



MEMORANDUM

TO: Transportation Planning Board
FROM: Lyn Erickson, Plan Development and Coordination Program Director
SUBJECT: Public Comment for the May 2023 TPB Meeting
DATE: May 17, 2023

The Transportation Planning Board accepts public comment on a rolling basis. Comments can be submitted via email (tpbcomment@mwkog.org), online (mwkog.org/tpbcomment), Visualize 2050 Initial Project List Feedback Form (<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Viz2050Update>), mail, and phone. Comments are collected until noon on the Tuesday before the TPB meeting. These comments are compiled and shared with the board at the meeting the following day.

Public comments received from the Visualize 2050 feedback form are shared with the TPB Technical Committee at their monthly meeting. Comments already shared with the Technical Committee are denoted with an asterisk (*). Comments received after the May 2023 Technical Committee meeting will be shared at June's meeting.

Between noon at Tuesday, April 18 and noon on Tuesday, May 16, 2023, the TPB received two submissions from the Visualize 2050 Initial Project List Feedback Form and four comments submitted via email.

The comments are summarized below. All full comments are attached to this memo.

PUBLIC COMMENT FROM VISUALIZE 2050 FEEDBACK FORM

Anonymous – Project Comment via Online Form – April 25, 2023*

A commenter shared feedback about the US 15 Improvements and John Marshall Widening in Virginia. They expressed support for the US 15 Improvements citing traffic and concern about the at-grade railroad crossing. They also expressed support for the John Marshall Widening project.

Eric Englin – Project Comment via Online Form – May 2, 2023*

Englin shared feedback about the Union Station to Georgetown Line expressing support for the extension to improve equity and east-west connectivity. They also suggested that Visualize 2050 should consider the other aspects of the DC Streetcar plan.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Gail Sullivan – Comment via Email – April 21, 2023

Sullivan, a member of the Community Advisory Committee, submitted a comment about TPB's Coordinated Plan. They provided input on having adequate signal timing to allow for older adults or people with disabilities to cross an intersection, and transit schedules providing time for transfers that require road crossings.

Arlene Montemarano – Article via Email – May 1, 2023

Montemarano forwarded an email from Don't Widen 270 with commentary expressing their disapproval for the project.

Tad Aburn – Letters via E-mail – May 12, 2023

Aburn provided a letter addressed to MWCOG leadership, including TPB Chair Reuben Collins, providing comments about environmental concerns related to transportation in the region.

Tad Aburn – Letters via E-mail – May 16, 2023

Aburn provided a public comment asking the TPB to address two questions related to environmental justice and climate change in regional transportation planning. They also attached two letters addressed to the TPB Technical Committee and Community Advisory Committee.

Public Comment Received from February 15 – May 16, 2023

The comments outlined below were received from the Visualize 2020 Initial Project List Feedback Form (<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Viz2050Update>) from February 15 – May 16, 2023 at 12PM. TPB staff has organized the original responses to the feedback form by state. Comments are reported monthly at the TPB Technical Committee and TPB meetings.

Table 1. District of Columbia Project Comment

Date	Project	How did you learn about this project?	I support this project's inclusion in Visualize 2050?	Explain why you support/do not support the project's inclusion in the Visualize 2050. You can also share other comments about the project's inclusion in the plan.	Name
2/28/2023	Union Station to Georgetown Streetcar Line	Project webpage	Neutral		
3/22/2023	Union Station to Georgetown Streetcar Line	Project webpage	Strongly agree		Mark Scheufler
4/13/2023	District-wide Bicycle and Pedestrian Management Program	Project webpage	Strongly disagree	the existing bike lanes have constrained and restricted traffic flow. This program does not increase traffic throughput, it in fact impedes it. Secondly, because the bike lanes are both on the right hand side of the road and the fact that it is slowing traffic has increased the danger to both bike riders, pedestrians, and drivers by forcing the drivers to make a right hand turn from the middle lane.	
4/13/2023	Union Station to Georgetown Streetcar Line	Project webpage	Strongly disagree	Given the constraints to traffic from the bike lanes, further impeding traffic in a high traffic area by taking away lanes for a street car makes no sense. If the bike lanes go away, then and only then, does it make sense to remove another lane for street cars.	

5/2/2023	Union Station to Georgetown Streetcar Line	Advocacy organization	Strongly agree	The current streetcar route does not provide significant transit benefits because the route is too short to connect many destinations on a trip. The extension west (together with the currently planned extension east to Benning Road) has the potential to fill a significant transportation gap and should be used together with mixed-use development along the corridor to create an excellent east-west corridor for DC. There would be significant equity benefits by connecting east of the river neighborhoods with downtown DC, and there is potential to facilitate tourism as the Streetcar could support trips taken from Georgetown or the white house area to reach difficult-to-reach areas like H Street Corridor or the Anacostia River.	Eric Englin
----------	--	-----------------------	----------------	---	-------------

Table 2. District of Columbia Project Suggestions

	Do you have any suggested projects that should be considered for the long-range transportation plan (Visualize 2050)?	Name
5/2/2023	Visualize 2050 should consider the wider Streetcar plan that DC had developed and evaluate the potential costs/benefits in relation to other transit or road projects. Ideally, this could also take into account potential economic development that takes place when infrastructure is put into a fixed place, rather than a bus route that could move with relatively little notice.	Eric Englin

