

## I-66 Study Funds Approved

The Transportation Planning Board on January 18 approved nearly \$10 million for the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) to study potential improvements on westbound I-66 inside the Beltway. The study funding was

included in amendments to the region's six-year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

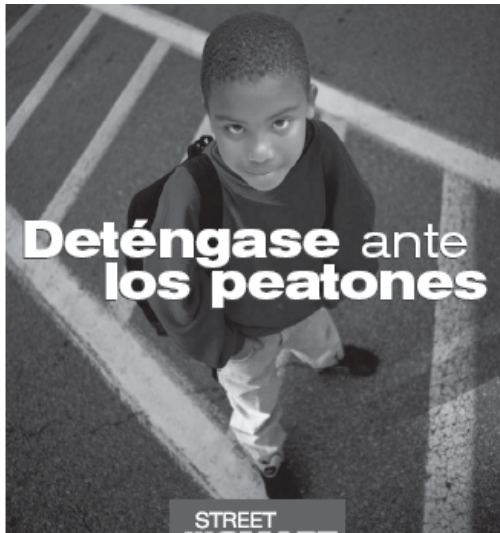
VDOT will use much of the funding to examine possible "spot improvements" as part of the ongoing "Idea-66" study. The spot improvements study will look at signage, ramp metering, sight distances, enforcement areas and safety pull-off areas. For particular road segments, the study will also examine options for "lane balancing" – equally



VDOT will study "spot improvements" on I-66 inside the Beltway.

See **I-66** on page 2

### "Street Smart" Campaign



**Deténgase ante los peatones**

**STREET  
SMART**  
Think of the Impact You Can Make

Conduzca con precaución – tómese el tiempo para prestar atención a las personas en la senda peatonal y espere a que crucen.

Un programa de seguridad pública del Distrito de Columbia, Maryland y Virginia

The Street Smart campaign has focused attention on immigrant communities, which suffer a disproportionately high number of pedestrian fatalities. This Spanish-language poster says: "Stop for Pedestrians. Drive with caution. Take time to pay attention to people in crosswalks and wait for them to cross." More about Street Smart on page 6.

## Scenarios Would Bring Households Closer to Jobs

More people means more congestion, right? Not necessarily.

The TPB's study of "what if" scenarios is showing that anticipated congestion in 2030 could actually be *reduced* if the number of future households in the region is increased from current 2030 forecasts.

"It might seem counterintuitive that increasing household density would decrease congestion," said Jill Locantore of the TPB staff. "But this scenario brings people who might otherwise commute from places like Pennsylvania or West Virginia closer to their jobs in the Washington

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distributing the traffic between the available lanes to reduce unnecessary merging and weaving.

Opponents of a third lane on westbound I-66 objected to the study funding because they believe the spot improvements are a step toward building a new westbound lane. In particular, they claimed that the spot improvements study has been designed to begin the process of widening the road in three large segments, by extending three westbound on-ramps to the next off-ramps.

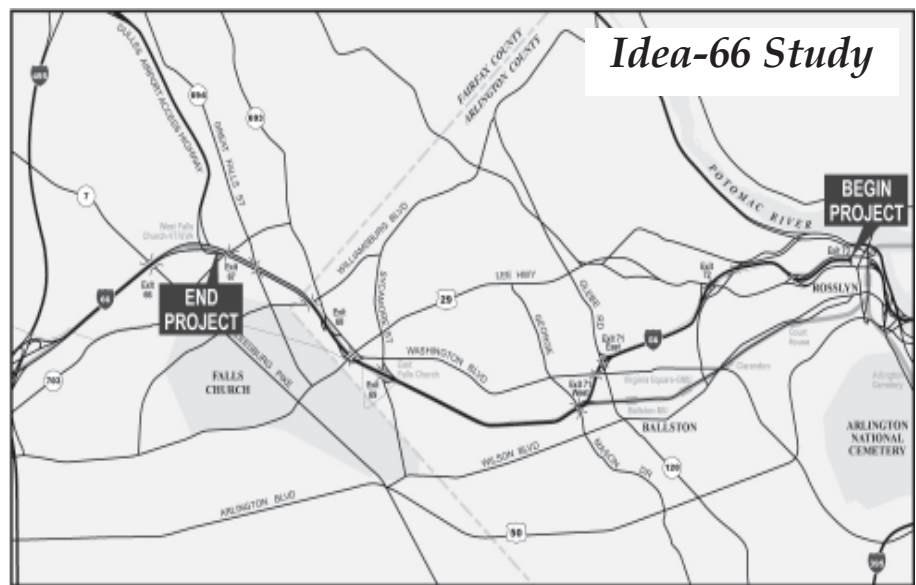
"This is not really a spot improvement proposal," said Christopher Zimmerman, Arlington County Board Chair and TPB member. "What's being described as spot improvements here—and therefore is not subject to a lot of the usual procedure—in fact, is an extensive effort to put in some of the widening."

