

National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board

777 North Capitol Street, N.E., Suite 300, Washington, D.C. 20002-4290 (202) 962-3310 Fax: (202) 962-3202 TDD: (202) 962-3213

Item #5

MEMORANDUM

September 11, 2008

TO: Transportation Planning Board

FROM: Ronald F. Kirby
Director, Department of
Transportation Planning

RE: Letters Sent/Received Since the July 16th TPB Meeting

The attached letters were sent/received since the July 16th TPB meeting. The letters will be reviewed under Agenda #5 of the September 17th TPB agenda.

Attachments



August 22, 2008

Mr. Phil Mendelson
Chairman
National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board
777 North Capitol Street, NE, Suite 300
Washington, DC 20002

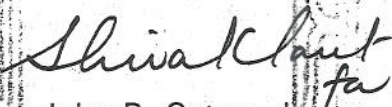
Dear Chairman Mendelson,

Thank you for your July 16, 2008, letter requesting funding support for the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board's FY2009 Street Smart Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Campaign. I am pleased to inform you that Metro will again provide funding for the campaign, in the amount of \$150,000. As with last year's contribution, we again provide the caveat that we must annually evaluate the value of our funding commitment to this program in the context of our financial position. Also as with last year, it is Metro's intent that the Metro funding commitment would be used to purchase Street Smart program advertising on Metro vehicles

Metro views the Street Smart campaign as an important element in our overall pedestrian and bicyclist safety program. It allows us to reach the hundreds of thousands of pedestrians and cyclists who use our system every day with messages to help keep them safe. As our joint effort on the April 2008 Pedestrian Safety workshop highlighted, continued safety education in the region on all fronts — pedestrians, cyclists and operators of all types of vehicles — is critical to all our safety efforts.

We look forward to participating fully in this effort with the TPB and our regional partners.

Sincerely,


John B. Catoe, Jr.
General Manager

**Washington
Metropolitan Area
Transit Authority**

600 Fifth Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001
202/962-1234

By Metrorail:
Farragut Square—Red Line
Gallery Place-Chinatown—
Red, Green and
Yellow Lines
By Metrobus:
Routes D1, D3, D6, P6,
70, 71, 80, X2

A District of Columbia,
Maryland and Virginia
Transit Partnership

National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board

777 North Capitol Street, N.E., Suite 300, Washington, D.C. 20002-4290 (202) 962-3310 Fax: (202) 962-3202 TDD: (202) 962-3213

MEMORANDUM

TO: Transportation Planning Board

FROM: Andrew J. Meese, AICP
Systems Management Planning Director

DATE: September 10, 2008

SUBJECT: Update on the Washington Region Metropolitan Area Transportation Operations Coordination (MATOC) Program

Background: This memorandum provides an update on the status of the Metropolitan Area Transportation Operations Coordination (MATOC) Program. MATOC is a regional program to enhance the availability of real-time transportation information and to strengthen coordination among transportation agencies, including:

- Improving technological systems for sharing transportation information among agencies involved in managing regional incidents
- Enhancing the transportation sector's standard operating procedures and notification practices for incidents
- Providing more timely and accurate transportation information to the public during incidents.

MATOC participants are DDOT, MDOT, VDOT, WMATA, and TPB. Initial funding for the program has been designated from a SAFETEA-LU grant supported by Congressman James Moran.

The TPB most recently received a MATOC update at its July 16 meeting, and has requested bimonthly updates.

Since the July Meeting

- The MATOC Steering Committee has continued frequent collaboration through meetings, conference calls, and emails, with the active support of the consultant team and TPB staff. Work continues towards rollout of a proof of concept system in December, and a fully operating system in July of 2009.
- Subcommittees consisting of staff from the DDOT, MD SHA, VDOT and WMATA are formed, have held initial meetings, and are working on:
 - Operations coordination issues, focusing on development of operating procedures for a proof of concept system, with plans for a subcommittee tabletop exercise-based workshop in early October.
 - Information technology issues, focusing on the functionality and operating environment of RITIS (the regional information sharing software tool). The University of Maryland Center for Advanced Transportation Technology, which has developed and currently supports RITIS, has continued making technical enhancements to RITIS. As noted in

Transportation Planning Board

September 10, 2008

Page 2 of 2

previous updates to the TPB, RITIS is already providing information sharing services among several of the region's transportation agencies.

