
TPB TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY

March 3, 2023

1. WELCOME, VIRTUAL PARTICIPATION PROCEDURES, AND MEMBER ROLL CALL PROTOCOL

Staff described the procedures and protocols for the virtual meeting and conducted a roll call. Meeting participants are documented in the attached attendance list.

2. APPROVAL OF MEETING RECAP FROM THE February 3 TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING

There were no questions or comments regarding the February 3 Technical Committee meeting. The summary was accepted as final.

ITEMS FOR THE BOARD AGENDA

3. BRIEFING ON THE DRAFT FY 2024 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM

Ms. Ms. Lyn Erickson provided a briefing on the draft of the FY 2024 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) to the committee. Ms. Erickson stated that the board will be asked to do two things regarding the carryover memo and the 2024 UPWP. Thus far, edits made to the UPWP draft include narrowing down on the finances of the carryover now that the revenues from the state partners are known. Additionally, Ms. Erickson stated that the updated UPWP draft includes each state's State Planning and Research (SPR) numbers, and an update to each state's planning studies list. Ms. Erickson concluded by saying that at the next TPB meeting, the board will be asked to vote on two resolutions: Amend the current UPWP with the carryover memo and approve the 2024 UPWP.

No questions or comments followed the presentation.

4. BRIEFING ON THE DRAFT FY 2024 COMMUTER CONNECTIONS WORK PROGRAM

Nicholas Ramfos stated that the latest version of the FY 2024 Work Program in the meeting agenda packet had been presented to the committee last month and to the Board and there were no comments that had been received or significant changes made to the draft document. He also stated that COG/TPB staff have recommended a change to the Flextime Rewards project to update the eligible corridors for the program based on the recent "Top Bottlenecks" analysis conducted by Andrew Meese's team and presented to this committee last December. The recommended change made would be vetted with the state funding agencies and if approved would be included in the final draft of the document and presented to the TPB on March 15th as part of the approval. If the document is approved, then the funding amounts would be verified in the current TIP. COG/TPB staff would then work with the state funding agencies to secure funding commitments and the program should be ready for implementation on July 1st. No questions or comments followed the presentation.

5. TPB WORK SESSION: WMATA BETTER BUS DISCUSSIONS

Eric Randall, TPB and Mark Phillips, WMATA briefed the committee on the outline for a work session to take place immediately prior to the March 15 board meeting, to discuss key issues for the WMATA Better Bus project. This was a request following the November board item on the Better Bus project. The goal of the work session is to help get input on regional coordination and cooperation on

activities that can improve bus transit, including bus prioritization, bus stop and shelter improvements, and the transition to zero-emissions buses. The details of the agenda were then reviewed.

Kanti Srikanth spoke on coordination with WMATA to arrange this work session and the importance of the topics to be covered. He emphasized it's not just about Metrobus, even though they are the largest transit operator. The three topics are important for all bus operators and jurisdictions, especially roadway owners. Member commitment is key to improving bus transit. TPB staff are also looking for activities or studies that can be undertaken to assist all members.

Gary Erenrich inquired if Montgomery County could also speak on its RideOn Reimagined study, which is taking place in parallel. He asked that a slide on activities outside WMATA be added to the overview presentation for the work session.

Vic Weissberg noted that Prince George's County is part of the Better Bus network redesign, but also has a separate transit vision plan. Dave Edmundson noted that this is also the case for Frederick County. Kanti agreed that many jurisdictions and agencies have their own plans, which should be acknowledged even though this work session is focused primarily on WMATA.

Note: At the March 3 Steering Committee, it was agreed to defer the work session to the morning of the April 19 TPB meeting.

INFORMATION ITEMS

6. VISUALIZE 2050: COMMENTS RECEIVED TO DATE, MARCH LISTENING SESSION DETAILS, MEMBERS TO REPORT ON PROGRESS AND ASK QUESTIONS

Ms. Lyn Erickson began by stating that this is a new informational item that will be on the committee's agenda every month with the purpose of summarizing what has happened with Visualize 2050 since the last conversation and to communicate the next planned steps. Next, Ms. Erickson referred to the listening session memo. These sessions will provide an opportunity for the members to speak directly with the agencies that enter the data and that are making the proposals. The main goal of the sessions is to allow the members to express their thoughts. Ms. Erickson then summarized the anticipated format of the listening sessions. No dates were finalized for the sessions at the time of this meeting.