### ***Delayed in December***

The TPB's Steering Committee, which has the power to approve non-regionally significant TIP amendments, had originally signed off on the study funding in December. But that action raised objections from TPB members who felt the study is regionally significant and deserved consideration by the full board. At the December TPB meeting, the board delayed approval of the study funding until January.

Following the December meeting, VDOT officials developed a revised project description to clarify its intentions that the study would look at a variety of spot improvement options. The TPB resolution approving the funding was also revised to include six key points of clarification on the project that were approved by the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA). NVTA is a subregional body that includes local officials from Northern Virginia who also serve on the TPB.

The NVTA clarifications sought to ensure that the study will be coordinated with the Metrorail extension to Tysons Corner, will not



preclude a third Metrorail track or express bus operations, and will assure that construction can occur within existing rights-of-way.

NVTA asked the spot improvement study to include evaluation of traffic management strategies, as well as safety and evacuation considerations. NVTA also asked that VDOT ensure that the spot improvements are consistent with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), which provides a federally mandated process for study and review of major transportation projects.

Separate from the spot improvements study (and separate from the TIP amendment that the TPB approved on January 18), NVTA asked that funding be sought for a long-range multimodal environmental document that will address the public transportation needs for the I-66 corridor.

At the TPB on January 18, Mr. Zimmerman cast the lone vote against the TIP amendment to fund the spot improvements study.

### ***Feasibility study began in 2004***

I-66 was constructed in the late 1970s under the constraints of the "Coleman Decision" of 1977, which gave final approval to the project, but limited the number of lanes on the road, banned truck travel and imposed carpool restrictions. Since construction, the Arlington County Board and citizens groups have strongly opposed widening proposals. In January 1999, Section 361 of the 1999 DOT Appropriations Act (PL105-277) conformed the "Coleman Decision" to existing Federal and State laws allowing modifications to

I-66 inside the beltway.

In 2003, U.S. Representatives Frank Wolf and Tom Davis, both from Northern Virginia, secured federal funding for an analysis of potential mobility improvements on I-66. Virginia Governor Mark Warner authorized the study, dubbed "Idea-66," with the condition that only existing right-of-way could be studied and that all realistic options should be considered. The TPB authorized the Idea-66 study in May 2004.

The Idea-66 feasibility study, released in March of this year, found that the most effective and feasible alternative considered for the 6.5-mile segment of I-66 inside the Beltway was the "Roadway Widening Concept" with the addition of a managed lane. Construction of this solution would cost an estimated \$112 to \$233 million. VDOT has not yet identified funding to proceed with a study of this widening/managed lane concept.

The Idea-66 feasibility study also recommended further study of a number of short-term "spot improvements." Those improvements could cost between \$2 million and \$45 million.

The TPB amendment on January 18, 2006 only funded the spot improvements study phase of Idea-66.

For more information on I-66, go to [www.idea66.com](http://www.idea66.com). To read the public comments on I-66 received by the TPB, go to [www.mwcog.org/transportation/tpb](http://www.mwcog.org/transportation/tpb) and see the "Letters Sent/Received" for December 21 and January 18. ■

## Other January Items

The TPB's January agenda also included the following items:

- Approval of appointments to the **2006 Citizens Advisory Committee**.

