



UPCOMING MEETINGS  
AND ITEMS OF  
INTEREST:

TPB Meeting,  
December 17:

- Briefing on the Development of the "CLRP Aspirations" and "What Would It Take?" Scenarios
- Briefing on the WMATA Capital Improvement Needs
- Review of Regional Priority Bus Projects

More information may be found at:  
[www.mwcog.org/transportation](http://www.mwcog.org/transportation)

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Planning  
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## REVIEW OF METROACCESS INDICATES PROGRESS, CHALLENGES

At its November 19 meeting, the Transportation Planning Board (TPB) received a briefing on the TPB's independent review of MetroAccess, the door to door service provided by the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) for transit users unable to take the bus or Metrorail system due to a disability. The review found that while progress has been made in improving the service, a number of challenges remain.

The independent review was overseen by the TPB Access for All (AFA) Advisory Committee and the TPB Human Service Transportation Coordination (HSTC) Task Force. These committees identified issues that MetroAccess riders continue to face, and helped create the scope of work for a review which focused on four areas: 1) Service Quality and Performance



**MetroAccess provides accessible transit service to eligible customers throughout the region.**

Monitoring; 2) Rider Input and Customer Service; 3) Policy and Planning; and 4) Eligibility Determinations. The TPB voted to forward the recommendations of the committees to the WMATA Board.

*(Continued on page 2)*

## TPB REVIEWS 2009 BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN PRIORITY PROJECTS

On November 19, the TPB received a briefing on the updated list of priority regional bicycle and pedestrian projects recommended for consideration in the FY 2010-2015 TIP by the Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee of the TPB Technical Committee.

The Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee developed the priority list considering the goals in the TPB Vision and the regional

bicycle plan, and using the following seven criteria:

- **Still Seeking Funding:** the project does not yet have full construction funding committed to it.

- **Bicycle Network Connectivity:** priority was given to projects that enhanced connectivity of facilities on the regional bicycle facilities network.

*(Continued on page 6)*

# REVIEW OF METROACCESS

*(Continued from page 1)*

The AFA Committee and Human Service Transportation Coordination Task Force identified the following five recommendations from the report as priorities for WMATA to address:

- Reduce employee turnover in order to retain quality, experienced managers, call center staff and drivers; and add an additional scheduler;
- Reduce long ride-times and address excessively early and late drop-offs and pickups;
- Complete and adopt a long-term capital plan for the MetroAccess service to ensure that adequate vehicles and equipment will be available in future years. In the short term, WMATA should add 24 vehicles as soon as possible to increase the fleet spare ratio from 10% to 15%;
- Consider changing the future contract structure to lessen the concentration of responsibilities and operating functions in any one company and to provide for a more stable, experienced workforce; and
- Simplify the recertification process for individuals found to be unconditionally ADA paratransit eligible and whose functional ability is not expected to improve over time.

The TPB's Access for All Advisory (AFA) Committee has had long standing concerns with service quality offered by MetroAccess, the door-to-door service provided to individuals who because of a disability are unable to use the bus and Metrorail system. These concerns led to the TPB conducting a study on demand responsive services in 2006, entitled "Improving Demand Responsive Services for People with Disabilities in the Washington Region." This report was presented to the TPB on February 15, 2006 and transmitted by the TPB to the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) Board. One of the priority recommendations from the TPB Demand Responsive

Study was that the TPB conduct an independent review of management and operational issues that MetroAccess has had challenges with in the past.

Of the improvements identified in the report, the following four items are some of the most significant. In general, riders commented that they have noticed these improvements in their experiences with MetroAccess:

- MetroAccess on-time performance (for pick-ups), missed trips and no-shows has improved over the last year;
- Staffing levels for reservationists, schedulers, dispatchers and contract monitoring has vastly improved since 2006;
- Customer complaints are being tracked and responded to more efficiently than they were; and
- WMATA is doing a better job in being clear with customers about MetroAccess policies, as shown, for example, in the outreach efforts done for the door-to-door service.

