

NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD

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**MINUTES OF THE
TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD
April 15, 2015**

Members and Alternates Present

Charles Allen, DC Council
Bob Brown, Loudoun County
Ron Burns, Frederick County
James Davenport, Prince William County/DOT
Allison Davis, WMATA
Dan Emerine, DC Office of Planning
Gary Erenrich, Montgomery County/DOT
Lyn Erickson, MDOT
Jay Fisette, Arlington County
Jason Groth, Charles County
Rene'e Hamilton, VDOT
Neil Harris, Gaithersburg City Council
John J. Jenkins, Prince William County
Shyam Kannan, WMATA
Tim Lovain, City of Alexandria
Phil Mendelson, DC Council
Bridget D. Newton, City of Rockville
Mark Rawlings, DC DOT
Rodney Roberts, City of Greenbelt
Kelly Russell, City of Frederick
Peter Schwartz, Fauquier County
Elissa Silverman, DC Council
Linda Smyth, Fairfax County
Tammy Stidham, NPS
Jonathan Way, City of Manassas
Victor Weissberg, Prince George's County/DPW&T
Patrick Wojahn, City of College Park
Sam Zimbabwe, DDOT

MWCOG Staff and Others Present

Kanti Srikanth
Robert Griffiths
Andrew Meese
Eric Randall
Rich Roisman
Dusan Vuksan
Jane Posey
Eulalie Lucas
William Bacon
Wenjing Pu
John Swanson
Michael Farrell
Erin Morrow
Andrew Austin
Daivamani Sivasailam
Wendy Klancher
Dan Sonenklar
Ben Hampton
Bryan Hayes
Sergio Ritacco
Lamont Cobb
Yu Gao
Debbie Leigh
Deborah Etheridge
Stuart Freudberg COG/EO
Steve Walz COG/DEP
Paul DesJardin COG/DCPS
Sophie Mintier COG/DCPS
Tim Schaible COG/DPSH
Jameshia Peterson DDOT
Gregory Matlesky Chairman Mendelson
Andrew Beacher VDOT
Norman Whitaker VDOT
John Hartline Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland
Nancy Abeles Bethesda, MD
Bill Orleans Resident
Tina Slater Purple Line NOW
Betsy Massie PRTC
Tamara Vatnick DCOP
Lisa Ragain COG/DEP
Matthew Colvin Safe Routes to School National Partnership

John A. Townsend II	AAA Mid-Atlantic
Robert Thomas	Washington Post
Rob Whitfield	Fairfax County Taxpayers Alliance
Mike Lake	Fairfax County DOT
Maria Sinner	VDOT
Marcia Hook	Dunn Loring, VA Resident
Bryan Zelle	Vienna, VA Resident
Adrienne Moretz	Frederick Co., MD
Patrick Durany	Sup. Jenkin's Office
Alex Kremasanka	MDE
Mike Lambert	HDR/Arlington
Pierre Holloman	Alexandria
Jeanette Tejada de Gomez	AAA Mid-Atlantic
Grayden Vanu	Prince William County/DOT

1. Public Comment on TPB Procedures and Activities

Bryan Zelle, a resident of Northern Virginia, commented that residents in the I-66 corridor believe that current plans do not reflect regional or multimodal solutions. He stated that the existing toll road proposal would take away a free lane of traffic, involve significant land takings, and enforce tolls on working families. Mr. Zelle encouraged the Board to consider transit and rapid bus service in the I-66 corridor.

Marcia Hook, a resident of Northern Virginia, said the Board should not approve VDOT's public-private partnership agreements in the I-66 corridor project. She cited aspects of the I-495 express lanes contract that should be avoided for the I-66 contract. She asked that VDOT consider bus rapid transit, pedestrian and bicycle improvements to under-utilized rail stations, and consistent lane changes inside and outside the Beltway. She urged the Board to push Virginia to revise their plans for the I-66 corridor.

David Bardin, former board member of the D.C Water and Sewer Authority, noted that Item 12 on the meeting agenda references transportation strategies to achieve co-benefits for regional climate change goals. He emphasized that the COG working group on greenhouse gas emissions reduction should focus on revenue raising transportation co-benefits, and evaluating them on a regional basis.

Kanti Srikanth reported that Carroll George, a resident of Northern Virginia, submitted a letter to the Board, with copies for distribution. Mr. George proposed a new way of pavement marking on freeway on-ramps for merging operations. Mr. Srikanth stated that TPB staff has reviewed the comments and will share its assessment with DOT staff responsible for freeway operations.

2. Approval of Minutes of March 18 Meeting

A motion was made to approve the March 18 meeting minutes. The motion was seconded and was approved unanimously.