The new members are:

*District of Columbia:* Harold Foster, Allen Greenburg, Grace Malakoff, Robin Marlin, Larry Martin, Joseph Bowser (alternate), Merle Van Horner (alternate).

*Maryland:* Ephrem Asebe, Nathaniel Bryant, Stephen Caflisch, Elvin Crespo, Emmet Tydings (2006 chair).

*Virginia:* Steve Cerny, Jim Larsen, Dan Malouff, Allen Muchnick.

- Approval of a letter from the TPB to the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority suggesting the agency designate a **WMATA point person for pedestrian and bicycle access** at transit stations. The TPB's Citizens Advisory Committee in December recommended that this issue be addressed.
- Briefing on **new EPA air quality rules:** The 8-Hour Ozone Standard and the Fine Particles (PM2.5) Standards.
- Report from the Citizens Advisory Committee containing **CAC recommendations on improving information and analysis** in the TPB's key planning documents. The CAC recommendations can be viewed at [www.mwcog.org/transportation/committee/cac](http://www.mwcog.org/transportation/committee/cac). ■

## Upcoming Agenda

The TPB's February agenda will include:

- Briefing on the report: "**Improving Demand Responsive Services for People with Disabilities in the Washington Region**" and transmittal of the report to the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA). This report was developed through the TPB's Access for All Advisory Committee.
- Update on activities to identify dedicated **funding for WMATA**.
- Briefing on the **2005 aerial survey** of peak-period freeway congestion. This survey has been performed every three years since 1993.
- Briefing on **project submissions** for the 2006 Constrained Long-Range Plan (CLRP) and FY2007-2012 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).
- Briefing on proposed new **public involvement** activities.
- Review of the draft FY2007 **Unified Planning Work Program**. ■

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## Scenario Study

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area, significantly reducing the amount of driving on our region's roads."

TPB staff presented this preliminary finding, along with other significant results, on January 18 at a special work session on the scenario analysis, which is officially known as the Regional Mobility and Accessibility Study.

### Getting back to the Vision

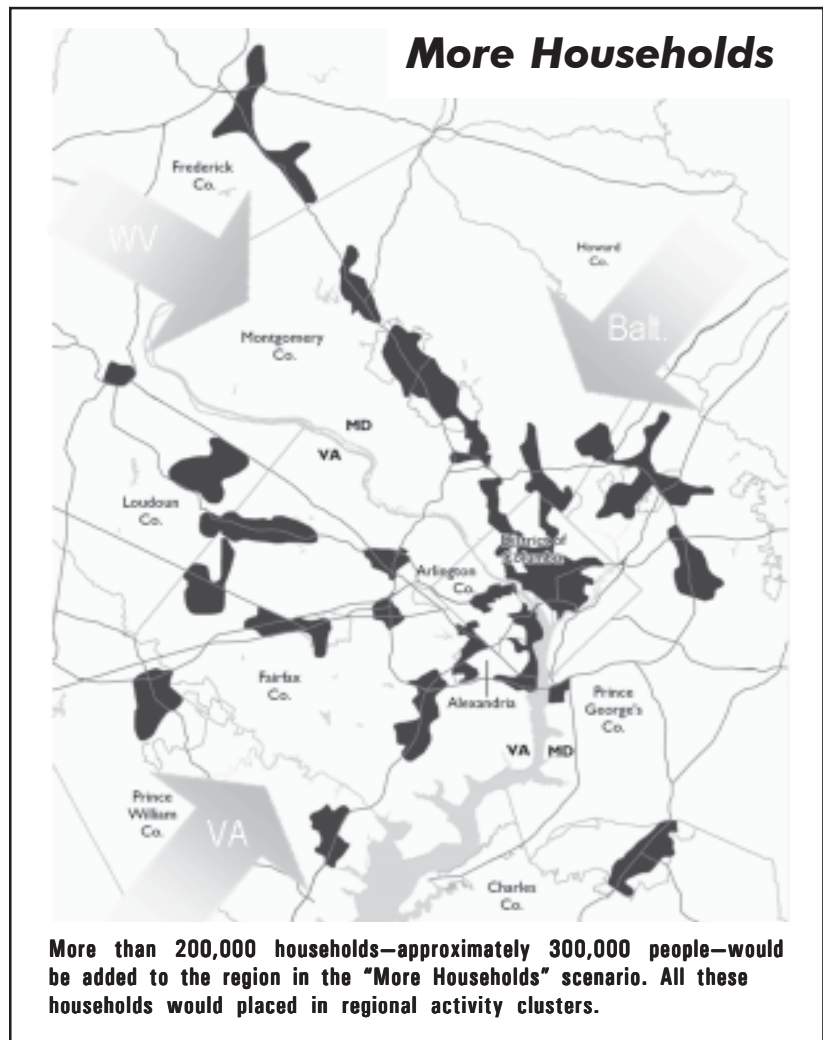
The TPB launched the study in 2000 to look at land use and transportation scenarios that are not part of current regional plans. A key purpose of the study was to see if there are actions the region might take to better meet the objectives of the TPB Vision, the regional transportation policy framework adopted in 1998.

