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**TPB TECHNICAL COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES**

October 2, 2020

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

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

**2. APPROVAL OF THE OCTOBER 2, 2020 TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

There were no questions or comments regarding the September Technical Committee meeting. The minutes were approved.

**ITEMS FOR THE BOARD AGENDA**

**3. PARTICIPATION PLAN UPDATE**

Mr. Hayes briefed the committee on public comment on the draft TPB Participation Plan. The comments were received from a member of the public, a member of the CAC, and from TPB partners at the Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration. He provided a quick overview of comments received and said that once the comment period ends on October 9 staff will write a memo that summarizes all comments received and staff response to the comment. He said that a summary of comments and the final plan will be presented to the board in October for approval.

There were no comments or questions from the committee.

**4. TPB WORK SESSION ON CLIMATE CHANGE PLANNING IN THE NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION**

Ms. Morrow briefed the committee on the upcoming TPB Work Session on Climate Change Planning in the National Capital Region scheduled for October 21. Climate change was established by the TPB Chair as a priority for this year. An item on the agenda will provide an overview of the interim 2030 greenhouse gas reduction goal that is expected to be adopted by the COG Board on October 14. If that goal is adopted by the COG board, it would be presented to the TPB to consider for endorsement at the October 21 meeting. Ms. Morrow reviewed the agenda with the committee noting the speakers and the meeting materials that had been prepared and posted for the committee.

Mr. Brown asked if staff expected questions at the work session about the global nature of greenhouse gas emissions and climate change, and whether the work being presented on the 2030 goal was related to a national initiative among MPOs. He also noted that the US has withdrawn from the Paris Agreement. Mr. Srikanth responded that he would expect those sorts of questions because the work is not just about setting a goal, but working towards achieving the goal. The 2030 goal is consistent with past TPB actions as the TPB has affirmed the 2020 and 2050 goals. On the topic of the Paris Agreement, there is an appendix in the draft 2030 Action Plan documenting the local jurisdictions continued commitment to greenhouse gas reduction goals. Mr. Walz added that CEEPC is working with the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy (GCoM) protocol to meet the levels of action established by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). Ms. Davis responded to a question in the chat box asking about a summary of local jurisdiction progress on greenhouse gas reductions. She said that COG staff is working on developing final greenhouse gas inventories for COG members along with fact sheets looking at the change in greenhouse gas emissions between inventory years. That information should be available for the jurisdictions by the end of the year and they can distribute that information as they see fit.

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Mr. Nembhard noted the impact that the rollback of vehicle emissions standards could have, but he said it seems that auto manufacturers recognize that there is demand for more fuel-efficient vehicles. Mr. Walz added that Maryland is a participant in clean-car standards. He said that what happens to the challenge to those standards will determine the impact on the local market. Mr. Srikanth added that TPB and MWAQC wrote a comment letter opposing the rollback of the CAFE standards noting the impact the rollback would have on meeting greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals as well as the potential impact on NOx emissions.

Mr. Erenrich noted that many of the local jurisdictions, including Montgomery County, have much more stringent goals and therefore the proposed 2030 goal is disappointing. He asked if the presentation to COG and TPB will list the individual goals of jurisdictions. He said that what comes out of the 2030 plan will be a commitment of those jurisdictions to adopt and follow goals, procedures, and policies to work towards the attainment of the regional goal. Mr. Walz noted that COG staff has provided information about local jurisdiction's goals to CEEPC (documented in Appendix C of the draft Action Plan). He also noted that the 2030 goal is a regional goal and he recognized that each jurisdiction could adopt their own goal that may be greater or lesser than the regional goal, depending on local conditions. In adopting the regional goal, there is an understanding that the localities will work towards supporting that goal.

Mr. Phillips recommended that for the TPB presentation, it would be helpful to have slides that focus on the transportation components of the Action Plan to show that the region can get to the reduction goal by 2030. He noted that WMATA's TPB member would want more information about the role of VMT reduction actions. Mr. Srikanth noted that the 2030 Action Plan is under development and it will have a long list of transportation strategies including those from the Multi-Sector Working Group and the Visualize 2045 Aspirational Initiatives. There will be a good mix of strategies including those affecting vehicle fuel, vehicle technology, and travel itself, which is where VMT reductions come in. The Action Plan is scheduled to go to CEEPC in November.

## **5. HIGH CAPACITY TRANSIT STATION AREAS INTERACTIVE MAP UPDATE**

Mr. Canan demonstrated enhancements added to the High Capacity Transit web-map, which was first presented to the Technical Committee in March 2020 and is being developed to support TPB's focus on transit-oriented communities. A memorandum from Mr. Canan to the Technical Committee was included in the meeting packet as part of this item. The demonstration began with a review of the initial functionality presented last March followed by a description of added enhancements. These included the addition of the ability to view and summarize COG's Cooperative Forecasts by station area, activity center, and jurisdiction, and the ability to view and summarize non-residential construction indicators by station and jurisdiction. A technical overview tab has also been added to the web map containing more documentation to assist users navigating the web-map.