However, riders also commented that they still have concerns about long trips, untimely pick-ups, and inexperienced drivers. Some of these concerns are a result of the following challenges identified by the review:

- Staff turnover of reservationists, dispatchers and drivers remains a concern at 121%, 89% and 111% respectively. Relatively low pay and benefits that MV Transportation offers combined with the difficulty of the job appears to contribute to this issue;
- Very early pick-ups and drop-offs are an issue; as are a small percentage of very long trips. The review identified some settings in the automated scheduling system that should be changed to address these issues;
- Eligibility determinations are taking several months to complete, apparently due to limited professional capacity provided to WMATA by contractors who conduct the in-person assessments.

*(Continued on the next page)*

**"We call upon this board to continue its oversight responsibilities to make sure that we get a better MetroAccess service."**

**- Dr. Harold Snider,  
Montgomery County  
Commission on  
People With  
Disabilities,  
member of the TPB  
Access for All (AFA)  
Advisory Committee**

However, service is being offered to applicants while the determinations are completed; and

- For a large metropolitan area, the structure of the contract is unusual. MV Transportation acts as a broker or turn-key operator and also operates over 60% of the service. This means that MV Transportation is responsible for monitoring its own service and has the entire responsibility for reservations, scheduling and dispatching functions. In other large metropolitan areas, the service providers and functions are typically broken out in contracts with multiple companies to lessen the concentration of responsibilities and functions within a single company.

Alexandria Council Member Tim Lovain, Chair of the HSTC Task Force, said he is “worried about the fact that one company, MV Transportation, runs the call center and also operates most of the service. Metro-

Access should use a separate company for the call center and divide up the trips among more companies. Competition can cure a lot of ills.” Catherine Hudgins, Fairfax County Supervisor and Chair of the AFA Committee added, “This service is utilized by some of the most vulnerable members of the region’s population.”

Responding to these challenges, Metro spokeswoman Angela J. Gates said in an e-mail: “We agree with the consultant’s finding that we may need a different business model now that MetroAccess has grown to such a large size. We will be reviewing alternate business models in preparation for the next time the service is put out to bid.”

The AFA Committee and the Human Service Transportation Coordination Task Force will continue to work with WMATA to ensure good MetroAccess service and on-going attention to cost efficient strategies for service improvement. ♦

## TPB NEWS: ITEMS IN BRIEF

### *MATOC Trial Phase to Begin in December*

On November 19, the TPB received an update on the Metropolitan Area Transportation Operations Coordination (MATOC) Program from Richard Steeg of the Virginia Department of Transportation, Chair of the MATOC Steering Committee. A six-month trial phase to test operating procedures and systems will be launched in December. As the test progresses, procedures and systems will be revised and enhanced. Requirements for new system functionality will be identified. A draft Communications Plan is being prepared and will provide for communication with stakeholders, including other governmental agencies, the media, the public, and local decision-makers. Full deployment of MATOC operations will be launched in July of 2009.

The TPB will receive an after-action report at the February TPB meeting to summarize MATOC activities for Inauguration Day and other events during January. For more information about the MATOC Program, visit the MATOC Steering Committee page at [www.mwcog.org/transportation/committee/](http://www.mwcog.org/transportation/committee/).

### *TPB Briefed on California Emissions Measure*

At the November 19 meeting, the TPB was briefed on the recently enacted California measure SB375, a bill which will link greenhouse gas emissions reductions to

the planning activities of metropolitan planning organizations (MPO) in California. At its December 17 meeting, the Board will be briefed on the potential applicability of this approach and other alternative approaches for linking greenhouse gas emissions reductions to metropolitan planning in the Washington region.

### *TPB Conducts Fifth Community Leadership Institute*

On November 19 and 22, the TPB held the fifth session of the Community Leadership Institute (CLI), a workshop designed to provide regional community leaders with information about the TPB process and regional transportation planning. The goal of CLI is to provide interested citizens with the tools they need to participate productively in local, regional, and state transportation decision-making.