Among its many goals and objectives, the TPB Vision called for an increase in transit use and a reduction in driving. The Vision also called for better coordination between land use and transportation, including an emphasis on regional activity centers—places that are intended to be focal points for jobs and housing, and nodes for transportation linkages.

The land use scenarios for the Regional Mobility and Accessibility Study were initiated by a number of "what if" questions, such as: What if more people who lived here worked here? What if there were more development on the eastern side of the region? What if more people lived and worked close to transit?

Based on such "what if" questions, five land use scenarios were developed:

- **"More Households"** would increase the total number of households in the region.
- **"Households In"** would move households into inner jurisdictions.
- **"Jobs Out"** would shift jobs to outer jurisdictions.
- **"Region Undivided"** would move jobs and housing to the region's eastern side.



- **"Transit-Oriented Development"** would put more jobs and households close to transit.

These land use scenarios all promote concentrated land use patterns by shifting a large portion of future growth into regional activity clusters. (The *clusters* are consolidated, somewhat larger versions of the regional activity centers.)

The study is not founded on unrealistic assumptions. The land use scenarios only shifted growth that is forecast to occur between 2010 and 2030; they did not move existing jobs and households. This means the amount of growth that was "in play" amounted to a relatively small percentage of total jobs and households. For example, the scenarios affected less than 15 percent of households expected to exist in 2030.

Scenarios with new public transit facilities have been layered onto each land use scenario. The new train and bus lines chosen for the study are all unfunded projects that are featured in various

state and local plans. These scenarios reflect the large variety of projects that are being discussed in individual jurisdictions throughout the region—including D.C. light rail projects, the Bi-County Transitway (Purple Line) in Maryland, and rail to Centreville in Virginia.

Highways are next on the study's agenda. TPB staff is currently analyzing a network of new toll lanes, including variably priced lanes on the Beltway and other Interstate highways.