Mr. Weissberg asked whether the web map would be maintained with updated data over time.

Mr. Canan confirmed that the intent was to maintain this as a "living" tool that would receive updates with more current data as they become available. Moreover, the tool could be further enhanced with additional functionality as future applications are identified or requested by users.

Mr. Weissberg, in a follow-up question, asked if there were any plans to add local government planning layers such as zoning.

Mr. Canan mentioned that he has raised this question with COG's Planning Directors Technical Advisory Committee (PDTAC), which comprises all the planning directors from member local governments. The PDTAC expressed interest in the web map but preferred not to include local zoning or planned land use layers in this regional tool.

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## **6. CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE – UPDATE AND RECRUITMENT**

Mr. Hayes briefed the committee on recommendations for updating the Citizens Advisory Committee. He said that the recommendations he presented were draft recommendations and that there would be an opportunity to update the recommendations before they are approved by the board. He provided a short history of the committee and said that the purpose of this update would be to strengthen the relationship between the committee and the board, to bring more regional perspective to the committee, and to modernize operating procedures. Referring to his memo he described the specific recommendations and provided some context for the proposed changes. He said that draft recommendations have been shared with the State Technical Working Group and that they will be shared with the Steering Committee and CAC before being presented to the board in October. Based on board input, the recommendations will be updated and shared for approval in November.

Chair Nembhard said he is in favor of changing the committee’s name from Citizens Advisory Committee to Community Advisory Committee. He said it makes sense to have more staff involvement in the selection process.

## **INFORMATION ITEMS**

### **7. VISUALZIE 2045: KICKOFF AND DRAFT INPUTS SOLICITATION**

Ms. Cook reviewed the draft Technical Input Solicitation Guide. The purpose of the guide is to provide the requirements for submitting inputs for the LRTP, Air Quality Analysis, and TIP and to communicate the process for submission. Ms. Cook noted that the Guide will be presented to the TPB as an information item at the November 2020 board meeting and that staff will seek approval of the Guide from the board at the December 2020 meeting. Ms. Cook noted that the board approval of the Guide will initiate the Call for Projects. As noted in the schedule in the draft Guide, inputs to the Plan and Air Quality Conformity Analysis are due by February 12, 2021. Ms. Cook requested that TPB Technical Committee members review the document and submit any questions, comments, or text that might be clarified. There were no questions.

Mr. Austin reviewed the Technical Input Solicitation Appendix which includes detailed instructions and a form that mimics the new TPB database for project submission, Project Infotrak. Mr. Austin received one question, via the chat function on the Webex, asking if a piece of information was missing from a question on the form. Mr. Austin noted that the blank spot represented a drop-down box from which responses could be selected.

Ms. Posey reviewed a memo that lists network coding details for projects in the current LRTP and asks Technical Committee members to provide any updates to the coding details, and to provide similar information for any new transit projects included with inputs to the 2022 Update of Visualize 2045. Ms. Posey noted that the needed information includes detailed transit route information, headways, runtimes, and fare assumptions for peak and off-peak service. She asked that members provide updates in writing to her by March 5, 2021. There were no questions.

### **8. LONG BRIDGE**

Ms. Youngbluth, DRPT, briefed the committee on the latest developments related to the Long Bridge and associated rail improvements as well as their likely impact on passenger rail service. The NEPA Record of Decision was published on September 3, 2020 and the project is estimated to cost around \$1.9 billion. The preferred alternative adds a separate two-track bridge upstream from the existing structure and includes a separate bike-pedestrian crossing. Next steps include preliminary engineering (2020-2022) and engineering design and construction (2022–2030).

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Ms. Youngbluth said that on December 19, 2019 the Commonwealth of Virginia and CSX came to an agreement allowing the Commonwealth to construct the Long Bridge as public infrastructure and to purchase track and right-of-way to Richmond and North Carolina. This includes adding a 4<sup>th</sup> track approach to the Long Bridge on the Virginia side of the Potomac River. She also noted that in 2020 the Virginia General Assembly authorized the creation of the Virginia Rail Authority with a 15-member board.

Ms. Youngbluth concluded by noting that Amtrak's Service Plan included six additional roundtrip trains connecting Virginia to the Northeast Corridor and VRE's Service Plan provides five additional roundtrip commuter trains on the Fredericksburg Line by 2030.

Mr. Edmonson asked about the controls in place to ensure that cost overruns do not happen on the project.