Mr. Kanti Srikanth added that it is not always state DOTs making project decisions, sometimes it is the local government or transit agency. Mr. Srikanth emphasized that it would be beneficial for the staff of the member agencies to join the listening sessions. These sessions are elected officials telling agencies what they are expecting or what they would like to see in the proposed projects. Mr. Srikanth stated that the second intent of the sessions is to facilitate continuous dialogue between the board and member agencies so that there are no surprises later.

Mrs. Marcela Moreno then provided additional insight on the public comment process for the Visualize 2045 Project List, which will inform the Visualize 2050 update. Between February 15th and March 1st, three comments were received, in addition to one letter. Mrs. Moreno stated that the online comment forms do not replace the traditional engagement process, it is a supplement that provides insight on more specific projects. Mrs. Moreno concluded to say that any new comments will be shared with the tech committee and TPB monthly.

Ms. Erickson stated that there was a letter received from the Coalition for Smarter Growth. Ms. Erickson then summarized the contents of the letter which suggests for providing sponsor agency email contacts and holding meetings for members of the public. Moreover, the letter suggests providing additional project information and clarification on the Visualize 2050 webpage, to modify the comment form, to amend the FAQ document, and to provide detail on the listening sessions.

Mr. Kanti Srikanth added that the new comment form is designed to share the received comments to specific, relevant members to inform the decision-making process. The public comments will be continuously pulled and distributed to the committee and board members. Mr. Srikanth continued to say that this form allows people to not only comment on the projects in the current plan and project list, but to also suggest any project that is not currently proposed.

The following questions were asked.

Mr. Gary Erenrich inquired whether the TPB member listening sessions will be remote or in person. Mr. Srikanth replied that the meetings will be fully virtual because virtual meetings tend to have more participation and it will make it easier for all member agencies to join.

Mr. Gary Erenrich asked who will chair the meetings. Mr. Srikanth replied that the TPB has three officers, one chair, and two vice chairs, each working from one of the three different states. Thus, it will be ensured that a leader from each state will be present at their relevant listening sessions.

Mr. Gary Erenrich stated that he could see Maryland being consumed with their lanes project. Mr. Erenrich stated that he would like to see the outline of the listening session meeting to be functional classification/transportation infrastructure category based so that the time can be used across all project types. Mr. Srikanth responded that it is possible in any of the three meetings that one or two projects could consume the whole time. When the meeting invite is sent out, it will state that it is the opportunity for TPB members to provide input to their agency staff and it will state that they will have limited time and that they will be held to that time constraint. Ms. Erickson added that the listening sessions serve to kick start the communication process between the TPB and agency staff, thus people should not feel limited to this opportunity to express input.

Ms. Christine Hoeffner noticed on the COG Facebook page, there is an item on getting ready for Visualize 2050. Ms. Hoeffner asked if TPB staff have any other standard blurbs that can be shared out on social media related to public comment for Visualize 2050. Ms. Rachel Beyerle responded that she will share short blurbs that can be used for social media or in newsletters.

Mr. Victor Weissberg expressed that he shared Mr. Erenrich's concern on a single project taking up too much time. Mr. Weissberg asked TPB staff to consider ways to manage the session so that the conversations can be balanced. Ms. Kari Snyder responded that she understands this concern and that it will be addressed Committee.

7. MPO HOUSEHOLD TRAVEL SURVEYS - STATE OF THE PRACTICE

Dr. Joh and Ms. McCall presented this item to the TPB Technical Committee. Since the last regional household travel survey conducted in 2017/2018 (Regional Travel Survey), travel survey methods have been evolving to address the need to capture regional travel patterns more frequently due to emerging technologies and shifts in travel behavior from the pandemic. To address these needs, TPB staff conducted a project to consider the approach and methodology used for future household travel surveys by researching the latest methods and approaches. This presentation focused on findings from interviews conducted with peer MPOs conducted in the fall of 2022 and discussed next steps.