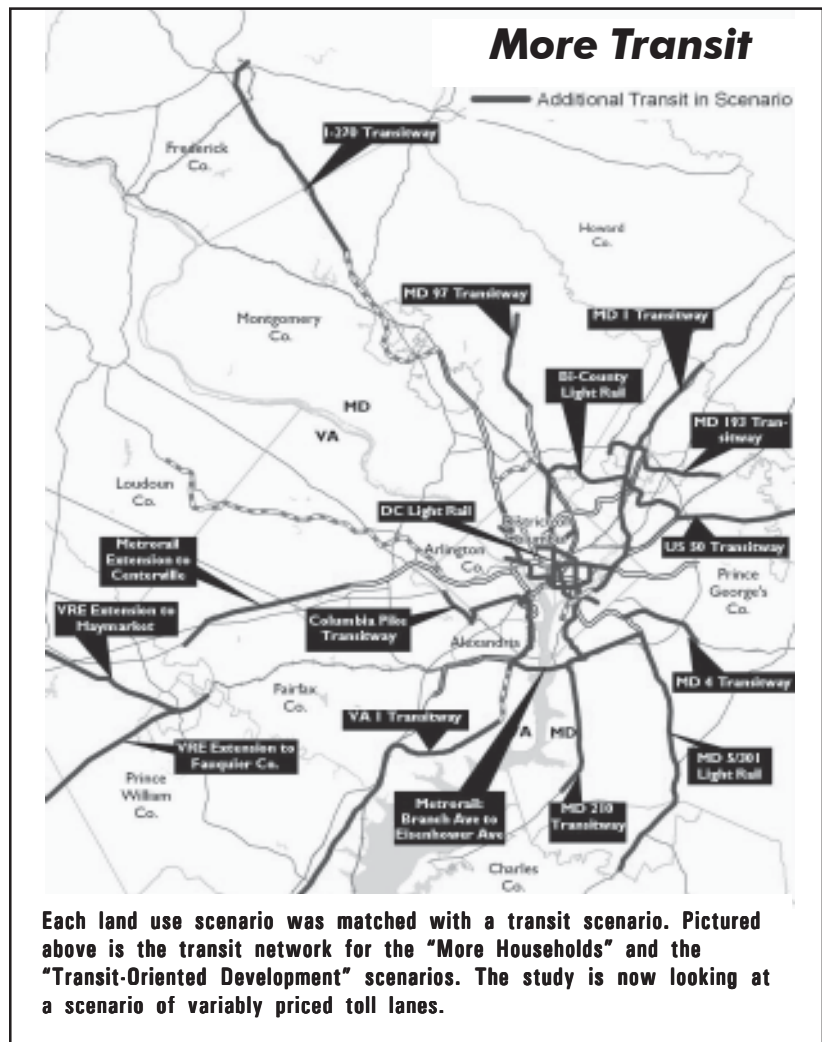
### Looking at scenario results

Staff has analyzed the five land use scenarios—both with and without transit scenarios—using the TPB's travel forecasting model. This analysis has examined the transportation effects of the scenarios, including changes in congestion, transit use and vehicle miles of travel.

The scenarios are not meant to compete with each other because some of them make more dramatic land use and transportation changes than others. Rather each scenario, and the underlying challenges, resonate differently in different places, with different groups.

The *"More Households"* scenario has sparked widespread interest because it gets at a nagging regional challenge: The Washington region is not providing enough housing for its workers, and this jobs/housing imbalance is expected to get worse. The *"More Households"* scenario would equalize this imbalance by increasing the number of households in 2030 by 200,000.

Even with a lot more people living in the region, travel conditions would improve with this scenario. Under *"More Households"* an average person in 2030 would drive 22 miles per day, compared to 24 miles per day if current trends continue – a decrease of two miles per day. Even more startling, the amount of total driving (vehicle miles of travel) on the region's roads would be less with *"More Households"* than under the study's 2030 baseline.



The *"More Households"* scenario underlined the need to increase housing—and the transportation benefits that might come when such an increase is concentrated in activity clusters. The scenario has already influenced policy-making. Using the land use assumptions of this scenario, the region's planning directors and COG's Metropolitan Development Policy Committee decided that the latest round (Round 7.0) of the region's Cooperative Land Use Forecasts should increase the number of households planned for 2030 by more than 120,000.

The *"Region Undivided"* scenario has captured attention because it addresses another key regional challenge: An economic divide separates the Washington region into a prosperous western side and an economically disadvantaged eastern side. Like the jobs/housing imbalance, this challenge has

## Scenario Study *continued from page 5*

transportation implications. Workers in the east increasingly must travel longer distances to get to jobs in the west.

The “Region Undivided” scenario would shift 57,000 households and 114,000 jobs to activity clusters on the eastern side of the region. New transit facilities would complement these land use shifts, including a circumferential Purple Line through Prince George’s County in a 180-degree arc stretching from Silver Spring to the Woodrow Wilson Bridge.