Table 3. Maryland Project Comment

	Project	How did you learn about this project?	I support this project's inclusion in Visualize 2050?	Explain why you support/do not support the project's inclusion in the Visualize 2050. You can also share other comments about the project's inclusion in the plan.	Name
3/13/2023	I-270"	Advocacy organization	Disagree	Any highway widening project 1) will induce MORE driving, not less, adding more pollution to the air, and 2) is a missed opportunity to invest in better bus rapid transit, light rail, or heavy rail. If so many people are using these highways and getting stuck in traffic it's a sign to "upgrade" to a higher-capacity system like buses or rail. Please apply my comment to any and all proposed highway widening projects in Maryland.	
3/13/2023	MARC Improvements	Advocacy organization	Strongly agree	We NEED to prioritize better rail infrastructure. Electrification; greater service frequency; and better connections to other public transit systems must be top of the list and should be prioritized above ANY highway-widening projects to meet our climate goals and protect the environment for our children.	
3/17/2023	MD 28/MD 198 Corridor Study, Potomac River Bridge to Loudon County Connecting MD-28 Into Dulles, VA	Friend/colleague, Lived EXPERIENCE	Strongly agree	We badly need another Potomac River crossing connecting Montgomery County, MD and Loudon County, VA. For security, faster transport, better economics, and so much more.	Greg Visscher
3/18/2023	Op Lanes Maryland Phase 1	News/media, It impacts an organization I'm affiliated with	Strongly disagree	It will damage the environment, worsen climate change, will only benefit the wealthy and the developers, widening roads doesn't reduce traffic	Nancy Soreng

				and the American Legion Bridge is structurally sound and just needs re-decking	
3/18/2023	Brunswick Line	Advocacy organization	Strongly agree	Expanding more frequent trains would take pressure off I 270 and be better for the environment	Nancy Soreng
3/20/2023	Montrose Parkway	Neighborhood/civic association	Neutral	The verbal description of the project and previous information I received described this as a NEW road. But the map included with the description shows just the segment crossing the railroad tracks. I SUPPORT re-routing the road above the railroad tracks. That crossing is extremely dangerous and I currently try to avoid it whenever possible.	Mary Stickles
3/20/2023	Veirs Mill Bus Rapid Transit	Neighborhood/civic association	Strongly agree	More and more reliable east-west transit routes are needed in the MD DC suburbs. Bus rapid transit seems to be the quickest and most cost effective option. I also support the pedestrian and bike improvements along that route.	Mary Stickles
3/20/2023	Brunswick Line	Project webpage	Strongly agree	We need more and more dependable transit options in the MD DC suburbs. Brunswick line does not run frequently enough to be well used as it could be.	Mary Stickles
3/24/2023	Op Lanes Maryland Phase 1	Neighborhood/civic association		I submit this article from WAPO, in case you missed it. Good points. www.washingtonpost.com washingtonpost.com Opinion Maryland residents won when a toll-lane plan failed Mar. 21st, 2023 Kudos to the people of Maryland for getting Transurban to walk away. Its expensive, lopsided project would ultimately yield little to no benefit to Marylanders. I recently moved away from Northern Virginia, where traffic is seemingly as bad as it has ever been. A thoughtful, multifaceted plan that could include toll roads would prove far superior to the	Arlene Montemarano

				<p>Transurban profit-oriented model, and it would be much less expensive to complete through traditional governmental project financing. Tolls would be lower, and the project would not come with revenue guarantees and noncompete clauses that come with many public-private partnership contracts. Virginia is locked into decades of such restrictions with Transurban, such as not being allowed to expand Metro's Orange Line for 10 years, little say over toll prices, and not being able to improve secondary roads to ease traffic without Transurban approval, plus state revenue subsidies if HOV riders are too numerous. This interferes with local governmental autonomy to provide for citizens and is contrary to the goals of an effective transportation program. I urge Marylanders to embrace this opportunity to build an effective plan for the new era. You have dodged a bullet; the real tragedy would be if Transurban returns. Robert McGary, Glen Allen, Va.</p>	
3/26/2023	Op Lanes Maryland Phase 1 (Creating more of a heat sink as the planet gets hotter.)	Advocacy organization	Strongly disagree	<p>There are a multitude of reasons to remove this project. Here is another that should be taken seriously: Heat. In addition to the well-researched fact that induced car travel offsets the temporal traffic fluidity gained after adding a new lane, there is the large amount of heat that additional pavement generates which is permanent, not temporal. That reality is explained by the fundamental thermal formula $Q = Mc\Delta T$ where Q is the amount of heat released, M the mass (of a new lane in this case), c the specific heat of the material (concrete or asphalt in this case), and ΔT the temperature increase. Given the large M added with a miles-long new lane, a large amount of pavement heat (Q) will be generated when</p>	Arlene Montemarano

				temperature increases (1" T). With summers becoming hotter and hotter, there is nothing trivial about the additional heat that new pavement brings.	
4/15/2023	Op Lanes Maryland Phase 1	Multiple sources	Strongly disagree	This project is deeply concerning because of the climate impact it would have. It would also likely generate additional traffic overall and on other roads that do not have capacity to support them.	Kacy Kostiuk
4/15/2023	Governor Harry W. Nice/Senator Thomas "Mac" Middleton Bridge Replacement Project	Serving on the TPB previously	Strongly disagree	This project does not allow for bike lanes, which the TPB previously requested as part of the project. Although this project is now likely farther along in the process, I hope MDOT will reconsider options to support bike lanes on this project.	Kacy Kostiuk
4/15/2023	MARC Run-through service to Virginia	Project webpage	Strongly agree	Improved rail would be a great asset and a big improvement to allow for residents living further away from the region's center alternatives to driving	Kacy Kostiuk
4/15/2023	MD 650 New Hampshire Avenue BRT	Neighborhood/civic association	Strongly agree	The New Hampshire Ave BRT project would be very beneficial to numerous neighborhoods and would improve connectivity with other high occupancy transit options (especially the Purple Line and the Red Line).	Kacy Kostiuk

