



COG REPORT PRIORITIZES INVESTMENT IN REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

Urgent action is needed on regional issues like transportation funding in order to maintain and improve the region’s economic competitiveness, according to Frank Principi, Chair of the COG Board of Directors, who briefed the TPB at its September 19 meeting. “After decades of a strong and reliable economy here in this region, thanks primarily to the federal government, this region’s economy is approaching a fiscal cliff.”

(Continued on page 5)

COG Board of Directors Chair Frank Principi briefed the TPB at its September 19 meeting on “Economy Forward: COG’s Call to Action for a More Competitive Metropolitan Washington.”



TASK FORCE TO STUDY “BUS-ON-SHOULDER” FEASIBILITY

A new task force established by the TPB at its September 19 meeting will study the feasibility of allowing transit buses that operate on Washington region highways to use the shoulder to bypass regular travel lanes when those lanes become especially congested.

The proposed task force and work plan, developed by TPB staff, came in response to a request by Board members at the July 18 TPB meeting to look into how bus-on-shoulder operations might be applied more extensively in the Washington region.

Already, buses are allowed to use shoulders to bypass congestion in two locations – in Virginia on the Dulles

Airport Access Road near the West Falls Church Metrorail station, and in Maryland on Route 29 near Burtonsville.

Several metropolitan areas around the country and overseas have implemented bus-on-shoulder provisions. The most extensive network in the United States is in the Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan area, where buses can use the shoulders of nearly 280 miles of highway whenever traffic in regular lanes drops below 35 miles per hour and when buses stand to save at least eight minutes per mile in travel time.

The TPB task force, as approved by the Board, will at a

(Continued on page 6)

Upcoming meetings and items of interest:

- TPB Meeting: October 17, 2012**
- Approval of Call for Projects and Schedule for Air Quality Conformity Assessment for 2013 CLRP and FY 2013-2018 TIP
 - Approval of Scope of Work for Additional Federal Air Quality Conformity Analysis

Inside this issue of TPBnews:

- 2** TPB Honors Longtime Planner Harold Foster
- 3** COG Updates Regional Activity Centers
- 4** Air Quality Conformity Analysis Planned
- 7** Draft Call for Projects, Schedule for Air Quality Conformity Assessment

TPB HONORS LONGTIME PLANNER, CITIZEN

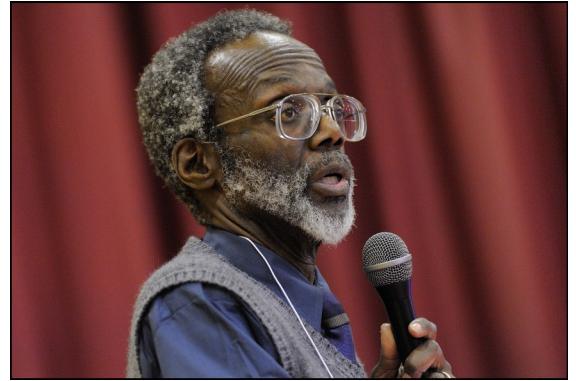
On September 4, the Metropolitan Washington Region lost a pillar of its community. Harold Foster, who was a planner for the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission and a third generation Washingtonian, passed away due to complications from hip replacement surgery. He was 62.

Foster was a familiar face to many members of the TPB. He served professionally in a variety of relevant capacities, including as a member of the TPB Technical Committee, where he represented Prince George's County.

As a tribute to Foster, the TPB at its regular September meeting paused for a moment of silence. Chair Todd Turner reflected, "I know several of [the members of the TPB] knew Harold very well and obviously are shocked to hear of his passing. Not only was he a solid citizen of the District of Columbia, but he was also a longtime worker in Prince George's County, and I know several of us had the opportunity to work with and for him."

Foster was known to refer to his "many different hats" as a way to distinguish his often overlapping professional responsibilities from his personal interests. In addition to working as a planner, he served for nearly a decade as a member of the TPB's Citizens Advisory Committee, where he represented the District of Columbia.

His fellow CAC members came to know him as a friend and a teacher. During monthly CAC meetings, he would employ his knowl-



Harold Foster speaks at a symposium in Greenbelt, Maryland in April.