3. Report of the Technical Committee

Mark Rawlings reported the Technical Committee met on April 3 and reviewed seven items on the Board's April Agenda. Staff briefed the committee on the following: Regional Bike to Work Day to be held at 79 locations across the region on Friday, May 15; incorporation of the new MOVES 2014 mobile emissions model into the 2015 CLRP and FY 2015 -2020 air quality conformity analysis; the review panel recommendations for funding to Northern Virginia projects for the FY 2016 Transportation Alternatives Program; the FY 2016 TLC program solicitation; the set of draft principles for the reauthorization of MAP-21; the February 18 memo to the Board outlining actions taken by COG, WMATA and several public safety committees in response to the January 12 Metro L'Enfant smoke incident; and a review of the activities of the transportation sector group of the Multi-Sector Working Group to develop an action plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Mr. Rawlings reported that staff presented three items for information and discussion: a multiyear strategic plan to refine the existing travel forecasting models and practice; a list of unfunded transportation projects; and the latest developments regarding USDOT regulations on performance measures under MAP-21.

4. Report of the Citizen Advisory Committee

Bob Summersgill reported that the Citizens Advisory Committee met on April 9. The committee heard a presentation on the multi-sector working group on greenhouse gas emission reductions and a subcommittee will look at making recommendations. The committee also heard a presentation on the status of real-time transit information for different regional transit providers and formed a subcommittee to develop recommendations on that. The committee also formed three additional subcommittees on public participation, unfunded project lists and WMATA issues. Mr. Summersgill reported that the committee would continue to look at transportation safety issues.

Mr. Kannan reported that WMATA is hosting and convening an open data discourse with the software developer community and will coordinate with the CAC and use input from the committee.

Mr. Summersgill commented that he looked forward to coordinating with WMATA and noted the agency has taken the lead in providing open data formats in the past.

5. Report of Steering Committee

Mr. Srikanth reported that the Steering Committee met on April 3 and approved a TIP amendment requested by Maryland DOT to add about \$25 million in funding for two bridge replacement projects. He said that the Steering Committee had also discussed recent activities of COG and

WMATA undertaken since the January 12 Metrorail smoke incident and said an update to staff's earlier memo to the Board is included under agenda item eleven.

Mr. Srikanth then reviewed the following letters that were either sent or received by the Board: a letter from AAA noting an error in the March 3 TPB Weekly Report publication and staff's response letter with a correction noted in the current edition of the Weekly report; a request for and staff's letter sent in support of a federal grant application from the University of Maryland Center of Advanced Transportation Technology; a memo from COG executive director Chuck Bean to COG Board requesting approval of COG staff's participation to facilitate the three state's effort to replace the existing Tri-State Oversight Committee (TOC) with the Metro Safety Commission; and a memo from USDOT to MPOs encouraging the incorporation of a set of federal planning emphasis areas in the MPO's annual work programs.

Mr. Srikanth expanded on the COG Board item of Mr. Bean's letter to the COG Board and noted that the Board approved Mr. Bean's request to enter into a MOU with the Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia. He said that the MOU would allow COG to assist the three states to replace the existing Tristate Oversight Committee (known as the TOC) with an independent Safety Oversight entity, called the Metro Safety Commission (MSC). This new commissions will continue to oversee the safety aspects of the Metrorail system. He said that this reconstitution of the existing oversight entity is a new requirement under MAP-21 and the Federal Transit Administration. He said that this MAP-21 mandated reconstitution of such oversight agencies is intended to provide agencies with authority to promulgate regulations as needed, hire and train qualified staff, enforce safety requirements and set consistent oversight policy on urban rail operations. The FTA will provide funding for this work. COG will not be serving as the MSC but only facilitating the creation of it by the three states.

Mr. Srikanth referred to the mailout and noted the following announcements and updates: the solicitation for projects under the FY 2016 TLC Technical Assistance program; recruitment for the Spring 2015 Community Leadership Institute, which will be conducted on June 3, 10, and 17; staff proposed plans for commemorating the TPB's 50th year anniversary this year; and the "Creating Pedestrian Spaces" best practices workshop on April 28 to be hosted by the Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee.

6. Chair's Remarks

Mr. Mendelson asked Mr. Srikanth about the 50th anniversary ceremony that will be held before the November 18 Board meeting.

Mr. Srikanth responded that the proposal is to hold an event before the Board meeting on November 18 and that staff is working with COG staff to hold a larger event in conjunction with the COG Board annual meeting in December.

Mr. Mendelson asked if the TPB planned to apply for funding for the sixth round of the USDOT

TIGER program.