This session of the CLI was unique in that it convened local elected officials from around the region. Fifteen local officials participated in the CLI, including two TPB members: Council Member Colleen Clay of Takoma Park and Mayor Todd Turner of Bowie.

For more information about the Community Leadership Institute, and for contact information for how to get involved, please visit the CLI website at: [www.mwcog.org/transportation/activities/cli/](http://www.mwcog.org/transportation/activities/cli/). ♦



## TPB APPROVES CLRP AND TIP

Projects that would improve access to Fort Belvoir and bring streetcars back to Arlington County were included in the region's 2008 Constrained Long-Range Transportation Plan (CLRP), which the Transportation Planning Board approved on November 19. The projects— I-95 and Fairfax County Parkway Fort Belvoir Access improvements, and the Columbia Pike Streetcar— were both submitted by the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) for inclusion in the CLRP.

The TPB approves an update to the CLRP every year. The CLRP lists projects that the region anticipates can be funded and built by 2030.

On November 19, the TPB also approved the FY 2009-2014 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), which is a six-year subset of the CLRP. The TIP contains specific phasing and funding information for projects that will be completed in the short term. By approving the 2008 CLRP and FY 2009-2014 TIP, the TPB carried out its federally mandated role concerning

the allocation of federal transportation funding for projects in the Washington region.

A third new project added to the CLRP is the Fairfax Connector Service Transit Development Plan, which would increase bus

service on priority routes through the purchase of new buses and expansion of an operations facility. It also includes bus stop access and safety improvements identified as part of the recent Bus Stop Inventory and Safety Study.

In addition, the approved CLRP contains significant changes to the two major HOV/HOT lanes projects in the plan, on Interstates 95, 395, and 495 (Capital Beltway). These changes deal with

technical issues such as interchange locations and lane termini, and revisions to the Transit Plan for the I-95/395 project.

The Fort Belvoir Access project entails two different improvements that would enhance access to the Fort's Engineer Proving Ground from two major corridors that serve the area – the Fairfax County Parkway and I-95. Northern Virginia leaders have called for such improvements since the latest round of Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) was announced, as the changes will substantially increase the number of employees at the site. The projects are scheduled for phased completion in 2011 and 2013.

The Columbia Pike Streetcar Project will extend streetcar service for 4.7 miles between the Pentagon City Metro Station in Arlington County and the Skyline area of Fairfax County; it is scheduled to be completed in 2016. TPB member David Snyder said he hoped the project could eventually be extended through his jurisdiction of Falls Church and into Tysons Corner. He also praised “the leadership that brought about the Columbia Pike Streetcar Project from my colleagues in Arlington County and Fairfax County.”

TPB member Timothy Lovain also expressed hope that the streetcar line could eventually reach the City of Alexandria, which he represents on the Board.

The Board heard remarks at the beginning of the November 19 meeting from Cheryl Cort, representing the Coalition for Smarter Growth. Ms. Cort urged the TPB to revisit the entire CLRP given changing circumstances related to funding for transportation projects and the urgency of the need to address transportation impacts on climate change.

For information about the 2008 CLRP and FY2009-2014 TIP, go to [www.mwcog.org/clrp](http://www.mwcog.org/clrp). ♦

*More information about the 2008 CLRP, the FY 2009-2014 TIP, and accompanying project information may be found on the CLRP website at [www.mwcog.org/clrp](http://www.mwcog.org/clrp).*



The TPB created visually appealing materials, including the CLRP Brochure pictured above, to assist the public in understanding the CLRP and TIP.

## The Constrained Long-Range Plan: New Projects for 2008

### Significant Additions to the CLRP

#### 1. Access to Ft. Belvoir Engineer Proving Ground (EPG): I-95 and Fairfax County Parkway (BRAC)

Two projects have been proposed to meet expected demand at the Fort Belvoir EPG due to the Base Realignment and Closures (BRAC) act.