Table 4. Virginia Project Comment

	Project	How did you learn about this project?	I support this project's inclusion in Visualize 2050?	Explain why you support/do not support the project's inclusion in the Visualize 2050. You can also share other comments about the project's inclusion in the plan.	Name
2/27/2023	Arcola Boulevard Improvements	Friend/colleague	Neutral		
2/27/2023	I-66 Improvements		Strongly disagree	The Transform I-66 Megaprojects--both outside and inside the Beltway--have largely been completed. If there are a few remaining elements from those projects that VDOT wants to retain in Visualize 2050, those elements should be resubmitted as separate, clearly described projects. Also, any additional widening of I-66 inside the Beltway should be clearly tied to a firm commitment by VDOT to toll I-66 in both directions, either during the eight peak weekday commuting hours or ideally 24/7. Finally, VDOT should reconfigure its tolling system inside the Beltway to reduce the tolls to zero whenever that segment would be free-flowing at 55 MPH.	Allen Muchnick
3/3/2023	I-66 Improvements (CE1956: I-66 and US 29 Interchange, Widen and Construct US 29 and VA 55)	Project webpage (The project map depicts downtown DC.)	Strongly disagree	I believe the \$255 Million project described at I-66 and Rte 29 in Gainesville has been completed. Any incomplete or future elements should be resubmitted as a separate new project.	

3/3/2023	Grant Avenue Road Diet		Neutral	This project is largely, if not entirely, funded and about to go to construction. If any element is not fully funded for construction, it should be resubmitted as a new, separate, re-scoped project. This project would not expand roadway capacity.	Allen Muchnick
3/13/2023	VA 123 Widening (Fairfax)	Advocacy organization	Strongly disagree	Any lane widening plan is doomed to failure from the start. The last thing needed is an extra lane for such useless endeavors. Especially when it makes the commute worse by creating an induced demand of vehicles thus creating more traffic than necessary. Northern Virginia is already polluted with enough cars and enough traffic, the last thing we need is a wider lane just for more traffic to congest it all over again. Northern Virginia requires more bike lanes, more train lines, more anything else but highway/freeway/route lane expansions. We NEED less traffic and less people in cars not more people in cars and more congestion on our roads.	
3/14/2023	VA 7, Widen, any road widening		Strongly disagree	adding additional general road travel lanes increases miles driven through induced demand. this is incompatible with making the Washington area reduce its carbon foot print and should be strongly discouraged to not make the climate problem worse	Steve Wardell

3/15/2023	VA 28 Widening, General Comment - stop widening roads. This induces more driving over time, increasing emissions and hurting the region's climate goals.		Strongly disagree	There are far too many roadway widening projects in this plan. Widening roadways induces additional driving over time, increasing emissions and moving the region further from its stated climate goals. The majority of funding should be spent on maintaining existing infrastructure and expanding climate-friendly modes of travel: public transportation and active transportation like biking and walking. Continuing to spend the majority of money on roadway widening is climate arson.	
3/15/2023	Duke Street BRT Design & Construction	Project webpage, i live in the Duke St corridor	Strongly agree	BRT projects like the one on Duke St are beneficial to climate and enable more people to travel without relying on cars. Transit and bike/ped projects like this should receive the vast majority of funding	Alex Goyette
3/16/2023	Richmond Highway Corridor Improvements	Fairfax County Alert	Strongly agree		

3/22/2023	Route 1 Improvements, CE2161	Project webpage	Disagree	Remove widening VA 123 to 6 lanes from Annapolis Way to US 1 (VP10g) from the project. Less than 20000 AADT does not warrant the high priority highway expansion. Developer can improve roadway as needed.	Mark Scheufler
3/22/2023	Rippon Boulevard Extension	Project webpage	Strongly agree	Update Project Description to future scope	Mark Scheufler
3/22/2023	Wellington Road Improvements	Project webpage	Neutral	CE3695 - Update Project Description to future scope/Combine with CE2145	Mark Scheufler

3/22/2023	Route 1 Improvements	Project webpage	Neutral	CE1942 - Update Project Description to future scope [Align with High Capacity Transit]	Mark Scheufler
3/22/2023	Route 1 Improvements	Project webpage	Neutral	CE2685 - Remove/Consolidate/Update Project Description to future scope [Align with High Capacity Transit]	Mark Scheufler
3/22/2023	Route 1 Improvements	Project webpage	Disagree	CE3180 - Update Project Description to future scope [Align with High Capacity Transit] - Project is restricted due to I-95 Express Lane Concessionaire Agreement https://p3.virginia.gov/docs/95-395_Third_ARCA_executed/95-395_Third_ARCA_(Executed).pdf	Mark Scheufler

3/22/2023	Catharpin Road, Widening	Project webpage	Disagree	Local Project. Project should be funded by developer/proffer as needed	Mark Scheufler
3/22/2023	McGraws Corner Drive	Project webpage	Disagree	Local Project. Project should be funded by developer/proffer as needed	Mark Scheufler
3/22/2023	Vint Hill Road Improvements	Project webpage	Disagree	Local Project. Project should be funded by developer/proffer as needed	Mark Scheufler