Mr. Srikanth responded that staff has reviewed the TIGER announcement, and has done some initial outreach to DOTs. He said that Montgomery County has some interest in applying for a TIGER grant. He said that County has requested that the TPB endorse their application. From the staff perspective there is no opportunity for the TPB to take the lead on developing an application for a regional set of projects, but in the coming weeks staff will discuss working with DOTs and WMATA.

Mr. Mendelson noted that given the imminent deadlines of May 4 for the pre-application and June 5 for the final application, it is unlikely that a regional application would be submitted. He said that individual jurisdictions could look at applying for the sixth round.

Mr. Srikanth agreed.

Mr. Mendelson said that a bill in the U.S. House of Representatives titled “Commuter Parity Act” had only one sponsor from the regional delegation. The bill involves increasing transit commuter benefits to achieve parity with parking benefits. With no objection from the Board, he advised staff to draft a letter that the Executive Committee would approve to send to the rest of the delegation, urging that they co-sponsor the bill.

Mr. Srikanth responded that staff would follow up on this request.

Gar y Erenrich noted that the TPB should add support for commuter benefits to the Board’s priorities for reauthorization, under Agenda Item 10.

Mr. Mendelson added that staff should look to both requests.

Mr. Srikanth agreed.

Mr. Fisette referred to the earlier announcement on the June 2015 CLI session and asked whether participants in the June CLI program could participate in one day out of three choices, or if it was a three-day experience. He also asked if Board members were required to make nominations or if people can self-nominate. Mr. Srikanth responded that the CLI comprises of three half-day sessions, that are held after work in the evenings and that nominations from either the Board members or self-nominations were acceptable

ACTION ITEMS

7. Approval of Regional Bike to Work Day 2015

Ms. Moretz, chair of the Bike to Work Day Subcommittee, said that Bike to Work Day would be held on Friday May 15 in the Washington region. She said that since 2001, WABA and Commuter

Connections have teamed to host the event with the aim to reduce the number of single occupant vehicles on the road and to encourage drivers who normally travel alone to try biking to work for the first time. To support first-time participants in the event, she said that WABA and Commuter connections offer safety classes, guaranteed ride home, and planned convoys. Last year 16,800 people registered to participate in the event, and the goal this year is to get 19,000 people to register. She said that people can register at biketoworkmetrodc.org, and that outreach is being conducted on Facebook as well as on Twitter @biketoworkday. Additional outreach is being conducted through English and Spanish language posters and rack cards that are being distributed by employers and agencies in the Washington region. She said that Greg Billing from WABA was in attendance and that her subcommittee was asking the TPB to approve the 2015 Bike to Work Day Proclamation and encouraged the Board to pass similar proclamations in their jurisdictions.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the 2015 Bike to Work Day proclamation. The proclamation was approved unanimously.

8. Approval of an Updated Scope of Work for the Air Quality Conformity Assessment for the 2015 CLRP and the FY 2015-2020 TIP to use MOVES2015

Ms. Posey said that in July 2014 the EPA released an update to their transportation air quality model, called MOVES 2014, and gave MPOs two years to use the model. She said that TPB staff has been testing the model since MOVES 2014 was released and that staff is ready to use that model for the CLRP 2015 air quality conformity analysis. She said that TPB staff has shared the results of their tests with the states and local agencies as well as the TPB's Technical Committee, MWAQC's Technical Committee, and the MWAQC Executive Committee. Each of these groups endorse the move from the old MOVES 2010a model to the newer model. She said that the TPB needs to approve an update to the CLRP scope of work in order to move forward with the new model.

A member asked what advantages the new model has over the old model.

Ms. Posey said that one advantage is that it allows the TPB to take credit for federal projects, like CAFE standards, that are already in effect but not included in MOVES 2010a. Another advantage is that the new model incorporates improved scientific assumptions that yield results that are more accurate.

A member said that it would be helpful if Ms. Posey could explain the different projections from MOVES 2010a and MOVES 2014.

Ms. Posey reiterated that the main difference between the outputs of the two models is that the newer model, MOVES 2014, allows the TPB to take credit for federal programs already in place, like the new CAFE standards. She said that the newer model also includes improved emission rates for gasoline, sulfur, and ethanol, as well as improved fine particle emissions calculations, among other improved assumptions.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the updated CLRP 2015 Scope of Work. The motion passed unanimously.