##### I-95 Access to Fort Belvoir

Widen the existing ramp from southbound I-95 to the Fairfax County Parkway and EPG southern loop road. Add a new reversible, single-lane approach bridge from the northbound HOV/Bus/HOT lanes to the EPG's southern loop road.

Estimated Year of Completion: 2011, 2013

Cost: \$28.8 million

Source of Funding: Federal

##### Fairfax County Parkway Access to Fort Belvoir

Add a one-lane ramp from the EPG Access Road to northbound Fairfax County Parkway and a two-lane ramp from the Access Road to southbound Fairfax County Parkway.

Estimated Year of Completion: 2011

Cost: \$6.8 million

Source of Funding: Federal

#### 2. Columbia Pike Streetcar (*From Skyline to Pentagon City*)

Design, construct and operate a streetcar system running approximately 4.7 miles between Pentagon City in Arlington County and Skyline in Fairfax County. For most of the route, streetcars will travel in mixed traffic.

Length: 4.7 miles

Estimated Year of Completion: 2016

Cost: \$138.5 million

Source of Funding: State and local

#### 3. Fairfax Connector Service Transit Development Plan

Increase bus service on priority routes and purchase 35 new Fairfax Connector buses. Expand the West Ox Bus Operations Facility to accommodate new buses and increased service.

Estimated Year of Completion: 2011

Cost: \$91.9 million

Source of Funding: Local

### Bids and Solicitations

For current COG solicitations available for bid/proposals, please visit "Doing Business with COG:" [www.mwcog.org/doingbusiness/cogbid/](http://www.mwcog.org/doingbusiness/cogbid/) ♦

### Significant Changes to the CLRP

#### 4. I-495 Capital Beltway HOV-HOT Lanes

The 14 mile stretch of HOV-HOT Lanes on the Capital Beltway between Backlick Road and Old Dominion Drive is scheduled to be complete in 2013.

Estimated Year of Completion: 2013, 2030

Cost: \$1.619 billion

Source of Funding: Federal, state, private

#### 5. I-95/395 HOV-HOT-Bus Lanes and Transit Plan Revisions

The Transit Plan for the I-95/395 HOT Lanes project has been revised to reflect the results of the Transit/Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Study conducted by the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) and its Technical Advisory Committee. The Transit/TDM plan's cost has been revised from \$390 million to \$298 million to reflect the revised transit investment strategy for the corridor. ♦

## UPCOMING DECEMBER AGENDA ITEMS

The TPB's December 17 agenda is expected to include the following items:

- Briefing on the Development of the "CLRP Aspirations" and "What Would It Take" Scenarios.
- Briefing on Alternative Approaches for Linking Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reductions to Metropolitan Transportation Planning.
- Briefing on the Draft Scope of Work for the Air Quality Conformity Assessment for the 2009 Financially Constrained Long Range Transportation Plan (CLRP) and the FY 2010-2015 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).
- Briefing on the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) Capital Improvement Needs.
- Review of Regional Priority Bus Projects for Consideration in the FY 2010-2015 TIP.

Information and materials for the monthly TPB meeting are posted on the TPB website one week prior to the meeting: [www.mwcog.org/transportation/tpb/](http://www.mwcog.org/transportation/tpb/) ♦

# BICYCLE / PEDESTRIAN PROJECTS



**Bike racks and lockers at the New York Avenue Metro Station.**

*“Sidewalk and other roadway improvements also improve the appearance of the location, so people who are not walkers or bike riders benefit because they see lots more people in the area, either walking or biking.”*

**- Reuben Snipper,  
Takoma Park Council  
Member**

*(Continued from page 1)*

- **Pedestrian Safety:** priority was given to projects that promoted pedestrian safety, especially in areas with documented pedestrian safety problems and no pending road project that could address them.
- **Access to Transit:** priority was given to projects that enhanced access to Metrorail stations and other major transit stops or facilities.
- **Time Frame:** all projects should be able to be completed by 2015, the end of the TIP time frame.
- **Local Support:** the project is a priority for the jurisdiction or jurisdictions in which it is located.
- **Reasonable Cost:** the total cost of the list should be a reasonable fraction of the total spending in the region on highways

and bridges. Staff estimates that the funding requested for the attached projects in FY2010 is less than one percent of total highway funding for that year.

