



## BOARD APPROVES TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROJECTS FOR NORTHERN VIRGINIA

On May 21, the TPB approved 13 projects in Northern Virginia for funding under the Transportation Alternatives Program for FY 2015. The Transportation Alternatives program provides funding to projects considered “alternatives” to traditional highway construction and that expand travel choices, and enhance the transportation experience by integrating modes and improving the cultural, historical, and environmental aspects of the Washington region’s transportation infrastructure.



Cyclist on Four Mile Run Trail by Trail Voice/Flickr

The projects selected for Northern Virginia complete trail systems, improve sidewalks and crosswalks near schools, and provide other streetscape improvements like street lamps and ADA compliant curb ramps.

The program, created under the latest federal surface transportation authorization known as MAP-21, supports projects that were previously funded under other programs including Recreational Trails, Transportation Enhancements, and Safe Routes to School.

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## TPB URGES CONGRESS TO PROTECT HIGHWAY TRUST FUND FROM INSOLVENCY

At its meeting on May 21, the TPB approved a letter urging Congress to act immediately to replenish the federal Highway Trust Fund and to secure more reliable, long-term sources of revenue to support ongoing transportation investments into the future.

Federal officials anticipate that the Trust Fund, from which nearly all federal aid for road and transit projects flows, will become insolvent by the end of August.

In a briefing to the Board on the imminent insolvency, Delania Hardy, of the Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations, explained that incoming revenues from fuel taxes and other sources—predicted to be about \$39 billion this fiscal year—will not be able to cover the \$51 billion in transportation spending already promised by Congress. She warned that once revenues fall short of planned expenditures, federal officials would have to delay or stop payments to states and

*(Continued on page 4)*

### Upcoming meetings and items of interest:

TPB Meeting: June 18, 2014

- Briefing on the implementation of the TPB Regional Priority Bus Projects under the TIGER Program
- Briefing on proposed MAP-21 rules on statewide and MPO planning

### Inside this issue of TPBnews:

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# REGIONAL COMMUTER RAIL INVESTMENTS PLANNED FOR CLRP

Representatives from Virginia Railway Express (VRE) and Maryland Area

Regional Commuter (MARC) briefed the TPB at the May 21 meeting on plans to keep their commuter rail systems in a state of good repair while also expanding capacity on existing routes to serve more riders in the Washington region.



MARC train by John H Gray/Flickr

The states submitted their updated plans for inclusion in the 2014 update to the region's Constrained Long-Range Transportation Plan (CLRP), which identifies hundreds of regionally significant projects and programs that area transportation agencies expect to fund and build by 2040.



VRE train boarding by Elvert Barnes/Flickr

The updated commuter rail plans include approximately \$2 billion in enhancements that the two operating agencies expect to be able to afford between now and 2040. Many of the improvements and much of the funding had already been identified previously, but recent updates reflect new funding and policy opportunities

In all, VRE has identified nearly \$1 billion in improvements, including buying additional rail cars, expanding station platforms and parking facilities, and upgrading equipment storage and maintenance facilities.

VRE plans to make about \$200 million in improvements by 2020, to allow train frequencies to be increased from once every 30 minutes to once every 20 minutes during peak periods and to enable the system to carry up to 25,000 passengers per day. Today the system handles about 19,000 daily passengers.

VRE's package of enhancements represents a portion of the larger, \$3.2 billion VRE System Plan, the remainder of which will be added to the CLRP in future years as additional funding becomes available.

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# TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES

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Transportation Alternatives complements the TPB's Transportation/Land-Use Connections (TLC) Program, which provides technical assistance to local jurisdictions to help them better coordinate transportation and land-use planning. Transportation Alternatives provides an opportunity for jurisdictions to fund the implementation of projects or initiatives identified in the planning studies funded under the TLC Program.

Transportation Alternatives offers the TPB an opportunity to support and enhance regional planning activities as

outlined in the *TPB Vision* and the *Regional Transportation Priorities Plan*.