- The MATOC Steering Committee has agreed to hire a dedicated "MATOC Facilitator" for the time period of the proof of concept, and, if successful, for the long term. The facilitator, intended to be someone with significant incident management coordination experience and knowledge, will act as a communications hub, ensuring that accurate and timely information on transportation incidents deemed to be of regional significance is shared among transportation operations agencies and with the public. A job description for a MATOC facilitator has been prepared, candidates identified, and initial interviews conducted, with the goal of having a person on board well before the December rollout of the proof of concept.
- Work on an Outreach Plan has been initiated. The Plan will provide for stakeholder communication, including other governmental agencies, the media and the public, and local decision makers. The initial focus will be on outreach during the proof of concept period.
- A focus group is being formed to help define the information needs of other transportation and public response agencies in the region so that these needs can be considered as MATOC operating procedures and software tools are developed and enhanced.
- The initial meeting of the Executive Committee, consisting of the chief executive officers of DDOT, MDOT, VDOT and WMATA, will likely occur in late fall.

Outlook: Progress is being made towards the on-schedule rollout of a proof of concept system in December. MATOC Steering Committee Chair Dick Steeg (VDOT) will brief the TPB on plans for the rollout in person at the November meeting. Progress is also being made on the development and enhancement of operating procedures and information sharing software tools to support full operation in July of 2009. The growth of the system to encompass communications with other transportation and public safety agencies, and with the public and media, is being managed through initiation of an outreach program.

washingtonpost.com

Calif. Aims to Concentrate Growth to Cut Use of Cars

High-Density Development May Get Dibs on Funds

By Ashley Surdin
Washington Post Staff Writer
Sunday, September 7, 2008; A02

LOS ANGELES -- California is poised to pass the first law in the nation linking greenhouse gas emissions to urban planning, a departure from the growth approach that spawned the state's car culture and urban sprawl.

The measure, known as SB375, aims to give existing and new high-density centers where people live, work and shop top priority in receiving local, state and federal transportation funds. The idea is that such developments check sprawl and ease commutes, in turn cutting the car pollution wafting through the Golden State.

Authored by Sen. Darrell Steinberg (D-Sacramento), the bill reflects California's push to slash its greenhouse gas emissions by 25 percent by 2020. Sponsors say the measure is part of a much-needed growth policy for a state whose population is expected to swell to 50 million from the current 38 million in two decades.

"Many places across the country have realized that if you just build spread-out developments, with the expectation that everyone will have to drive for everything, it should be no surprise when the result is excessive burning of gasoline," said David Goldberg, spokesman for Smart Growth America, a Washington D.C.-based nonprofit group that helps cities and towns plan more workable, environmentally friendly growth.

"SB375 breaks new ground, because it specifically links that pattern of development to excess driving and what we need to do to address climate change," he said.


Two years of intense negotiations have satisfied several critics of the bill and galvanized support from an unusual alliance of environmentalists, home builders, local governments and affordable-housing advocates.

But other home builders and several business groups are among the bill's opponents. They say it adds a new layer to an already complicated approval process, opens projects up to delays and frivolous litigation, and could threaten the state's economy.

"It will hamper or completely stop infrastructure throughout the state. It will jeopardize buildings, the transfer of goods and services," said Tom Holsman, chief executive of the Associated General Contractors of California, which is joined by the California Chamber of Commerce, the California Grocers Association and the California Retailers Association in opposing the bill.

"Basically, you're looking at all of California's economy, not just the housing industry," Holsman said. He added that despite the association's opposition to the bill, it supports Steinberg's environmental goals.

Advertisement



Earn up to
25,000 bonus points
on future stays.

Register now

Marriott
REWARDS

Celebrating 25 years
You've earned more
than points.®

The state's legislature recently green-lighted the measure, and Gov. [Arnold Schwarzenegger](#) (R), who aims to make California a trendsetter in fighting global warming, is expected to sign it into law once the state balances its long-overdue budget.

If he does, the state's Air Resources Board will set emission-reduction targets for 17 major metropolitan planning organizations responsible for housing and transportation projects. A separate bill, also expected to be signed by the governor, would designate financial resources to these organizations.