The Subcommittee’s last priority list was submitted in December, 2007. One of the projects on that list, the Falls Road Shared-Use Path in Montgomery County, has received full funding totaling \$5,000,000. As a fully funded project it was “graduated” off the priority list.

The Subcommittee sees this short list as a very modest investment in bicycle and pedestrian facilities in the Washington region. In trying to reach the adopted goals of the TPB Vision and the regional bicycle and pedestrian plan, the Subcommittee supports the funding of bicycle and pedestrian projects over and above this list. In addition, the Subcommittee encourages the inclusion of bicycle and pedestrian facilities in all transportation projects as recommended in policy guidance by the U.S. DOT and VDOT.

The 2008 Regional Unfunded Priorities that were submitted by the TPB’s Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee may be found on the following page. ♦

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## OTHER NOVEMBER AGENDA ITEMS

The TPB’s November 19 agenda included the following items in addition to topics covered elsewhere in this newsletter:

- Appointment of Nominating Committee for Year 2009 TPB Officers.

- Approval of the Funding and Transmittal Letter for TPB’s 2009 Membership in the Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations.

Information and materials for the November 19 TPB meeting are posted on the TPB website: [www.mwkog.org/transportation/tpb](http://www.mwkog.org/transportation/tpb). ♦

## 2008 Priority Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects

### **Metropolitan Branch Trail (District of Columbia)**

This 7.7 mile multi-use path will run from Union Station to Silver Spring, parallel to the Red Line of the Metro. It will link to the planned Prince George's Connector Trail at Fort Totten. On the Montgomery County side, the trail will eventually connect to the Georgetown Branch Trail.

### **MacArthur Boulevard Shared-Use Path and Shoulder (Montgomery County)**

This project is to provide bikeway improvements along 13,800 feet of MacArthur Boulevard, from I-495 to Oberlin Avenue. This project will also provide for spot improvements to MacArthur Boulevard to enhance safety for pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists.

### **Henson Creek Trail (Prince George's County)**

This project includes the extension of the existing stream valley trail to both the north and south. In the north, the trail will be extended from Temple Hill Road to the Branch Avenue Metro. To the south, this trail will be extended from Oxon Hill Road into the Broad Creek Historic District on the Potomac.

### **Holmes Run Greenway Shared-Use Path Improvements (City of Alexandria)**

The Holmes Run Greenway is one of the most heavily used non-roadway transportation corridors in the City of Alexandria. This approximately 3-mile linear park provides a key off-road bicycle and pedestrian connection from the high density residential and retail centers on the West End to the Eisenhower Valley and is a major connector to bicycle and pedestrian facilities in Fairfax County and Old Town Alexandria.

### **Arlington Boulevard Bikeway Improvements (Arlington County)**

This project is for design and implementation of a series of bicycle and pedestrian safety and access improvements to the multi-use trail that parallels Arlington Boulevard in Arlington County. The project area extends from the Fairfax County line to Pershing Drive.

### **Leesburg Pike Seven Corners to Alexandria Pedestrian Initiative (Fairfax County)**

Leesburg Pike (Route 7) Pedestrian Initiative is a pedestrian safety and access improvement project consisting of pedestrian and bus stop intersection improvement projects and completion of a continuous walkway on both sides of Route 7 from the Seven Corners interchange to Alexandria.