3/22/2023	John Marshall Widening		Disagree	CE3694 - Local Project. Project should be funded by developer/proffer as needed	Mark Scheufler
3/22/2023	Dale City Parkway Node New Through Boulevard	Project webpage	Disagree	Local Project. Project should be funded by developer/proffer as needed	Mark Scheufler
3/22/2023	Battlefield Park Bypass Project	Project webpage	Strongly disagree	Recommend Route 29 Alternate Alignment	Mark Scheufler

3/22/2023	US 15 Improvements		Neutral	CE3162 - Combine with CE1803	Mark Scheufler
4/25/2023	US 15 Improvements	Project webpage	Strongly agree	I'm assuming this is the project to widen US 15 and build a railroad overpass near the Town of Haymarket (CE1803). If not, please file these comments under that project. This is a badly overdue project that causes both congestion and safety issues to this day. Traffic on this stretch of US 15 has grown significantly over the last 10 years and it not only serves as a 2-lane bottleneck on a 4-lane road, but also a high-risk area due to the at-grade railroad crossing. This project would go a long way in lessening both congestion and injuries/fatalities.	
4/25/2023	John Marshall Widening	Project webpage	Strongly agree		

Table 5. Virginia Project Suggestions

	Do you have any suggested projects that should be considered for the long-range transportation plan (Visualize 2050)?	Name
2/27/2023	BRT	
3/17/2023	A POTOMAC RIVER CROSSING to connect Loudon County VA to Montgomery County MD and stop the ridiculous commute down and into the beltway and then back out west simply to get to Dulles area or points west.	Greg Visscher

3/22/2023	<p>1. Occoquan to Neabsco Creek 3rd/4th Track Project (VPRA TRV) - Phase 3 2. Neabsco Creek to Quantico 3rd/4th Track Project (VPRA TRV) - Phase 3 3. Alexandria to Springfield 4th Track Project (VPRA TRV) - Phase X 4. Franconia to Occoquan 4th Track Project (VPRA TRV) - Phase X 5. I-95 Bi-Directional Express Lanes Dale City to Springfield 6. I-95 Bi-Directional Express Lanes Stafford CL to Dale City 7. North Woodbridge to Potomac Mills Fixed Guideway Study (Bus Transit/Rail) 8. US 1 Bus Rapid Transit (Woodbridge to Dumfries) 9. VA28/Old Centreville Rd Bus Rapid Transit (Manassas to Centreville) 10. VA234 Business Bus Rapid Transit 11. Route 29 Alternate (Close Route 29/Remove Battlefield Bypass) 12. I-66 Trail over Bull Run 13. Active Transportation Interstate crossings 14. 2nd Rosslyn WMATA Station 15. Fair Oak WMATA Station</p>	Mark Scheufler
-----------	---	----------------

Table 6. Multi-jurisdictional Project Suggestions

	Do you have any suggested projects that should be considered for the long-range transportation plan (Visualize 2050)?	Name
2/27/2023	Complete all unbuilt segments of the National Capital Trail Network by 2030. Each unbuilt trail segment should be listed as a separate project.	Allen Muchnick
3/3/2023	Complete all unbuilt segments of the TPB's National Capital Trail Network by 2030. The individual trail segments could be listed as separate, standalone trail projects. For Prince William County, the key projects would include 1) the East Coast Greenway (Occoquan River to Stafford County line), 2) the I-66 Trail (Route 15 to Bull Run Rd in Fairfax County, especially the crossing of Bull Run from the east end of Balls Ford Rd [and perhaps also from Vandoor Dr]), 3) the Rte 234/Manassas Bypass Trail from Brentsville Rd to I-66/VA-29 in Gainesville, 4) all Minnieville Rd shared-use path gaps, especially north of Rte 294 (erroneously depicted as existing), 5) Shared-use path crossings of I-95 and US-1, especially at Rte 234, Rte 294, Rte 123, Dale Blvd, and Opitz Blvd, 6) Rte 29 Trail (Fairfax Co. line to Fauquier Co. line), and 7) Signal Hill Rd from Liberia Ave to Signal View Dr (also erroneously depicted as existing). The other NCTN elements in PWC would presumably be built as part of concurrent road widening projects which are of otherwise dubious value.	Allen Muchnick

3/13/2023	Cancel all highway widening projects - they will only increase car pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, making our planet hotter and deadlier. All money should be invested in electrification and public transportation, as well as making towns and cities accessible by bike and on foot.	
3/14/2023	congestion pricing projects	Steve Wardell
3/18/2023	Incentives to continue and expand telecommuting for work, medical appointments, meetings and government hearings.	Nancy Soreng

Marcela Moreno

From: GAIL SULLIVAN <glsullivan@verizon.net>
Sent: Friday, April 21, 2023 12:57 AM
To: TPBcomment
Subject: TPB Coordinated Plan

Hello,

1. When a senior or disabled person attempts to cross an intersection with a light, the timing is never enough to allow a safe crossing. It is even worse if there is a barrier in the middle to separate multiple lanes and the person has to stop on a narrow strip to wait for the next light cycle.
2. The schedule for mass transit doesn't take into account the person needing to catch the cross transit to complete their destination. If my connecting transit gives me less time to get there even if it is right across the street or the connecting transit is there it will take me a little longer.