Photo by Eric Zhang.

edge as a professional planner and local historian to provide context to regional transportation matters. In a letter to Foster's family, the CAC wrote, "The CAC was Harold's salon. We would dine together monthly and discuss the regional transportation issues of the day. Harold would listen until he marked the crux of the discussion. He didn't challenge anyone's opinion. Rather, he described the issue and then, with the skill of a Southern preacher, described how it should be resolved."

The CAC remembers that Foster served as the committee's institutional memory, and fondly recalls Foster's ability to analyze regional transportation issues: "Harold's sentences were not short. They brought old colleagues back to life, told of history repeated, and animated our discussions with color and life... It was a privilege just to know him as a friend and it's an honor to have worked with him over the years at the CAC. To simply hear him talk was a pleasure. He was one exceptional and wonderful human being." ♦

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TPB staff announces upcoming board and committee meetings; release of key studies, presentations, reports, and publications; public comment periods; and other relevant information. ♦

"To simply hear him talk was a pleasure. He was one exceptional and wonderful human being."

COG UPDATES ACTIVITY CENTERS, BRIEFS TPB

The number of designated Activity Centers in the region will grow to more than 130 if a proposal to expand the definition of what constitutes an Activity Center is approved by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments later this year.

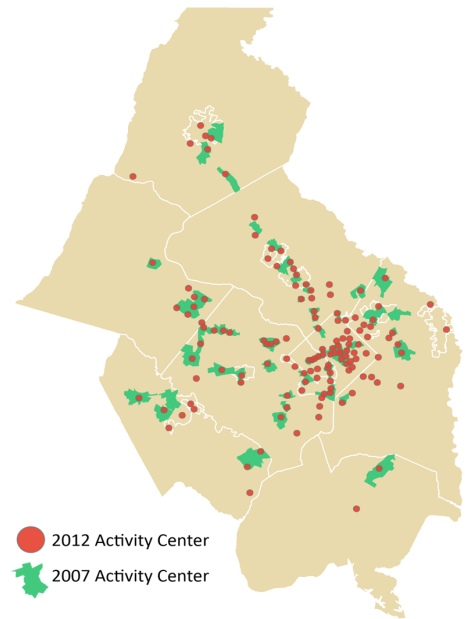
According to a briefing by COG staff at the September 19 TPB meeting, the expanded definition was developed after consultation with local planners throughout the region and will if approved replace the definition last used in 2007 to identify the region’s Activity Centers.

Under the proposed definition, the number of Activity Centers is slated to grow, but the new centers will be smaller in size and together occupy less overall land area than before, reflecting a shift to more distinct, geographically focused priority growth areas.

The new designation method, described by Sophie Mintier of the COG Department of Community Planning and Services, which is overseeing the process, requires that potential Activity Centers meet two primary criteria: they must be places that local jurisdic-

tions have identified as being centers or priority growth areas; and they must have a combined population and employment density above the median for the jurisdiction in which they’re located.

Activity Centers must also meet any two of four secondary criteria (see box, lower left).



Major changes for the 2012 Regional Activity Centers Update

The changes mean that Activity Centers are no longer just existing or anticipated hubs of employment – which was how Activity Centers were defined before the major update – but now include more mixed-use, transit-accessible areas that better reflect the development and growth priorities of local communities and the region.

The Activity Centers will continue to be used for regional growth forecasts, transportation modeling, and demographic analysis. They will also be used for a variety of policy purposes, like monitoring the region’s progress toward achieving the goals of *Region Forward* and informing efforts to prioritize locations for investment under COG’s Activity Center Strategic Investment Plan and the TPB’s Regional Transportation Priorities Plan, two efforts specifically called for in the recent COG report, “Economy Forward.”