Mr. Canan noted that recommendations are a large part of the input we receive from the TPB Technical Committee and other stakeholders that will inform the final set of recommendations. He also noted that based on these findings, we probably need to move away from our previous model and move toward conducting more frequent travel surveys. Additionally, this is how it is set up within the UPWP and our work program; we are planning for future household travel surveys to be different from how it was conducted in the past as a once-a-decade survey.

Mr. Phillips noted that WMATA has a customer research group that is involved with survey research and would like to invite subject matter experts on our staff to provide input on their surveys.

Mr. Edmondson noted that for non-county jurisdictions such as the City of Frederick, an issue is ensuring that the survey data can be useful for conducting analyses for their jurisdiction. He asked about the possibility for jurisdictions to oversample for their jurisdiction. Ms. McCall responded that we want to keep this on our radar and will examine as we move forward; she also noted that historically we have worked with other jurisdictions and will plan to have a conversation with jurisdictions before developing recommendations.

Mr. Moran thanked Dr. Joh and Ms. McCall for conducting this research and for keeping the Travel Forecasting and Emissions Analysis team in the loop.

Mr. Srikanth commended that the once a decade household travel survey data is used in the travel demand forecasting model and that one of the criticisms that was received was that the data become out of date. Until the Regional Travel Survey data was collected, we were relying on the 2007/2008 household travel survey data which was before the big boom on teleworking and TNCs and we want to be able to capture the recent trend of travel behavior for long range transportation planning. He also noted that we will keep in mind the member jurisdictions who want to participate in an oversample and should be aware of the timeframe. Ms. McCall responded that if the survey is conducted more frequently, there may be more flexibility for jurisdictions to participate in an oversample compared with conducting the survey every ten years.

8. BRIEF OR LASTING: CHANGES TO BIKE AND PEDESTRIAN VOLUMES DURING AND AFTER THE PANDEMIC

Mr. Yu Gao presented research on bike and pedestrian volume before, during and after the COVID pandemic. Arlington's continuous, automated bicycle and pedestrian counters served as the primary source of data for this project. Mr. Gao explained that in the analysis all the locations were assigned into two groups: Primary Peak group and Primary Off-peak group based on key counter characteristics, including: weekday and weekend volume comparison and time of day volume distribution. For Primary Peak group, it was found that weekday use declined in 2020 and remains lower; weekend use initially increased in 2020 before returning to pre-pandemic levels; weekday hourly volume is more evenly distributed since 2020; and weekend hourly volume in 2020 is higher than pre-2020 and post-2020 for most hours. For Primary Off-peak group, it was found that weekday and weekend use both increased in 2020 before returning to pre-pandemic levels; weekday hourly volumes of post-2020 are more evenly distributed than pre-2020 and 2020; and weekend hourly volume of 2020 is higher than pre-2020 and post-2020 for most hours. Mr. Gao also shared the finding of the data from counters located in other jurisdictions in the region and discussed their similarities to the Arlington data.

Amir Shahpar asked why the post 2020 volume went down. Mr. Gao answered that due to COVID-19, the use of some trails initially increased significantly in 2020 and then returns to pre-pandemic levels. Mr. Shahpar also asked about the trip information of users. Nicole McCall responded that the findings in the presentation are purely based on the volume data from the counters and does not

provide detailed trip information like purpose. Mr. Shahpar suggested that the big data tools can be used to investigate more detailed trip information such as origin and destination. Tim Canon mentioned that FY 2024's work program includes an increased focus on active transportation regional count program and big data investment, which will help to answer more research questions. David Edmondson noted that the findings are interesting and consistent with the transit travel data he observed in downtown Frederick. He is interested to know the correlation between them. Nicholas Ramfos mentioned that the 2022 Bike to Work Day survey asked questions about commute trips and non-commute trips. The survey results are being finalized and he is willing to share the findings in the future.

9. MILITARY INSTALLATION RESILIENCE IN THE NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION: FOCUS ON TRANSPORTATION ELEMENTS

Ms. Rainone reviewed a set of slides reviewing past, current, and future resiliency planning work as it relates to the Department of Defense (DoD) in the National Capital Region and beyond. The presentation provided an overview of recently completed and planned resiliency studies, with a specific focus on transportation measures, at military installations in the region and peer metro areas.