Gail Sullivan

Sent from my iPad

Marcela Moreno

From: Arlene Montemarano <mikarl@starpower.net>
Sent: Monday, May 1, 2023 11:21 PM
Subject: Yes, but...

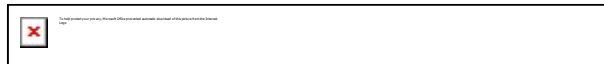
So excellent. And so worthwhile for the time it takes to read and follow its links.

Until this project is officially cancelled, the reality is we are still in jeopardy. Right now the project is leaning off a cliff. Com'on guys. Let's push.

=====

On 4/23/2023 8:29 AM, Don't Widen 270 wrote:

[View this email in your browser](#)



Yes, but...

Maryland Matters does as good a job as anyone summing up the toll-lane project's current status: "[Next steps are not immediately clear.](#)"

YES: Toll-giant Transurban has [exited the I-495/I-270 project](#). A big step in the right direction.

BUT: Pro-highway interests keep pushing toll lanes, and we don't know what the Moore administration will do.

YES: Gov. Moore [has pledged](#) to address the project through the "lens of equity... the lens of environmental protection" and to [leave no one behind](#).

BUT: He hasn't said "no" to a vastly inequitable project that benefits only the wealthiest.

YES: Making smart, collaborative decisions about regional transportation is immensely complex. The Moore administration needs time to do it right.

BUT: What doesn't take time is announcing ASAP the end of any version of Hogan's hugely harmful leftover of a plan. [A plan that lacks public support](#). A plan that would require Moore to spend the rest of his first term imposing destructive construction on an unwilling public, only to leave them [worse off](#) than before.

As long as any version of the toll-lane scheme remains on the table, our broad coalition will keep actively opposing it and pressing for the smarter [alternatives](#). (See "Look to the List!" and "Latest Lawsuit", below).



Northbound I-495 toll lanes between Tysons and Route 50 at peak congestion. General lanes (with no inside shoulder) are packed; toll lanes are empty. Maryland chose the same design.

Action Item

The fate of the toll lane project may be decided soon. Governor Moore [repeatedly said](#) he wants “engagement with local partners...” Lobbyists and special interests are [working hard to get the governor’s ear](#). Our county elected officials need to be in that mix, actively calling for an end to this harmful plan.

Write to the Montgomery County Council today. Urge them to call on the Moore Administration to cancel the toll lane plan now in favor of the effective [alternatives](#). Use your own heartfelt/worried/impassioned words to explain why you oppose the project.

Send your message to county.council@montgomerycountymd.gov. Your message will be distributed to the Council President and all County Council members.

Look to the List!

Anyone who doubts the breadth of opposition to the public-private toll lane scheme should check out the more than 70 organizational signers of [this powerful letter](#) to Transportation Sec. Wiedefeld.

Signing on: Unions, the Natural Resources Defense Council, the NAACP, civic groups, environmental coalitions, the Sierra Club of Maryland, transit advocates, conservationists, foundations, grassroots orgs, homeowners’ associations, scientific associations, sports orgs, faith ministries, the City of Rockville, and on and on. It’s a gathering of advocacy forces that collectively represent hundreds of thousands of Marylanders who know a very bad deal when they see one. All are urging Governor Moore to make the only call consistent with his goals and values: end the toll lane scheme and pivot to future-looking [alternatives](#) that will truly meet public needs.

Latest Lawsuit

A dark hallmark of the toll-lane plan has been the relentless effort by MDOT and others to hide information from the public. Now the Maryland Transit Opportunities Coalition, our trusted partner, has filed a [lawsuit](#) to force the Federal Highway Administration to share documentation about the project. The suit calls out in particular the [mysterious Capital Beltway Accord](#), the much publicized, never seen bi-state “agreement” that may or may not exist, may or may not govern Maryland financial commitments for the next 50 years, may or may not constrain Maryland transportation policy for generations. Thank you for filing, MTOC.

The construction/destruction that awaits us if Moore says ‘yes’.



Just one example: sound wall down, trees felled. Prep for toll lane construction. Northbound I-495 near Georgetown Pike, 4/12/23.

You can easily see what will happen in MD if the toll lane project goes forward. Just take a drive on I-495 in Northern VA. Under Hogan, MDOT’s project was designed to be a continuation of VDOT’s 495 NEXT project, which is now under construction.

- See [VDOT’s chillingly business-as-usual description](#) of neighborhood sound wall removal, tree clearing, pile driving.

- Read about the actual devastating impact on communities in [this lawsuit](#) filed by the Northern Virginia Citizen's Association.
- See [this warning from VA residents](#) to Marylanders, published in Maryland Matters.

We need to make our voices heard! Write to the Montgomery County Council today at county.council@montgomerycountymd.gov.

There's Strength in Numbers: Help us Grow Our Mailing List

People who read our newsletters take action, and our elected officials take notice! Help spread the word about what we can do to safeguard our environment and promote healthy, efficient, and fair transportation options.

Tell your friends and neighbors they can join our newsletter email list by going to dontwiden270.org/get-involved and checking the "keep me informed" box. Our website is dontwiden270.org.