Steinberg said that those who veer from the targets won't be penalized, but that by 2012 transportation subsidies will almost entirely go to projects that comply -- an incentive he called a "hard carrot."

California is the 12th-largest emitter of carbon in the world, with cars and trucks emitting about one-third of the state's greenhouse gases. In 2006, it became the first state to impose a cap on all greenhouse gas emissions.

Some other states similarly striving to combat global warming have been eyeing California's latest legislation.

"We've been watching it closely," said Peter Kasabach, executive director for New Jersey Future, a statewide research and policy organization advocating smart growth. "It combines three different elements of housing, transportation and land use into one package, which is something that a lot of different groups around the country are trying to do."

Kasabach called the measure's broad support among usually contentious groups a coup but added that he is not sure whether the revised bill would have much effect. "Usually, the tradeoff of getting everyone to agree is watered-down legislation. The question that remains to be seen is what impacts come out of this legislation," he said.

Tom Adams, president of the California League of Conservation Voters, one of the bill's co-sponsors, said the legislation would significantly affect a state where affordable housing comes with a two-hour commute and the number of vehicle miles traveled is growing much faster than the population.

"This will be a watershed moment for car culture in California," Adams said. Without reducing the number of miles people drive every day, he added, the state cannot hope to live up to its environmental policies.

[View all comments](#) that have been posted about this article.

Post a Comment

[View all comments](#) that have been posted about this article.

Add a comment (max 5000 characters)

Submit

Comments that include profanity or personal attacks or other inappropriate comments or material will be removed from the site. Additionally, entries that are unsigned or contain "signatures" by someone other than the actual author will be removed. Finally, we will take steps to block users who violate any of our posting standards, terms of use or privacy policies or any other policies governing this site. Please review the [full](#)



HOT TOPICS

[Administration and Finance](#)
[Environment](#)
[Highways](#)
[Intermodal](#)
[Materials and Testing](#)
[News and Issues](#)
[Passenger Transportation](#)
[Planning and Operations](#)
[Safety and Security](#)
[Successful Practices](#)
[Technology](#)

ABOUT AASHTO

[Awards](#)
[Contact Us](#)
[Bookstore](#)
[Membership](#)
[Committees](#)
[Programs](#)
[Mission](#)
[Jobs](#)

GET THE CATALOG



RESOURCES

[Employment Opportunities](#)
[AASHTO Staff Presentations](#)
[Links](#)
[AASHTO Portal](#)

WHAT'S NEW

[« Back to news items](#)

Senate Approves \$8 Billion Highway Trust Fund Rescue

Breaking through a deadlock that had stalled action for months, the Senate tonight by voice vote approved the immediate transfer of \$8.017 billion from the federal government's General Fund to the Highway Trust Fund to restore its solvency.

"State departments of transportation are breathing a collective sigh of relief across the country today," said AASHTO Executive Director John Horsley. "The Highway Trust Fund supports transportation projects that keep America working, relieve congestion, and save lives. This was the right thing to do, and the states are grateful."

States have put on hold hundreds of millions of dollars of construction projects this week as a result of Friday's announcement by U.S. Transportation Secretary Mary Peters that federal-aid payments would be rationed because of a shortage of federal funds. Peters said that distribution of federal highway funds to the states would be weekly, rather than twice daily. She also indicated that after the first weekly payment this Thursday, states would likely receive a reduced percentage of their claims, depending on the amount of revenue flowing into the trust fund.

Reversing the administration's previous opposition to a bill (HR 6532) already passed overwhelmingly by the House, Peters urged the Congress to enact a "clean bill" to resolve the crisis by Friday. She said the trust fund faces a zero balance sooner than originally expected because Americans have sharply reduced driving and gas purchases this year because of high prices at the pump. That in turn has led to a drop in gas-tax collections because the fee is assessed per gallon purchased.

Despite the administration's urging, efforts to move the legislation by unanimous consent were thwarted Monday when several Republican senators continued their objections to increasing the nation's budget deficit by sending \$8 billion of general revenue to the Highway Trust Fund.