The “Region Undivided” scenario would improve travel conditions across the region and local impacts would be even bigger in many places. For example, under the scenario, transit commute trips to the Largo area would more than double.

### *The feedback loop*

At their meeting on January 18, TPB members discussed how the scenario analysis might be used to affect decision-making.

“We need to think about how the study can feed back into planning decisions,” said TPB Chairman Michael Knapp.

Takoma Park Mayor Kathy Porter agreed, saying the study should be integrated into the development of the TPB’s Constrained Long-Range Transportation Plan (CLRP) and into local planning.

Some TPB members maintain the study should be used to promote policy changes. Barry Miller of the D.C. Office of Planning said the study supports the District’s efforts to focus growth on the eastern side of the region. Jim Zook, planning director for Fairfax County, said he would like to be sure the study does not lose sight of the “absolute need to invest more in transportation.”

Most members agreed that public outreach is needed. Last year, the TPB’s Citizens Advisory Committee launched a series of public forums based on the scenario study, called “What if the Washington Region Grew Differently?” The committee plans to continue those forums this year.

To see a copy of the most recent presentation on the scenario study, go to [www.mwcog.org/transportation](http://www.mwcog.org/transportation). ■

## Ped/Bike Safety Campaign Making an Impact

The TPB’s *Street Smart* pedestrian and bicycle safety campaign is beginning to make a dent in the attitudes of drivers, walkers and cyclists, according to annual evaluation surveys.

Since the campaign began in 2002, survey responses show that drivers were more likely to stop for pedestrians in crosswalks and pedestrians were less likely to jaywalk. After last year’s campaign, male drivers under 35 were found to be more aware—by an increase of 12 percentage points—of the Street Smart messages and the increased likelihood that they could be ticketed for not yielding to pedestrians in crosswalks.

The Street Smart campaign uses a variety of media, including drive-time radio, bus displays and other posters, newspaper advertising, handout brochures and “tip cards.”

Last year’s campaign carried the core messages:

- Take the time to cross safely.
- Stop for pedestrians.
- Watch for bicyclists.
- Big vehicles have bigger blind spots.
- Every seven minutes, every day, a pedestrian or cyclist is hit, injured or killed on our roads.

The campaign targets male drivers, 18-34, because they are the primary offenders in pedestrian accidents.

In recent years, the campaign has focused attention on high-density Hispanic areas and extensively used Spanish-language media. Pedestrian fatalities among immigrant populations are disproportionately high.

Street Smart will launch its next campaign in April.



**In 2005, the campaign began warning of the danger of trucks and buses, which are much more likely to cause serious injury than passenger vehicles.**



The 2005 campaign, which ran for four weeks in June, was combined with stepped-up law enforcement efforts throughout the region. The District of Columbia, for example, handed out more than 2,500 citations during the campaign.

Approximately \$340,000 has been provided in local and federal funds for this year's campaign. Last year, the TPB began a process of sending annual letters to the local jurisdictions asking for contributions to the campaign at the level of five cents per capita.

For more information on Street Smart, see [www.mwcog.org/transportation](http://www.mwcog.org/transportation). ■

## Knapp Assumes 2006 TPB Chairmanship

Montgomery County Councilmember Michael Knapp assumed the 2006 chair of the Transportation Planning Board on January 18.

Catherine Hudgins of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors assumed the position of first vice chair, while Michelle Pourciau, deputy director of the District of Columbia Department of Transportation (DDOT), is serving as second vice chair.

According to the TPB bylaws, the three TPB officers are from D.C., Maryland and Virginia. The chairmanship rotates every year among these three jurisdictions.

*Michael Knapp* was elected to the Montgomery County Council in 2002 to represent upcounty and western areas of the county. For five years in the early 1990s, he served on the staff of Senator Pete Domenici, focusing on issues related to biotechnology, especially the Human Genome Project, as well as on health care and social issues. Mr. Knapp concentrated on increasing awareness and funding for biotechnology and worked with the Senator to ensure that those who suffer from mental illness have access to the same health insurance coverage as those who suffer from other illnesses. Knapp also helped to create the "Character Counts" legislation that has helped Maryland to lead the nation in laying a strong foundation for character education in our

schools. More recently he has held positions in several biotechnology companies. Mr. Knapp spent 10 years in the Army Reserves as an Engineer and Infantry officer.