Mintier explained to the members of the TPB that COG staff have been meeting with city and county councils throughout the region to explain the new designations and to answer any questions local officials have and will continue to do so through the end of October. She said that the COG Board of Directors will be asked to approve the final list of Activity Centers at its November meeting. ♦

2012 ACTIVITY CENTER UPDATE

Number of Proposed Activity Centers Under New Method: **136** (up from 59 in 2007)

Share of Activity Centers to be Served by Rail Transit by 2040: **67%** (up from 50% in 2007)

Activity Centers Must Now:

- *Be places that local jurisdictions have identified as priority growth areas*
- *Have combined population/employment density above the median for the jurisdictions in which they’re located*

They Must Also Meet Two of the Following:

- *Intersection densities of at least 55 per sq. mile*
- *Existing or planned high-capacity transit*
- *Mixed-use development or zoning to allow it*
- *Combined housing and transportation costs that do not exceed 45% of regional median income*

MWAQC TO INCORPORATE SAFETY MARGINS

The Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee (MWAQC) is expected to act on a TPB recommendation to add “safety margins” to new targets for future emissions of fine particle pollution, according to a briefing received by the TPB at its September 19 meeting.

The new targets – or “mobile emissions budgets” – are being set as part of a Maintenance Plan to demonstrate to EPA that the region is on track to continue meeting federal standards for fine particle, or PM 2.5, emissions through 2025.

Three years ago, EPA found that the region had met federal PM 2.5 standards and encouraged MWAQC to apply to have the region designated as an “attainment area.”

In order for that request to be approved, MWAQC must set future mobile emissions budgets that annual forecasts – based on the Constrained Long Range Plan (CLRP) and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) – must show are expected to be met in future years. If the forecasts were ever to find otherwise, the region would risk losing federal funding for highway and transit projects.

In March, the TPB urged MWAQC to consider adding safety margins to the new budgets because of uncertainty about how quickly newer, cleaner vehicles will enter the region’s fleet of cars and trucks in coming decades, and concerns that future changes to the models used to forecast emissions could also lead future forecasts to exceed the targets.

The MWAQC task force is working to incorporate safety margins in the Maintenance Plan by adding a “second-tier” budget for transportation-related emissions that is 20% higher than the transportation-related portion of the proposed budgets for 2017 and 2025. The higher budget would be triggered in the event that forces outside the control of the TPB resulted in higher-than-expected forecasts of emissions.

MWAQC discussed the two-tiered budgets at its most recent meeting on September 27 and is awaiting EPA feedback on the approach, as two-tiered budgets have not been used anywhere else in the country. Pending favorable feedback from EPA, MWAQC could approve the PM 2.5 Maintenance Plan for public hearings in early 2013. ♦

AIR QUALITY CONFORMITY ANALYSIS PLANNED

On September 19, the TPB was briefed on a planned air quality conformity analysis of the 2012 Constrained Long Range Plan (CLRP) and FY 2013 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

The new analysis comes in response to new, more stringent standards for ground-level ozone emissions issued by EPA in May. Under the new standards, the region was redesignated as a “marginal non-attainment area” for ozone, and must demonstrate that it anticipates being in compliance with the stricter standards by 2015.

The new analysis will use all of the same basic assumptions about how the region will

grow and how people will travel in coming years as was used in an analysis earlier this year. That means the Round 8.1 Cooperative Forecasts of population and job growth, the Version 2.3 Travel Demand Model, the 2011 vehicle registration information, and the Mobile 6.2 emissions model will – in combination with the projects and programs that are planned in the 2012 CLRP – form the basis for the predictions of emissions for 2015.

The scope of work for the new analysis is currently available for public comment. The TPB will vote to approve the scope of work for the analysis at its October meeting and will be asked to approve the final results of the analysis in December. ♦

ECONOMY FORWARD

(Continued from page 1)

Principi, who represents the Woodbridge District on the Prince William County Board of Supervisors, provided an overview of a recent COG report, “Economy Forward: COG’s Call to Action for a More Competitive Metropolitan Washington.” The report, which was approved by the COG Board of Directors and released on September 12, identifies five priorities that the region must focus on to support economic growth and competitiveness.

Greater investment in transportation infrastructure tops the priority list as an essential element to the region’s economic competitiveness. The report indicates that a recent survey of economic development directors and other stakeholders ranked the transportation system as one of the top challenges to recruiting and retaining businesses in the area.

The transportation priorities outlined in the report have a direct link to the TPB’s work in developing a Regional Transportation Priorities Plan (RTPP). According to Principi, “Some very promising projects are already underway at COG that we need to capitalize on. [The TPB’s] Transportation Priorities Plan...will have a positive impact in strengthening our region’s competitiveness, attracting new businesses, expanding our existing ones, and fundamentally bringing new jobs into the region.”