After behind-the-scenes negotiations, Senate Environment & Public Works Committee Chairwoman Barbara Boxer, D-CA, asked late this afternoon that the bill be brought up for immediate action with 90 minutes of debate. No objections were made to her request. The Senate proceeded with debate and then took a voice vote approving the bill and returning it to the House for consideration of an amendment by Sen. Max Baucus, D-MT and chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, which would make the transfer of funds effective upon enactment. The House bill would make funds available Sept. 30.

The bill returns \$8.017 billion to the Highway Trust Fund that was removed and sent to the General Fund as part of a 1998 budget deal.

During debate, several senators expressed the urgency of acting to resolve the crisis, noting the hundreds of thousands of construction jobs that are dependent on federal highway funds flowing to the states.

"What we are doing is simply restoring the revenue that was shifted out of the trust fund 10 years ago," Boxer said during floor debate. "What we are saying to many working people out there is that we are not going to let them run the risk of being laid off, being fired, having to come home and tell their family that they just can't work."

Sen. James Inhofe, R-OK and ranking minority member of the Senate Environment & Public Works Committee, said removing money from the Highway Trust Fund for general government spending in 1998 was "morally wrong" and urged his Republican colleagues to support the bill.

"The uncertainty over the federal government's ability to fulfill promises made in law substantially disrupts states' highway programs," Inhofe said.

Oklahoma Department of Transportation Director Gary Ridley testified to the committee Wednesday morning about the urgency of the Senate acting to prevent the Highway Trust Fund from running out of money to pay state reimbursement requests on a daily basis. Ridley told senators how Oklahoma delayed \$73.7 million worth of contracts this week over the uncertainty of when it would receive federal payments for the work.

Sens. Jim DeMint, R-SC, and Judd Gregg, R-NH, who had previously blocked several attempts this year by senators to infuse more money into the Highway Trust Fund, dropped their objection Wednesday and allowed the bill to come up for a vote. But they both spoke at length regarding their opposition to increasing the federal budget deficit by sending general tax revenue to shore up the highway fund.

"Today's votes are creating tomorrow's fiscal disasters and this \$8 billion Highway Trust Fund bailout is really just one example," DeMint said. "We're going to have to borrow this money from China or who knows where. We don't have that money."

The Congressional Budget Office released an estimate yesterday that this year's federal budget deficit will reach \$407 billion – very close to the record \$413 billion deficit recorded in Fiscal Year 2004.

Gregg said the 2005 highway bill known as SAFETEA-LU contained more than 6,000 earmarked projects at a cost of \$24 billion. Some of those pet projects should have been eliminated to make up for the coming deficit in the Highway Trust Fund, he argued, or the shortfall could be made up by borrowing from the trust fund's Mass Transit Account.

But supporters countered that the money should have never been taken out of the trust fund a decade ago or this problem wouldn't have happened.

"This is not a bailout," said Sen. Patty Murray, D-WA and chairwoman of the Senate's transportation appropriations subcommittee. "That \$8 billion was collected in gas taxes for the purposes of being deposited in the Highway Trust Fund. At the time, the trust fund was flush with money. People didn't think we needed it. Clearly we need it back now."

The House is expected to act as soon as tomorrow on concurring with the Senate amendment.

"We particularly thank the leaders of the Senate Finance Committee, the Senate Environment & Public Works Committee, the Senate Appropriations Committee, and the Senate leadership for their bipartisan cooperation in working to avert this crisis," Horsley said. "We encourage the House to act swiftly so that the president can sign this bill as soon as possible."

In a statement issued tonight, Peters commended the Senate for "acting swiftly to address the immediate needs of the trust fund" while continuing to emphasize the need to reform federal transportation taxing and spending in the future.

"The lesson is clear: It's time to embrace a new approach to transportation that does not rely on high fuel consumption and instead directs funds where they are actually needed," she said. "Congress must eliminate the billions in wasted spending, thousands of unneeded earmarks, and hundreds of conflicting and contradictory special-interest programs in order to make sure states don't face this situation again."

This story posted Wednesday, September 10, 2008

© American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials. All rights reserved.
444 N Capitol St. NW — Suite 249 — Washington, DC 20001
[About AASHTO](#) | [Legal Information](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Copyright Notice](#)

[Administrator Login](#)