Copyright (C) 2023 Don't Widen 270. All rights reserved. You are receiving this email because you signed up through a petition, on our website, dontwiden270.org, or through our Facebook page, facebook.com/dontwiden270. Our mailing address is:

Don't Widen 270

P.O. Box 10461

Rockville, Maryland 20849

[Add us to your address book](#)

Want to change how you receive these emails? You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe](#)

--

Arlene Montemarano, 240-360-8691, Lawndale Drive

The State's plan to add 4 private toll lanes to 495 and 270 will have significant, irreversible negative impacts on Maryland, its air, water, land, climate, residents and communities, historic resources, ecosystems, flora, and fauna.....Sierra Club. I would add its finances, which will be hobbled for 50 years, by contract. And The Project will more than double the current square footage of impervious surface as compared to the existing eight-lane Beltway.

--

Arlene Montemarano, 240-360-8691, Lawndale Drive

The State's plan to add 4 private toll lanes to 495 and 270 will have

significant, irreversible negative impacts on Maryland, its air, water, land, climate, residents and communities, historic resources, ecosystems, flora, and fauna.....Sierra Club. I would add its finances, which will be hobbled for 50 years, by contract. And The Project will more than double the current square footage of impervious surface as compared to the existing eight-lane Beltway.

Tad Aburn
39724 East Sun Drive, Unit 213
Fenwick Island, DE 19944
tadaburn@gmail.com
(443) 829-3652

May 12, 2023

Clark Mercer, Executive Director, Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOCG)

Kate Stewart, Chair, MWCOCG Board

Anita Bonds, Chair, Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee (MWAQC)

Reuben Collins, Chair, MWCOCG Transportation Planning Board (TPB)

Takis Karantonis, MWCOCG Climate, Energy & Environment Policy Committee (CEEPC)

777 North Capitol St. N.E.

Suite 300

Washington, DC 20002

RE: An Offer to Help Address Critical Environmental Problems That May Disrupt the Regions Transportation Plan

Executive Director Mercer, Board Chair Stewart, and Chairs Bonds, Collins and Karantonis:

I am writing again today to respectfully ask for your help and to offer my assistance to ensure that critical environmental issues that affect public health in the region and also have the potential to cripple the region's transportation plan are not overlooked.

For reasons that I do not totally understand, MWCOCG staff is ... I believe ... is either intimidated by me ... thinks I want to attack MWCOCG ... or that I have simply gone off the deep end. None of this is accurate. I want to be of assistance. I have great respect for the leadership MWCOCG has demonstrated. Most importantly, I am not just an environmental advocate ... I understand the critical need for a robust economy and how critical the region's transportation plan is to driving economic growth, and improving the quality of life for the region's residents.

A little background on me ... I am an Ivy League educated environmental professional who spent my entire 40 year career working to resolve environmental issues by looking for innovative, win-win solutions that balance environmental protection with economic prosperity. I was the head of the State of Maryland programs for air quality and climate

change. I was a member of MWAQC for many years and held numerous other leadership positions for many national and regional environmental policy groups.

I am now retired and very driven to test my new role as an “unshackled”, very well informed member of the general public. I believe very strongly that collaboration is much better than confrontation for finding solutions. As the Maryland Air Director, I was involved in policy development processes that were very collaborative ... but also involved in efforts that were much more confrontational - usually driven by legal challenges or media attacks. In my opinion, Collaboration and partnerships are by far the best way (for all parties) to find solutions. One of my post-retirement pet projects is the issue of the role public participation has in developing policy. I am writing a paper on this issue with several colleagues and chose the MWCOG region as my focus, not because the DMV has the worst environmental problems, but because I have seen the region and its elected officials show real leadership on resolving very difficult issues. I am also very familiar with the issues and processes in the region.

If you would like to ask other MWCOG leaders about my background, expertise and persistence, I would encourage you to talk to Phil Mendelson or Tom Dernoga who both have experience working with me. I have great respect for both ... they are truly concerned about the environment but also strive to find the win-win solutions I mentioned earlier.

Here is my ask. I would like to help.

I would like to work collaboratively with MWCOG to help develop and implement strategies to address the two most politically charged environmental issues of the post-pandemic era ... climate change and environmental justice. Both issues are extremely challenging ... technically and politically. They are both primarily driven by emissions from the transportation sector and have disproportionately high impacts on communities of color and other overburdened communities. I believe that there are win-win solutions to both issues.

Again, I would like to help. I believe that by being a leadership area on these two issues that the MWCOG region would receive positive national recognition. Innovative, win-win programs are also very important to elected officials whose constituents want environmental protection, good jobs and a high quality of life.

In closing, I feel that I need to raise one final concern. I have an interesting relationship with the MWCOG staff. Kanti and I go way back and I have great respect for his leadership and expertise on transportation issues. That said, My relationship with the transportation community has always been very edgy. At times in the past, I have pushed very hard on the transportation planning process to do better on environmental issues. So hard in fact, that the only two times in my career where I almost lost my “at-the-pleasure” job with the State of Maryland were both linked to my perhaps overly aggressive pushing on transportation.

I believe that Kanti and I also consider each other as friends ... an interesting and sometimes challenging friendship built from mutual respect. We are both strong-willed and very knowledgeable in our areas of expertise. I am worried that my pushing has become a personal issue with Kanti. The current approach being used by MWCOG staff* is basically to ignore me and to hope that I go away. I believe that strategy is a counter-productive approach that could lead to confrontation and is good for no one ... the public, the environment, transportation and economic growth in the region and MWCOG and its elected leadership.