Ms. Youngbluth responded that, after the EIS and before preliminary engineering, a risk register was created to identify potential cost overruns and develop plans to address them throughout the project and that the risks will continue to be monitored and fleshed out throughout the preliminary engineering work. In addition, the project team is ensuring that sufficient contingency is in place to cover potential overruns.

Ms. Calkins asked about coordination between the Long Bridge project and the Union Station Project, especially with respect to Union Station's ability to handle the increased train traffic. Ms. Youngbluth noted that DRPT shares concerns about future operations including interoperability between MARC and VRE services, train storage capacity at Union Station, the condition and maintenance of the Station itself as well as the rail infrastructure leading to the station. She committed to further offline discussions with Ms. Calkins on this issue.

Mr. Phillips asked if there would be any construction impacts on the Metro yellow line bridge upstream from the project.

Ms. Youngbluth answered that coordination with Mr. Robinson was ongoing throughout the EIS process and that coordination would continue. It is not anticipated that there will be any construction impacts that will cause an outage on the yellow line. The most likely impacts would be related to bridge construction over the yellow line tunnel, but Mr. Robinson did not have concerns at this time. Coordination will be important as engineering work gets underway on the bridge itself.

Mr. King asked whether electrification of rail corridors south of the river or the use of battery-electric locomotives is under consideration. Ms. Youngbluth replied that this issue will continue to be researched and that what happens in the future will be determined through planning exercises and studies.

Mr. Srikanth added that the general question is what kinds of strategies are available to the transportation sector to reduce both greenhouse gas and criteria pollutant emissions and that he suspects that the TPB will be expecting these large projects to show how they will address these goals. If this becomes an afterthought, it is unclear if the transportation sector will be able to contribute in a timely manner to these emissions goals.

Mr. King further noted that battery-electric technology has been successful in mining and other heavy-duty operations.

## **9. COVID-19: TRANSPORTATION IMPACTS AND OPPORTUNITIES**

Mr. Jasper briefed the committee on the results of a sensitivity analysis examining potential transportation impacts of COVID-19 that was performed earlier this year. The analysis examines four plausible scenarios: Quick Recovery, Active Transportation (significant transfer of trips to walking and biking), Second Pandemic Wave in October, and Cautious Recovery.

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The analysis considered two separate time horizons, short term (2020-2021) and new normal (2025). For the short-term horizon, Mr. Jasper compared the results of the four scenarios with data collected since the analysis was completed, including vehicle miles traveled (VMT), vehicle speeds, and transit ridership. The observed data shows a divergence between highway and transit recovery. For VMT and vehicle speeds, the data is closely tracking the quick recovery and active transportation scenarios. For transit ridership, the data is lagging and indicates the cautious recovery analysis was not cautious enough. Mr. Jasper also outlined the results of the new normal horizon. While the congestion reduction impacts are a positive, transit ridership reduction is challenging.

Mr. Jasper noted the results of three recent surveys as well as additional observed data that provides insight on COVID-19's impact on the region's transportation system. Commuter Connections surveyed area employers about the influence of the pandemic on telework and found that more than half of worksites anticipate a post pandemic telework levels will remain higher than prior to the pandemic. VDOT's Virginia Commuter Survey Results found that 60 percent of those working from home do not know when they will return, and 80 percent would like to work from home at least one day a week after the pandemic. In its Capital COVID-19 Snapshot Survey, the Greater Washington Partnership found that only a third of the workforce is expected to physically return in the fall. While truck volumes and weekend travel volumes have recovered, Northern Virginia is lagging the statewide average in terms of recovery. Recurrent congestion has not returned and travel into and out of DC has recovered more slowly than suburb-to-suburb travel patterns.

Mr. Jasper concluded his presentation by recommending additional areas of research: transit safety perceptions, DC-centric versus suburb-to-suburb travel patterns, concerns that some rail travelers may have a predisposition to switch to driving, and whether employers will move to higher levels of work from home on a permanent basis. From a Northern Virginia perspective, an increase in those working from home may free up capacity to accommodate future growth and could be a silver lining.

Mr. Phillips suggested that it would be helpful to make it clear that the analysis is specific to Northern Virginia rather than the region as a whole. He also requested that any discussion about decreases in ridership are made in the context of the reductions in capacity to clarify that the issue involves supply as well as demand.

Mr. Erenrich inquired how the analysis included continuous line functions when it only included discreet years. Mr. Jasper explained that they used their own model for the new normal and the consultant developed a variation to project the impact of operations; he also offered to follow up with the project's consultant for more information.

Bob Brown noted that the Bureau of Transportation Statistics is maintaining a catalog of COVID-19 Transportation Statistics. It shows mobility over time at the national, state, and county level.