9. Approval of Projects for Funding under the MAP-21 Transportation Alternatives Program for FY 2015 in Virginia

Mr. Swanson provided background on the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), which was established by MAP-21. He said that in the Washington region, the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia all sub-allocate part of the TAP funding they receive to the TPB. He said that the Board was being asked to approve projects for Northern Virginia. He said that the TPB received 17 applications for a total funding requested of \$5.4 million. He said that nine of those projects were chosen to receive a total of \$2.5 million.

He said that a selection committee had worked to review the applications and developing the recommendations. He also noted that the selection criteria for TAP projects draws from the Regional Transportation Priorities Plan.

Mr. Lovain said that he is pleased that MAP-21 enables MPOs to have some portion of federal funds to distribute.

Ms. Smyth asked if a list of all 17-project applications were available.

Mr. Swanson said that he would send the list of project applications to Ms. Smyth.

A motion was made to adopt resolution R20-2015 to approve the recommended projects for funding under the Virginia MAP-21 Transportation Alternatives Program for FY 2016. The motion was approved unanimously.

10. Approval of Policy Principles on the Reauthorization of the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21)

Mr. Srikanth said that TPB staff was asked by the Board to develop a set of policy principles for federal reauthorization of MAP-21. Referring to his handout, he said that the Board was being asked to approve a resolution and an attached statement of policy principles. The resolution includes 11 whereas clauses that provide context, and two resolution clauses. He said that the first resolution clause adopts the attached policy principles, and that the second resolution clause calls on the U.S. Congress to authorize the program for a full six-year period. Referring to the handout, he also summarized the three broad policy principles: increase federal transportation funding, fund priority needs, promote effective planning and project development.

Mr. Erenrich suggested that the principles include specific reference to restoring parity between the commuter transit benefit and the parking benefit.

Mr. Lovain agreed with Mr. Erenrich and suggested that the principle be rewritten to say, "The

federal commitment to balanced multimodal transportation systems must be reaffirmed, including by restoring parity between the transit commuter benefit and the parking commuter benefit."

The Board accepted this as an amendment.

Mr. Kannan proposed a series of grammatical changes to the policy principles that were accepted by the Board.

Mr. Roberts expressed concern regarding the policy principle statement that "changes in the federal planning and environmental review processes outlined in MAP-21 should be enhanced and strengthened." He said he was concerned that such changes might weaken environmental laws so that projects can be pushed through more quickly.

Mr. Srikanth responded that the principle was intended to convey support for MAP-21's promotion of collaboration of among federal and state agencies to streamline the review process for projects.

Mr. Zimbabwe said that this principle is not about changing federal requirements, but instead it is about making sure that projects can be delivered on a predictable basis and go through the same level of compliance that they go through today.

Mr. Srikanth suggested changing the principle to read, "Streamlining of federal planning and environmental review processes outlined in MAP-21 that are entered ensuring timely delivery of transportation projects should be supported."

The Board accepted the changes as an amendment.

Mr. Zimbabwe suggested that the resolution state that if Congress does not pass a long-term extension, then Congress should support a shorter-term reauthorization.

Mr. Mendelson said the resolution implies that a short-term extension is a possibility.

Mr. Lovain said that a six-year extension is preferred because it provides stability and predictability, and that explicitly mentioning a short-term solution would let them off the hook.

Mr. Wojahn said that reauthorization should include funding for public transit and safe bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. They suggested that the last policy sentence read: "In particular, federal funding for public transit and for safe pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure should be enhanced."

The Board accepted the change as an amendment.

A motion was made to adopt resolution R21-2015 as amended to approve TPB policy principles regarding the reauthorization of MAP-21. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

INFORMATION ITEMS

11. Briefing on the COG/WMATA Actions subsequent to the January 12, 2015 Metrorail smoke incident near the L'Enfant Plaza train station

Mr. Freudberg and Mr. Troup briefed the Board.

Mr. Freudberg began by providing an overview of ongoing COG-led efforts to coordinate response during Metrorail emergencies. In particular, he highlighted a mutual-aid agreement maintained by COG's Passenger Rail Safety Subcommittee that details procedures for coordination and support between WMATA and area fire departments during Metrorail emergencies. He also highlighted the three key COG committees (Fire Chiefs, Police Chiefs, and 911 Directors) and two subcommittees (Public Safety Communications and Rail Safety) focused on public safety related to Metro, and he explained the membership and role of each group.

Mr. Freudberg also outlined steps that have been taken in response to letters from Senators Warren and Mikulski seeking plans for improving emergency communications in the Metro system and providing better training for first responders. He explained that WMATA and the fire departments of the six jurisdictions in which it operates have undertaken more regular testing of emergency communications systems since the January 12 incident, established procedures for regular testing going forward, and set up protocols for resolving any problems that are discovered during the testing. He also explained that a study is underway to identify additional technologies and steps to improve underground communications in the Metro system, including improving cell service. Regarding improved training for first responders, Mr. Freudberg explained that WMATA and area fire departments have been working to develop a regional training and exercise plan, including documenting best practices from other transit systems and metropolitan areas.