I would like to be helpful. The two environmental issues I am pushing are real, becoming increasingly important and evolving very rapidly. New data and analysis is coming out every day. The linkage to transportation is no longer a question. The disproportionate impact on communities of color is also no longer a question. The federal government is frantically working to update environmental and transportation rules and policies linked to federal approvals and federal funding linked to these issues. These facts combine to make the risk to the region's air quality and transportation plans (and economic prosperity) very high. MWCOG is well recognized for getting out in front of these types of very tough issues.

With great respect,

George S. Aburn Jr.

Tad Aburn
tadaburn@gmail.com
(443) 829-3652

Cc: Kanti Srikanth, Deputy Executive Director, MWCOG
Phil Mendelson, Chair, DC Council
Ted Dernoga, Prince George's County Council

** Lyn Erikson and Wyehta Lipford have generally been more responsive*

Comments for the May 17, 2023 TPB Meeting

Tad Aburn

tadaburn@gmail.com

(443) 829-3652

Mr. Chairman, Board members, thank you again for providing the opportunity to provide public comment today.

My name is Tad Aburn. Last year I was the Chair of the MWAQC Technical Advisory Committee. I was an MWAQC member for over 10 years. For almost 20 years I was the director of the air pollution program in Maryland. I am now retired and commenting today as a concerned citizen working on behalf of several communities in Prince George's County.

For the past six months, I have submitted comments and letters to TPB on three major issues that are now critical issues strongly linked to the transportation planning process:

- Environmental Justice at both the local and regional level,
- Climate Change, and
- Transparency

Additional details and examples of these issues are provided in earlier comments and letters and available to TPB and its Committees from COG staff and through the TPB website.

My comment today again asks TPB to provide a summary or a response to my earlier comments and letters by providing a response to two basic questions:

- 1. "What is the TPB doing to address the way that regional transportation planning and projects are unintentionally creating very high-risk air pollution hot-spots in communities of color and other underserved communities."**
- 2. "What is the TPB doing to ensure that the climate change strategies that are now being developed to meet current (but weak and out of date) regional goals are sufficient ... and will also not result in an inefficient use of federal and state transportation dollars."**

In closing, I respectfully request that TPB provide a summary of plans or actions to address the questions above. I would also like to ask TPB (per guidance from COG staff) to directly distribute the attached letters to the members of the TPB Technical Committee and the TPB Community Advisory Committee for their June meetings. I do not believe that my earlier letters to these two TPB Committees were ever sent directly to the Committee members. I do have concerns over this public participation/transparency policy as the TPB Committees should be able to receive public comment directly.

Tad Aburn
39724 East Sun Drive, Unit 213
Fenwick Island, DE 19944
tadaburn@gmail.com
(443) 829-3652

May 17, 2023

Marc Rawlings
Chair, MWCOG Transportation Planning Board (TPB) Technical Committee
777 North Capitol St. N.E.
Suite 300
Washington, DC 20002

RE: Request to Provide a Short Briefing at the June 2,2023 TPB Technical Committee Meeting

Chairman Rawlings, members of the TPB Technical Committee:

I am writing to request an opportunity to provide a short briefing on June 2nd to TPB Tech on several emerging data and technical analyses issues that I believe are being overlooked.

I understand that “public comment” can only be made at full TPB meetings and will continue to do so. The TPB Technical Committee however, routinely asks individuals with certain expertise to, at the request of the Chair, provide briefings to the Committee. I am asking the Chair to allow me to provide such a briefing.

My name is Tad Aburn. Last year I was the Chair of the MWAQC Technical Advisory Committee. I was an MWAQC member for over 10 years. For almost 20 years I was the director of the air pollution program in Maryland. I have considerable experience with the transportation conformity process and transportation related air pollution problems. I am now retired and commenting today as a volunteer working for several Prince George's County communities and as a concerned citizen.

My short comments would focus on the new data and technical analysis that is now available for key transportation issues that create air pollution and climate change. These issues could be major problems for TPB as the region moves forward with new transportation plans and Visualize 2045. These data and analyses provide new insights into how transportation is affecting environmental justice and climate change issues ... two of the highest priority environmental issues in the MWCOG region and nationally.

As you know, the federal government is actively working on revisions to its policies on environmental justice and climate change resulting from transportation projects. I know that TPB prides itself on the use of cutting edge data and getting ahead of issues that are evolving very quickly. I would encourage you to begin to look at these new data and analyses.

The new data and analysis are briefly described below:

- New data and analyses on the significant role that transportation plays in creating air pollution hot-spots in communities of color/environmental justice communities is now available or becoming available. Three examples include:
 - The hyper-local air monitoring data in the Cheverly area of Prince George's County where MDE has completed analyses linking high-risk air pollution hot-spots to transportation sources and the air pollution plume from the Washington DC ozone nonattainment area,
 - The research quality data around the Ivy City area in the District that, in a recent MWAQC briefing on the science of air pollution, Dr. Russell Dickerson from the University of Maryland called the black carbon levels in Ivy City "alarming", and
 - The analytical work performed by Dr. Sacoby Wilson's University of Maryland Center for Community Engagement, Environmental Justice and Health (CEEJH) that identifies priority environmental justice areas and provides linkages to the transportation sector.
- Emerging data and analyses on greenhouse gas emissions that will be critical to the TPB process for addressing transportation emissions as part of the MWCOG regional efforts on climate change. Several examples include
 - The new data and analyses that indicate that the MWCOG climate change goals for 2030 and 2050 need to be strengthened significantly. This is critical to the selection of climate change transportation strategies as decisions to meet the current goals may not be sufficient and may be highly cost-ineffective to meet the strengthened goals now being considered. A briefing at the last CEEPC meeting began to touch upon these new data and analyses, and
 - The data that is now readily available through the transportation conformity modeling process ... this data will be critical for the region to consider as it moves forward over the next few years with updated TIPS, CLRPs and Envision 2045.

