202

### Meeting Summary

Regional Bus Subcommittee  
CHAIR: Steve Yaffe, Arlington County

Tuesday July 22, 2008  
Noon – 2 PM

#### ***Meeting Attendees:***

Carrie Anderson-Watters, Frederick  
County Transit Services  
Howard Benn, Montgomery County  
James Hamre, WMATA  
Foster Harold, MNCPPC  
Jim Hogan, Transportation Planning  
Board  
Pierre Holloman, City of Alexandria  
Jim Maslanka, City of Alexandria  
Greg McFarland, NVTC  
Mark Moran, MWCOG

Valerie Pardo, VDOT  
Robin Phillips, American Bus  
Association  
Kevin Thornton, Prince George's  
County Government  
Alexis Verzosa, City of Fairfax  
Randall White, Fairfax County  
Department of Transportation  
Steve Yaffe, Arlington County  
Lenny Howard, MTA/MDOT  
Craig Smith, Martz Group

#### ***TPB Staff in Attendance:***

Michael Eichler  
Robert Griffiths

Andrew Meese  
Robert Snead

#### ***Agenda Items:***

##### Welcome and Introductions

*Chair Steve Yaffe, Arlington County*

Mr. Yaffe called the meeting to order, and attendees introduced themselves to the subcommittee.

##### 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 July 21, 2008, the following jurisdictions have submitted completed nomination forms: The District, City of Alexandria, Arlington County, Montgomery County and Frederick County. Prince George's

County submitted an incomplete, draft form. Staff is still hoping to receive submissions from WMATA, Loudoun County, PRTC, MTA, City of Fairfax and Fairfax County.

Mr. Benn described the process by which Montgomery County assembled the list, and noted some of the similarities in the types of projects submitted across the jurisdictions. Mr. Yaffe also noted that many submissions were multi-jurisdictional in nature, with projects located on city/county boundaries.

The subcommittee then discussed Item 7 on the submission form, Regional Marketing and Customer Information, and discussed in depth the efforts to integrate the WMATA Ride Guide data with Google Transit.

(<http://transit.google.com>) Members suggested having Jessica Wei who is working on Google Transit with VDRPT present to the subcommittee. Staff will also follow up with WMATA to see if any progress has been made in integrating the WMATA data with Google Transit.

#### Update on the Scenario Study “CLRP Aspirations Scenario” Development

*Michael Eichler, TPB Staff*

Mr. Eichler presented the comments received on the development of the CLRP Aspirations Scenario to the subcommittee and then opened the floor to discussion.

Mr. White raised the observation that many of the region’s light rail projects are being studied and planned as short, disconnected segments by individual jurisdictions in isolation. He stated that this piece-meal approach can prove very costly, as different jurisdictions move forward with their own transit vehicle specifications and standards, and without any possibility for shared maintenance and storage facilities. He suggested that the region’s light-rail planners should investigate the possibility of sharing maintenance facilities when moving forward with these projects.

#### Update on the Regional On-Board Bus Survey

*Robert Griffiths, TPB Staff*

Mr. Griffiths provided an update on the regional on-board bus survey. He reported that the survey work has been completed and that the contractor met their goal of a 20% return rate on the surveys. He stated that a draft survey report should be available in September.

#### Update on Transportation Demand Model Transit Inputs

*Bobby Snead, TPB Staff*

Mr. Snead reported on the process of the delivery of electronic transit schedules from operators to TPB staff, stating that staff has run into complications attempting to convert the electronic submissions into formats suitable for input to the regional model. His recommendation is to have operators in the region

export transit schedules from their systems into a specific electronic format (DBF or text) for incorporation into the model. He is working on developing file format specifications and will send them to the operators when complete.

### Discussion of the FY 09 Work Plan for the Regional Bus Subcommittee

Mr. Eichler distributed copies of the work plan description for Regional Bus Planning from the 2008 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and asked the subcommittee members if there were topics that were not being addressed by the subcommittee. Mr. Hamre mentioned that Mr. Erenrich (Montgomery DOT) had inquired about coordination between the regional bus subcommittee and an ITS subcommittee under MOITS Policy Task Force and Technical Subcommittees. Mr. Eichler reported that he had met with Mr. Erenrich and Mr. Meese who provides staff support for MOITS, and Mr. Meese had stated that there is no traffic engineering subcommittee under MOITS, which focuses on more higher-level communications and technology issues.

Mr. Hamre stated that he had recently been given the go-ahead to proceed with a study of WMATA routes to identify travel delay points across the region and propose potential solutions, and to develop a technology standard compatible with the existing ITS architectures. He suggested that the regional bus subcommittee could act as an advisory committee for this study, and that the subcommittee should work to identify and invite regional traffic engineers to key meetings where this topic is being discussed.

Subcommittee members also raised the question of planning for the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) efforts that are occurring throughout the region in the coming years. Mr. Benn stated that the state of Maryland has an advanced program in place to plan for the movement of staff and patients from Walter Reed to the Bethesda Naval Medical Hospital. He suggested that agencies and operators involved in BRAC planning could present at future RBS meetings to share strategies and best practices. Mr. Hamre suggested that his colleague Wendy Jia could present on a WMATA study being performed.

### New Business

*Introduction to Policy Discussion: Shared Use of Bus Stops at Metrorail Stations, Transit Centers, and On-Street Locations, Steve Yaffe*

Mr. Yaffe began a conversation with the subcommittee on the impacts of a new FTA policy that prevents agencies receiving federal funding to provide paid charter service, and a subsequent WMATA policy that will restrict and regulate access for private charter buses and vans to bus bays at Metrorail stations. This issue is of major concern, and involves local enforcement and consideration of street furniture, and is not isolated to Metrorail stations. This issue is also relevant to other transit centers and stops near major trip generators. Mr. Yaffe suggested that the subcommittee develop a common regional guidance to deal with the impacts, and recommended that subcommittee members circulate ideas for solving this issue before the September meeting.

Related to this, the subcommittee briefly discussed the issue of independent inter-regional bus services and their lack of dedicated stop areas causing problems for traffic and local bus systems, especially around Metrorail stations. Mr. Hamre mentioned that Circe Torruellas at DDOT was taking the lead on the efforts to ease these problems.

The chair suggested that the subcommittee members develop a list of major concerns that have to be addressed in creating regional curbside management guidelines, including right-of-way permits, signage, prioritization by vehicle type to station entrances, and the possibility of financial contributions to enhancements like bus bulbs. Responses are requested by September 9.

*Transit Operator Presentations: September, Bus Stops*

Mr. Benn informed the subcommittee that his colleague who was scheduled to present at the next meeting on bus stops from Ride-On has received a promotion and the position will not be filled before the next subcommittee meeting. Mr. Hamre stated that WMATA is making headway on bus stop issues and suggested that the bus stop presentation in September could be covered by WMATA staff.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 2:00 PM.

The next meeting of the TPB's Regional Bus Subcommittee will be held on September 23, 2008.

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