On the Montgomery County Council, Mr. Knapp is the chair of the Council's Homeland Security Committee, is a member of the Council's Education Committee and serves on the Public Safety Committee as lead Councilmember for Fire and Rescue Services. In addition to the TPB, he serves as vice chairman of the Board of Directors for the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments.

*Catherine Hudgins* was first elected to the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors in 1999. She represents the Hunter Mill District in the northwestern portion of the county. From 1995 to 1999, she served as chief aide to Kate Hanley, the former chair of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors. Prior to that she held various positions as a teacher and in the computer and telecommunications industries. On the County Board of Supervisors, she is active in human services, housing and community development, information technologies and transportation. She is a member of the Board of Directors for the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA).

*Michelle Pourciau* is responsible for strategic planning and policy for the District of Columbia's transportation system. She represents the Department in local, regional and national forums. Previously, Ms. Pourciau served as chief of Transportation and Public Policy at DDOT. In this capacity, she managed the completion of the first transportation vision plan and the subsequent implementation and action program. She also managed transportation planning and policy for public spaces in D.C., for federal programs and grants, for local, regional and national issues, and for the operation and implementation of new and innovative programs. ■



TPB Chairman  
Michael Knapp

# Calendar of Events

Dates and times subject to change. All meetings are at COG unless otherwise indicated. If you are in need of special assistance to participate in meetings, please call (202) 962-3315 or (202) 962-3213 (TDD). Bicycle racks are located in the parking garage at 777 N. Capitol St., NE (Enter from 1st Street).

## February 2006

- 3 TPB Technical Committee (9 am)
- 3 TPB Steering Committee (noon)
- 7 Regional Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Marketing Group (10 am)
- 9 TPB Citizens Advisory Committee (6 pm)
- 10 Joint Technical Working Group for the Regional Mobility and Accessibility Study (noon)
- 14 Management, Operations and Intelligent Transportation Systems (MOITS) Policy and Technical Task Forces Joint Meeting (12:30 pm)
- 15 Transportation Planning Board (noon)**

## March 2006

- 3 TPB Technical Committee (9 am)
- 3 TPB Steering Committee (noon)
- 8 Bike to Work Day Steering Committee (10 am)
- 9 TPB Citizens Advisory Committee (6 pm)
- 10 Joint Technical Working Group for the Regional Mobility and Accessibility Study (noon)
- 14 Commuter Operation Center Subcommittee (10 am)
- 14 Commuter Connections Subcommittee (noon)
- 14 Management, Operations and Intelligent Transportation Systems (MOITS) Policy and Technical Task Forces Joint Meeting (12:30 pm)
- 15 Transportation Planning Board (noon)**
- 17 Travel Forecasting Subcommittee (9:30 am)
- 21 Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee (1 pm)
- 23 Aviation Technical Subcommittee (10:30 am)
- 23 TPB Access for All Advisory Committee (noon)
- 28 Travel Management Subcommittee (9 am)

## April 2006

- 4 Regional Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Marketing Group (10 am)
- 5 Telecommuting Ad-Hoc Group (10 am)
- 7 TPB Technical Committee (9 am)
- 7 TPB Steering Committee (noon)
- 11 Management, Operations and Intelligent Transportation Systems (MOITS) Policy and Technical Task Forces Joint Meeting (12:30 pm)
- 13 TPB Citizens Advisory Committee (6 pm)
- 14 Joint Technical Working Group for the Regional Mobility and Accessibility Study (noon)
- 18 Employer Outreach Ad-Hoc Group (10 am)
- 18 Commuter Connections High Tech Ad-Hoc Group (noon)
- 19 Transportation Planning Board (noon)**
- 25 Travel Management Subcommittee (9 am)

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