Members of the TPB embraced the information provided in Principi’s briefing. Board Member Catherine Hudgins, who also serves on the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors and chairs the WMATA Board, emphasized the value of the region’s transportation system and acknowledged the importance of integrating the report’s goals in WMATA’s development of its own strategic plan.

Board Member Harriet Tregoning, who serves as Director of the District of Columbia Office of Planning, acknowledged the financial challenges to transportation investment. “I think the very same pullback that you’re noting in terms of federal spending in the region is particularly acute in the transportation arena.” She expressed hope that the TPB could work to address this funding issue: “I think we recognize that increasingly, our jurisdictions are going to have to

look to themselves to find the funding to create the transportation future that we think our region deserves. I hope that as TPB, we can begin to turn our attention to this a little bit more deliberately.”

TPB Chair Todd Turner affirmed that COG and the TPB are uniquely positioned to serve as regional bodies for discussing funding alternatives. He also reiterated the importance of the Regional Transportation Priorities Plan and its connection to the Economy Forward report, stating that the TPB will continue to pursue its timeline on the RTPP, and in doing so, will advance the call to invest more in the region’s transportation system.

In addition to transportation investment, the report recommends that area officials collaborate to address four other actions: efficient investment in the region’s Activity Centers; an industry and labor market analysis; development of a brand that promotes the region’s economic diversity; and an improved partnership between the federal government and the region. **For more information**, visit www.mwcog.org. ♦

TPB terminology

AFA	Access for All Advisory Committee
ARRA	American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009
CAC	Citizens Advisory Committee
CLRP	Constrained Long-Range Transportation Plan
COG	Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
DDOT	District Department of Transportation
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
MDOT	Maryland Department of Transportation
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization
NVTA	Northern Virginia Transportation Authority
RTPP	Regional Transportation Priorities Plan
TIP	Transportation Improvement Program
TPB	Transportation Planning Board
VDOT	Virginia Department of Transportation
WMATA	Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

BUS-ON-SHOULDER TASK FORCE

(Continued from page 1)

minimum include representatives from the three state departments of transportation that have jurisdiction over the region's highways, as well as the transit agencies that currently operate bus services on those roadways. Other local transportation and government agencies will also be invited to participate.

The task force will review existing experiences with bus-on-shoulder operations in the region and elsewhere to see what safety, engineering, and operational issues – like appropriate operating speeds, shoulder widths and pavement materials, signage, and merging procedures – are important to consider before implementing such a system.

The group will also work to identify those segments of highway where it would be easiest and make the most sense to allow buses to use shoulders to bypass congestion.

Once the task force completes its study, it will be up to the highway and transit agencies in the region to decide whether or not to implement bus-on-shoulder provisions, and approval from the federal government will be needed, too.



In the Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan area, buses are able to use the shoulder of major highways to bypass congested travel lanes.

Board members Carol Krimm and Chris Zimmerman will co-chair the task force.

At the September 19 meeting, Krimm thanked TPB staff for developing the proposal for the task force and a work plan. “I want to thank Mr. Kirby and the staff for being so responsive when we asked for this project to move forward... and putting together this doable work program over the next few months,” she said.

Zimmerman also thanked the staff, saying, “I’m really glad to see that there’s growing interest... and a plan to seriously look at how we might take better advantage of the infrastructure we have to move people more effectively throughout this region.”

The task force will meet three times between now and May 2013, when the final report is due. The first meeting will take place on October 17, immediately prior to the next regular meeting of the TPB. The second and third meetings are tentatively planned for January and April. ♦

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TPB REVIEWS DRAFT CALL FOR PROJECTS, SCHEDULE FOR AIR QUALITY CONFORMITY ASSESSMENT

SCHEDULE FOR 2013 CLRP AND FY 2013-2018 TIP

(* INDICATES TPB MEETING)