In closing, If possible, I would love to provide a short briefing (and offer to help with future TPB Tech briefings) on June 2nd. Should a briefing not be possible, I would respectfully request that a copy of this letter and the related comments made to TPB be distributed to the Committee and that a short synopsis of the letter and comments be provided by TPB Tech staff on June 2nd, similar to the process used at TPB meetings. I have already provided several letters to TPB, MWAQC and CEEPC that are linked to the technical issues that I believe TPB Tech needs to begin to look at. These letters are available from TPB staff.

I believe it is critical for TPB Tech and TPB to begin to address the issues I have raised as protecting public health is a goal shared by all members of MWCOG. That said, it is also critical for TPB and TPB Tech to get ahead of the curve on these issues as the Federal guidance and rules are now changing, and failure to get ahead of the curve could have draconian impacts on future transportation plans, regional economic development and political futures.

Please do not hesitate to contact me. I look forward to the leadership I expect you to show on these very difficult issues.

George S. Aburn Jr.

Tad Aburn
tadaburn@gmail.com
(443) 829-3652

Cc: TPB Tech Members
Reuben Collins, Chair, TPB
Anita Bonds, Chair, MWAQC
Tom Dernoga, Maryland Vice Chair, MWAQC
Takis Karantonis, Chair CEEPC
Tom Ballou, Chair MWAQC TAC
Dr. Sacoby Wilson, UMCP CEEJH
Dr. Russell Dickerson, UMCP
Colin Burrell, DC DOEE
Phil Mendelson, DC Council
Cristina Fernandez, US EPA
Christopher Lawson, US FHWA

Tad Aburn
39724 East Sun Drive, Unit 213
Fenwick Island, DE 19944
tadaburn@gmail.com
(443) 829-3652

May 17, 2023

Richard Wallace
Chair, MWCOG Transportation Planning Board (TPB) Community Advisory Committee (CAC)
MWCOG TPB CAC Members
777 North Capitol St. N.E.
Suite 300
Washington, DC 20002

RE: Request to Provide a Short Briefing at the June 15, 2023 CAC Meeting

Chairman Wallace, members of the TPB CAC:

I am again writing to request an opportunity to provide a short, invited briefing at the 6/15 TPB CAC meeting on several emerging policy, data and technical analyses issues that I believe need to be looked at. These issues are important to the discussions that CAC will have during your meeting on 6/15. I understand that "public comment" can only be made at full TPB meetings and I will continue to do so. The CAC however, routinely asks individuals with certain expertise to, at the request of the Chair, provide briefings to the Committee. I am asking the Chair to allow me to provide such a briefing.

My name is Tad Aburn. Last year I was the Chair of the MWAQC Technical Advisory Committee. I was an MWAQC member for over 10 years. For almost 20 years I was the director of the air pollution program in Maryland. I have considerable experience with the transportation conformity process and transportation related air pollution problems. I am now retired and commenting today as a volunteer working for several Maryland communities and as a concerned citizen.

My short briefing would focus on the policy implications of new data and technical analysis that is now available for key transportation issues that create air pollution and climate change. These issues could be major problems for TPB as the region moves forward with new transportation plans and Visualize 2045. These data and analyses provide new insights into how transportation is affecting environmental justice and

climate change issues ... two of the highest priority environmental issues in the MWCOG region and nationally. I would also be happy to provide information on what the potential solutions to these problems are ... based upon experience in other leadership areas.

As you know, the federal government is actively working on revisions to its policies on environmental justice and climate change resulting from transportation projects. I know that TPB prides itself on the use of cutting edge data and getting ahead of issues that are evolving very quickly. I would encourage CAC to begin to look at the policy issues associated with the new data and analyses as they are critical to public health in the region and could have serious implications for future transportation plans.

More detail on the new data and analysis and the policy implications are included in the attached recent letters to TPB and TPB Tech.

In closing, If possible, I would be happy to provide a quick briefing (and offer to help with future TPB CAC briefings) on June 15th. Should a short briefing not be possible, I would respectfully request that a copy of this letter be distributed directly to the full Committee and that a short synopsis of the letter and the related comments made at the May 17, 2023 TPB meeting, be provided by TPB staff on June 15th, similar to the process used at TPB meetings. I have already provided several additional letters that are linked to the key policy issues that I believe are critical to TPB and the regional transportation planning process. These are available from COG staff.

Please do not hesitate to contact me. I look forward to the leadership I expect you to show on these very difficult issues.

George S. Aburn Jr.

Tad Aburn
tadaburn@gmail.com
(443) 829-3652

Cc: TPB CAC Members
Reuben Collins, Chair, TPB
Anita Bonds, Chair, MWAQC
Tom Dernoga, Maryland Vice Chair, MWAQC
Takis Karantonis, Chair CEEPC
Tom Ballou, Chair MWAQC TAC
Dr. Sacoby Wilson, UMCP CEEJH

Dr. Russell Dickerson, UMCP
Colin Burrell, DC DOEE
Phil Mendelson, DC Council
Cristina Fernandez, US EPA
Christopher Lawson, US FHWA