Mr. Troup provided an overview of ten early safety action items and communication improvements that WMATA has made since the January 12 incident. The improvements include quarterly rather than annual emergency training exercises for first responders, new emergency operations protocols for the Rail Operations Control Center, and replacement of damaged third-rail cables. (All ten action items were included in Mr. Troup's PowerPoint presentation.) He also outlined three early recommendations by the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) in response to the January 12 incident: assessing the tunnel ventilation system, developing written ventilation procedures, and incorporating those procedures into regular ongoing training and exercise programs.

Mr. Troup also gave a brief overview of the architecture of WMATA's radio system. He said that the agency has begun weekly tests of the public safety radio system and developed an outage display to provide first responders with up-to-date information on any possible outages. He also described an upgrade of WMATA's other main radio system, used by transit police and train operators for regular day-to-day communications, to use the same frequency as the public safety system. He said the upgrade is being coordinated with cell carriers working to expand cell service in Metro stations and tunnels. He said the work will take three to four years.

Chair Mendelson opened the floor to questions.

Ms. Silverman asked Mr. Troup to clarify how the steps being taken by WMATA will reduce or eliminate radio outages that prevent train operators from communicating with the Rail Operations Control Center.

Mr. Troup said that the new system planned to be in place in the next three to four years should eliminate such outages in the system. He said the set-up of the new system is much more robust and modern, and the challenges that have caused recent outages will be eliminated.

Ms. Silverman asked whether the planned upgrades had been fully funded.

Mr. Troup explained that WMATA has allocated funding for the upgrades, but that it hopes to offset some of those costs with assistance from the federal government.

Ms. Silverman asked whether there was a system in place to ensure that when train operators reported radio outages in the system those outages were recorded and resolved.

Mr. Troup explained that the new outage display maps were one-step in improving accountability and responsiveness. He said that WMATA has established new standards and expectations for getting broken radio equipment and transponders back in service. He said that WMATA is still in the process of developing ways to share outage and resolution information with operators so that they can be aware ahead of time about outages in the system and can know whether outages that they report have been resolved.

Ms. Russell asked about interoperability of WMATA's new radio system and the radio systems of the jurisdictions through which Metro runs.

Mr. Troup explained that the radios would operate on different frequencies but that those frequencies will all be able to be accessed through one single radio unit at any given time.

Ms. Russell also asked about enhancing the ability of Metro riders to report emergencies by texting 911.

Mr. Troup said that that would be an issue for local 911 centers. He did say, however, that Metro currently has a service in place for riders to text Metro transit police.

Mr. Harris asked Mr. Troup why the radio upgrades that would allow increased cell service in Metro stations and tunnels had not yet been completed, and he sought assurances that it would now be completed.

Mr. Troup explained that the private group that had been working on the cell service upgrades several years ago went bankrupt and that work ceased on the project for two years. He also said that high-priority safety upgrades called for in the wake of the 2009 Red Line crash had precluded much of the infrastructure installation inside tunnels and stations that would have been needed for the new cell system. He said that WMATA is now in charge of the installation and has a solid plan in place

to make sure it is completed in the next three to four years.

Mr. Harris also asked how WMATA plans to train all of the region's 10,000 first responders in responding to Metro emergencies.

Mr. Troup explained that WMATA now provides 24-hour-a-day, seven-day-a-week access to its emergency training facility to increase training opportunities, and he said the agency provides computer-based training to expand opportunities, too. He referred Mr. Harris to WMATA's Office of Emergency Management for more information.

12. Briefing on the Activities of the Transportation Sector Group of the COG Multi-Sector Working Group to Examine Greenhouse Gas Reductions

Mr. Griffiths provided a high-level summary of the activities completed to date for the COG Multi-Sector Working Group to Examine Greenhouse Gas Reductions. He said that the initial suggested strategies have been identified for the transportation, land use, and environment sectors. He said that a public comment period on these suggested strategies will conclude on April 22 and that on May 8 the working group will decide on a final list of strategies. He said that he will present more information on this item at the May 20 TPB meeting.

13. Briefing on a Study to Identify Pedestrian/Bicycle Access Improvements at Select Rail Stations in the Washington Region

Item 13 was postponed and will be presented at the May 20 meeting.

OTHER ITEMS

14. Other Business

No other business was brought before the Board.

15. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 2:08 p.m.