Sept. 19, 2012*	TPB briefed on Draft Call for Projects.
Oct. 17, 2012*	TPB releases Final Call for Projects
Dec. 14, 2012	DEADLINE: transportation agencies complete submission of draft project Inputs.
Jan. 4, 2013	Technical Committee reviews Draft CLRP project submissions, draft Scope of Work for the Air Quality Conformity Assessment.
Jan. 10, 2013	CLRP project submissions and draft Scope of Work released for public comment.
Jan. 16, 2013*	TPB briefed on project submissions and draft Scope of Work.
Feb. 9, 2013	Public comment period ends.
Feb. 20, 2013*	TPB reviews public comments and is asked to approve project submissions and draft Scope of Work.
May 3, 2013	DEADLINE: transportation agencies finalize CLRP forms (including Congestion Management Documentation Forms where needed) and amendments to the FY 2013-2018 TIP.
June 13, 2013	Draft CLRP, TIP amendments and Conformity Assessment released for public comment at Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) meeting.
June 19, 2013*	TPB briefed on the draft CLRP, TIP amendments and Conformity Assessment.
July 13, 2013	Public comment period ends.
July 17, 2013*	TPB reviews public comments and responses to comments, and is presented the draft CLRP, TIP amendments and Conformity Assessment for adoption.

At its September meeting, the TPB received a briefing on the draft Call for Projects document and the schedule for air quality conformity assessment for the FY2013 CLRP and the FY2013-2018 TIP.

The TPB is expected to approve the draft document and release the Final Call for Projects on October 17, signaling that regional transportation agencies can begin submitting information to the TPB on regionally significant transportation projects so that they may be included in the 2013 CLRP. The final plan will come before the TPB for approval on July 17, 2013. ♦

OCTOBER AGENDA ITEMS

The October TPB Meeting is anticipated to include the following:

- Approval of Call for Projects and Schedule for the Air Quality Conformity Assessment for the 2013 CLRP and FY 2013-2018 TIP.
- Approval of Scope of Work for the 2015 forecast year air quality conformity analysis of the 2012 CLRP and FY2013-2018 TIP.
- Briefing on the COG Report: “Charged Up: Making Metropolitan Washington Electric Vehicle Ready.”
- Briefing on the Implementation of Capital Bike-share.
- Update on the Regional “Street Smart” pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Education Campaign.
- Update on the TPB Bus-on-Shoulder Task Force. ♦

Bids and Solicitations

For current COG solicitations available for bid/proposals, please visit “Doing Business with COG:” www.mwcog.org/doingbusiness/cogbid/

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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., N.E. (Enter from 1st St., N.E.).

October 2012

- 5 TPB Technical Committee (9 am)
- 5 TPB Steering Committee (noon)
- 11 TPB Citizens Advisory Committee (6 pm)
- 16 Employer Outreach Committee (10 am)
- 16 TDM Evaluation Group (noon)
- 17 Transportation Planning Board (noon)**
- 18 Human Services Coordination Task Force (noon)
- 23 Regional Bus Subcommittee (noon)
- 25 TPB Access for All (AFA) Advisory Committee Meeting (noon)

November 2012

- 2 TPB Technical Committee (9 am)
- 2 TPB Steering Committee (noon)
- 8 TPB Freight Subcommittee (1 pm)
- 8 Human Services Coordination Task Force (12:30 pm)
- 14 Bike to Work Day Steering Committee (10 am)
- 15 Aviation Technical Subcommittee (10:30 am)
- 15 TPB Citizens Advisory Committee (6 pm)
- 20 Commuter Connections Subcommittee (noon)
- 20 TDM Evaluation Group (10 am)
- 27 Regional Bus Subcommittee (noon)
- 28 Transportation Planning Board (noon)**
- 30 Travel Forecasting Subcommittee (9:30 am)

December 2012

- 7 TPB Technical Committee (9 am)
- 7 TPB Steering Committee (noon)
- 12 Regional Taxicab Regulators Task Force (1 pm)
- 13 Human Service Transportation Coordination Task Force (12:30 pm)
- 13 TPB Citizens Advisory Committee (6 pm)
- 18 Ridematching Committee (10 am)
- 18 Regional TDM Marketing Group (noon)
- 18 TDM Evaluation (2 pm)
- 19 Transportation Planning Board (noon)**

Dates and times subject to change. Please visit our website at www.mwcog.org for up-to-date information.

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This document is available in alternative formats upon request. Please contact Deborah Kerson Bilek at (202) 962-3317, dbilek@mwcog.org, or (202) 962-3213 (TDD). Allow seven working days for preparation of material.

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