### **Loudoun County Parkway Shared-Use Path (Loudoun County)**

This 4.4 mile shared-use path would be built parallel to Loudoun County Parkway from Route 7 to Waxpool Road. The Loudoun County Parkway is identified as a primary corridor in the Loudoun County Bicycle Plan.

### **Monocacy River Greenway Phase I (Frederick County)**

The Monocacy River is one of the most visible natural features in Frederick County. The Monocacy is one of the most often mentioned corridors by the public as needing a parallel trail. The priority segment is the 11 miles between Tuscarora Creek and Ballenger Creek.

### **Old Bridge Road Sidewalk (Prince William County)**

Old Bridge Road is classified as a minor arterial that carries an estimated 40,000 vehicles per day. This facility is the primary access road for numerous residential neighborhoods and two schools (Old Bridge Elementary School and Woodbridge High School).

### **WMATA Bicycle Parking Project (Region-wide)**

**Bicycle Racks** - This project replaces existing Type 3 racks with modern inverted U racks. The Type 3's are nearing the end of their useful lives, and are no longer manufactured.

**Bicycle Lockers** - Currently lockers are available only on a long-term basis. Since most bicyclists do not ride every day, this has led to significant under-utilization of the existing lockers. ♦



# 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.).

## December 2008

- 2 Management, Operations and Intelligent Transportation Systems (MOITS) Policy Task Force and Technical Subcommittee Joint Meeting (12:30 pm)
- 5 TPB Technical Committee (9 am)
- 5 TPB Steering Committee (noon)
- 11 TPB Citizens Advisory Committee (6 pm)
- 16 Commuter Connections Ridematching Committee (10 am)
- 16 Regional TDM Marketing Group (noon)
- 17 Transportation Planning Board (noon)**
- 23 Travel Management Subcommittee (9:30 am) (*tentative*)

## January 2009

- 6 Management, Operations and Intelligent Transportation Systems (MOITS) Policy Task Force and Technical Subcommittee Joint Meeting (12:30 pm)
- 8 Human Service Transportation Coordination Task Force (1:30 pm)
- 9 TPB Technical Committee (9 am)
- 9 TPB Steering Committee (noon)
- 14 Bike to Work Day Steering Committee (10 am)
- 15 Freight Subcommittee (1 pm)
- 15 TPB Citizens Advisory Committee (6 pm)
- 21 Transportation Planning Board (noon)**
- 22 Aviation Technical Subcommittee (10:30 am)
- 23 Travel Forecasting Subcommittee (9:30 am)
- 27 Travel Management Subcommittee (9:30 am)
- 27 Employer Outreach Committee (10 am)
- 27 Commuter Connections Subcommittee (noon)
- 27 Regional Bus Subcommittee (noon)
- 27 Bicycle & Pedestrian Subcommittee (1 pm)
- 27 TDM Evaluation Work Group (2 pm)
- 29 Regional Taxicab Regulators Task Force (noon)

## February 2009

- 6 TPB Technical Committee (9 am)
- 6 TPB Steering Committee (noon)
- 10 Management, Operations and Intelligent Transportation Systems (MOITS) Policy Task Force and Technical Subcommittee Joint Meeting (12:30 pm)
- 12 Human Service Transportation Coordination Task Force (12:30 pm)
- 12 TPB Citizens Advisory Committee (6 pm)
- 18 TPB Scenario Study Task Force (10 am)
- 18 Transportation Planning Board (noon)**
- 24 Travel Management Subcommittee (9:30 am)
- 24 Regional Bus Subcommittee (noon)
- 26 Access for All (AFA) Advisory Committee (2 pm)



Dates and times subject to change. Please visit our website at [www.mwcog.org](http://www.mwcog.org) for up-to-date information.

This document is available in alternative formats upon request. Please contact Sarah Crawford at [scrawford@mwkog.org](mailto:scrawford@mwkog.org), (202) 962-3237 or (202) 962-3213 (TDD). Allow seven working days for preparation of material.

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