10. FEDERAL CERTIFICATION REVIEW

Ms. Erickson briefed the committee on the Federal Certification Review and what will take place. Ms. Erickson mentioned that in the last review in 2019, the biggest recommendation from the feds was to update the agreement with Fredericksburg regarding their relationship with the TPB. Ms. Erickson stated that during the review, the TPB's public outreach efforts and Equity Emphasis Areas (EEAs) will be emphasized. The federal partners will then produce a written report that evaluates the TPB's performance, which will indicate whether we pass or not, and any corrective actions.

The following questions were asked:

Mr. Erenrich inquired whether any of the TPB agency member staff is needed at the Federal Review meetings. Ms. Erickson responded that member agency staff are not needed for participation but are welcome listen in through Webex.

Mr. Mark Phillips asked if anyone from WMATA is needed to attend the meeting and what subjects are needed to be discussed. Ms. Erickson responded that it is not likely that anyone from WMATA will be needed to attend.

11. OTHER BUSINESS

Ms. Nicole McCall spoke about the UPWP Technical Assistant Program and its benefits for applying. The program applies TPB-developed tools, techniques, data, and staff capabilities to conduct projects that vary from sub-area planning to travel modeling to data collection across metropolitan Washington. TPB staff usually support these projects; occasionally consultants are hired if special expertise or additional capacity is needed.

One of the past projects is the Market Assessment for VRE-MARC Run Through Service. The program also contributes funding to the Transportation/Land-Use Connections, Regional Roadway Safety, and Transit Within Reach programs. To be eligible for assistance you must be State and local governments as well as transit agencies in the National Capital Region that are members of the TPB may request technical assistance. Contact nmccall@mwcog.org for mor information.

Ms. Nicole McCall spoke to the committee about the Air Passenger Survey Pretest. This the 15th survey. The survey is moving to online from paper. In April, the survey test will start at Dulles airport and it will be at other airports in the future. There will be incentives to do the survey. For more information contact Ms. McCall (nmccall@mwcog.org)

Ms. Jane Posey told the committee that UPA have certified that our region has met the air quality standard (2015 ozone standard), We received a clean data determination so this means our region will start working on a redesignation request, Sandra Jackson FHWA, asked if we are going to be updating the MVEB because of the change MOVES model. Ms. Posey replied, yes, we will be updating MVEB because the new MVEB model for the 2008 ozone standard.

John explained that the TAP application period will not start until April 14th. The application for Maryland is for 1 month period. A survey was sent to past TAP awardees to find out if they are looking for future funding.

Carrie Snyder announced that MTA will hosting a virtual meeting on March 8, 2023. The meeting agenda will be discussing the Brunswick line study. Steven Miller, MDOT presented previously at a Technical Committee meeting.

ATTENDANCE

MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES PRESENT	
Mark Rawlings – DDOT Rebecca Schwartzman- DC Office of Planning Mark Mishler – Fredrick Co David Edmondson – City of Fredrick Brian Fields - Gaithersburg Eric Graye – M-NCPPC Kari Snyder – MD- DOT Gary Erenrich – Montgomery Co Victor Weissberg – Prince George Co Dan Malouff – Arlington Co Malcom Wattson – Fairfax Co Brian Leckie – City of Manassas	Sree Nampoothiri – No. VA Trans Auth Sophie Spillitopoulos - NVTC Cynthia Johnson - PRTC Amir Shahpar and Regina Moore – VDOT Amy Garbarini - VDRPT Nick Ruiz – VRE Mark Phillis – WMATA Laurel Hammig – NPS
OTHERS / MWCOG STAFF PRESENT	
Kanti Srikanth Lyn Erickson Kim Sutton Dusan Vuksan Sergio Ritacco Eric Randall Jane Posey Marcela Moreno Nicole McCall Yu Gao Nicholas Ramfos Ken Joh	Janie Nham Leo Pineda Tim Canan Mark Moran Rachel Beyerle William Bacon John Swanson Katherine Rainone Andrew Messe