## **OTHER ITEMS**

### **10. OTHER BUSINESS**

#### **Follow-up on September Transportation Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic in the National Capital Region Presentation**

Staff continue their work to gather additional data so that it can bring a unified picture of the impacts of the pandemic to the Technical Committee and the board.

#### **Safety Program Update**

Staff propose starting a safety program, similar to the Transportation Land-Use Connections program, to provide regional assistance for safety projects. The plan is to develop the program over the winter and start accepting applications in 2021.

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**Big Data Update**

Staff will extend the consultant contract to continue to work with key members and agencies to inform discussion about the best way to move forward with big data.

**Street Smart**

The Street Smart campaign is running ads. A virtual press room is available for people who want to access the Street Smart materials.

**Visualize 2045 Public Opinion Survey**

The survey launched on September 21. In the first week there was just over 1,000 responses and staff expects to exceed response rates.

**11. ADJOURN**

No other business was brought before the committee.

## ATTENDANCE

DC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mark Rawlings (DDOT)</li> <li>• Kristin Calkins (DCOP)</li> </ul>
MD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li style="width: 50%;">• Kari Snyder (MDOT)</li> <li style="width: 50%;">• Kyle Nemhard (MDOT)</li> <li style="width: 50%;">• Gary Erenrich (Montgomery County)</li> <li style="width: 50%;">• Alex Waltz (Charles County)</li> <li style="width: 50%;">• Winstina Hughes (SHA)</li> <li style="width: 50%;">• David Edmondson (City of Frederick)</li> <li style="width: 50%;">• Victor Weissberg (Prince George's County)</li> <li style="width: 50%;">• Mark Mishler (Frederick County)</li> </ul>
VA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li style="width: 50%;">• Jim Maslanka</li> <li style="width: 50%;">• Meagan Landis (Prince William County)</li> <li style="width: 50%;">• Malcom Watson (Fairfax County)</li> <li style="width: 50%;">• Dan Goldfarb (NVTC)</li> <li style="width: 50%;">• Robert Brown (Loudoun County)</li> <li style="width: 50%;">• Ciara Williams (VDRPT)</li> <li style="width: 50%;">• Sree Nampoothiri (NVTA)</li> <li style="width: 50%;">• Sonali Soneji (VRE)</li> <li style="width: 50%;">• Betsy Massie (PRTC)</li> <li style="width: 50%;">• Norman Whitaker (VDOT)</li> <li style="width: 50%;">• Regina Moore (VDOT)</li> <li style="width: 50%;">• Keith Jasper (NVTA)]</li> <li style="width: 50%;">• Chloe Delhomme (City of Manassas)</li> <li style="width: 50%;">• Xavier Harmony (VRDPT)</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mark Philips (WMATA)</li> </ul>
TPB/COG Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li style="width: 50%;">• Kanti Srikanth</li> <li style="width: 50%;">• Karen Armendariz</li> <li style="width: 50%;">• Lyn Erickson</li> <li style="width: 50%;">• Sergio Ritacco</li> <li style="width: 50%;">• Tim Canan</li> <li style="width: 50%;">• Mike Farrell</li> <li style="width: 50%;">• Andrew Meese</li> <li style="width: 50%;">• John Swanson</li> <li style="width: 50%;">• Mark Moran</li> <li style="width: 50%;">• Bryan Hayes</li> <li style="width: 50%;">• Nick Ramfos</li> <li style="width: 50%;">• Sara Bond</li> <li style="width: 50%;">• Dusan Vuksan</li> <li style="width: 50%;">• Erin Morrow</li> <li style="width: 50%;">• Abigail Zenner</li> <li style="width: 50%;">• Eric Randall</li> <li style="width: 50%;">• Charlene Howard</li> <li style="width: 50%;">• Steve Walz</li> <li style="width: 50%;">• Stacy Cook</li> <li style="width: 50%;">• Jinchul Park</li> <li style="width: 50%;">• Ken Joh</li> <li style="width: 50%;">• Sarah Bond</li> <li style="width: 50%;">• Jessica Mirr</li> <li style="width: 50%;">• Patrick Zilliacus</li> <li style="width: 50%;">• Charlene Howard</li> <li style="width: 50%;">• James Li</li> <li style="width: 50%;">• Jane Posey</li> <li style="width: 50%;">• Yu Gao</li> <li style="width: 50%;">• Nicole McCall</li> <li style="width: 50%;">• Maia Davis</li> <li style="width: 50%;">• Paul Desjardin</li> </ul>
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nancy Abeles (TPB CAC)</li> <li>• Katherine Youngbluth</li> <li>• Lisa Nissley</li> <li>• Glen Millis</li> </ul>