Local governments, park authorities, and school boards are among the agencies and organizations eligible to apply for Transportation Alternatives funding.

The TPB accepted applications for Maryland through May 15, 2014, and will accept projects for the District later this year. ♦

## FY 2015 Transportation Alternatives Projects for Northern Virginia

### Arlington County

#### Four Mile Run Trail Connection

Construct a paved non-motorized transportation link between Four Mile Run Trail and the street network of Crystal City.

**Funding - \$200,000**

#### Rosslyn-Ballston Corridor Accessibility Improvements

Construct spot improvements including curb extensions and ramps to various sidewalks within the Rosslyn-Ballston commercial corridor.

**Funding - \$200,000**

#### Safe Routes to Schools: Ashlawn & Williamsburg

Construct new sidewalk and trail sections to provide pedestrian and bicycle access to two schools.

**Funding - \$400,000**

### Fairfax County

#### Cinderbed Road Bikeway

Construct a 3.1 mile connection between Fort Belvoir and the Franconia-Springfield Metrorail station.

**Funding - \$400,000**

#### Cross County Trail - Lorton

Construct a segment of the Cross County Trail that will connect the Occoquan Regional Park and Laurel Hill Greenway via the Lorton Arts Foundation.

**Funding - \$353,057**

### Safe Routes to Schools: Westbriar Elementary

Complete missing segments of sidewalk along Old Courthouse Road.

**Funding - \$200,000**

### Town of Herndon

#### Herndon Historic Revitalization Project

Improve streetscape design and pedestrian accessibility, safety, and mobility in downtown Herndon.

**Funding - \$6,584**

### Loudoun County

#### Safe Routes to Schools

Install sidewalks to provide walkable paths for students to walk to eight schools in Loudoun County.

**Funding - \$413,018**

### Town of Middleburg

#### Washington Street Streetscape Improvements

Install street lights, landscaping, and rehabilitate sidewalks on the south side of Washington Street.

**Funding - \$206,688**

### Prince William County

#### Blackburn Road Sidewalk

Connect a missing sidewalk section on Blackburn Road from Rippon Boulevard to Cow Branch Bridge.

**Funding - \$560,000**

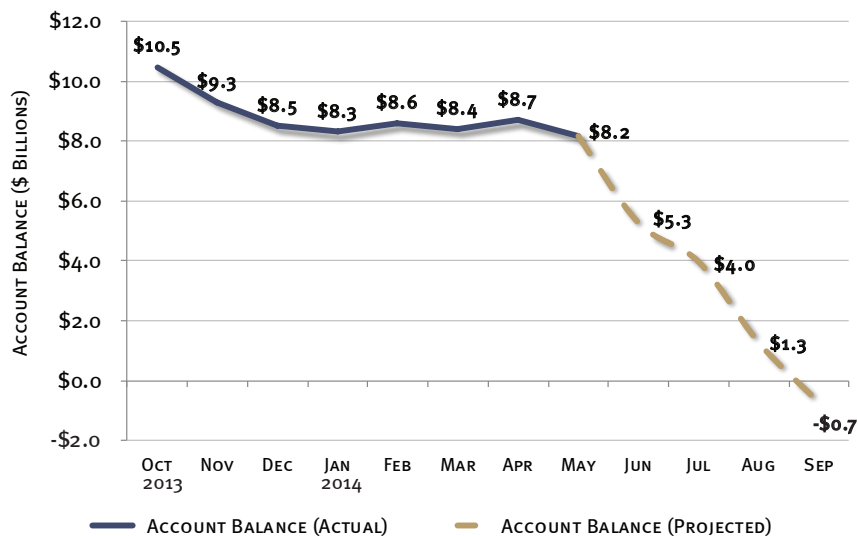
# HIGHWAY TRUST FUND

(Continued from page 1)

localities for projects that are already under construction or are scheduled to begin soon. and for the millions of people who visit the nation’s capital each year.

In its letter, the TPB warned of “significant administrative burdens and immediate unmet transportation needs” should the Highway Trust Fund run out of money to cover planned expenditures. Looking beyond the next few months, the TPB also included a call for more reliable, long-term funding solutions for transportation, citing the fact that the gap between revenues from federal fuel taxes and growing transportation needs will only continue to widen in coming years.

## FEDERAL HIGHWAY TRUST FUND EXPECTED TO BE INSOLVENT BY AUGUST



SOURCE: US DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION HIGHWAY TRUST FUND TICKER (WWW.DOT.GOV)

“Agencies responsible for keeping our roadways and transit systems safe and in a state of good repair have programmed nearly \$2 billion in federal funding to spend on hundreds of improvements this year,” the TPB said in its letter. “Many of the projects address critical safety needs. Insolvency will put agencies in the impossible position of deciding which projects to keep funding and which to halt.”

The letter pointed out the major impacts such disruptions would have in the region, including threatening job growth and economic recovery, and making it harder to maintain mobility for the federal workforce

the TPB said in its letter. “Now it’s time for the federal government to do its part.”

In her presentation, Hardy updated the Board on the latest Congressional efforts to reauthorize MAP-21, the current two-year federal transportation funding bill that expires on September 30. She said that several different committees were working on various aspects of reauthorization, with proposals ranging from short-term extensions to six-year bills. But, she said, none of the proposals include long-term funding solutions for closing the gap between current revenues and anticipated spending. ♦

“In 2013, both states in our region—Maryland and Virginia—took historic steps to raise new revenue for transportation at the state level, by raising user fees and other taxes to continue investing in critical infrastructure,”

## COMMUTER RAIL INVESTMENTS

(Continued from page 2)

In Maryland, a little more than \$1 billion in planned improvements have been identified, including the purchase or refurbishment of hundreds of rail cars and locomotives, numerous improvements, and expanded service on all three lines, including more weekend and off-peak service on the Penn Line between the District and Baltimore.

Maryland's package of improvements, which are all planned to be made before 2030, are part of the larger, statewide MARC Growth and Investment Plan, which spells out additional improvements through 2050.

These commuter rail maintenance and expansion plans align with the two key elements of the *Regional Transportation Priorities Plan*. The Priorities Plan calls for proper maintenance of the region's existing transportation system, of which commuter rail is an important part. The plan says that keeping existing transit, roads, and bridges safe and in good working order is essential before the region can move on to other improvements.

The Priorities Plan also calls for expanding capacity on the existing transit system, as a way to take greater advantage of infrastructure that is already in place. ♦

### UPCOMING JUNE AGENDA ITEMS

The June 18 TPB meeting is expected to include the following items:

- Approval of an amendment to the FY 2013-2018 TIP that is exempt from the Air Quality Conformity requirement to update projects and funding in the District of Columbia section of the FY 2013-2018 TIP
- Briefing on the 2014 regional Bike to Work Day
- Briefing on the implementation of the TPB Regional Bus Project under the Transportation Investments Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) Program
- Briefing on the update of the Coordinated Human Service Transportation Plan and new Section 5310 Enhanced Mobility Project solicitation details
- Briefing on the proposed MAP-21 rule on statewide and MPO planning, guidance on the representation by transit agencies on the MPO board, and proposed regulations on performance measures ♦

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[mwcog.org/tpbweeklyreport](http://mwcog.org/tpbweeklyreport)

### OTHER MAY AGENDA ITEMS

The TPB's May 21 meeting also included the following items:

- Approval of an amendment to the FY 2013-2018 TIP that is exempt from the Air Quality Conformity requirement to include project and funding updates for the Northern Virginia section of the FY 2013-2018 TIP
- Notice of a proposed amendment to update projects and funding in the District of Columbia section of the FY 2013-2018 TIP ♦

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# 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 North Capitol St., NE (Enter from First St., NE).

## June 2014

- 5 Freight Subcommittee (1 pm)
- 6 TPB Technical Committee (9 am)
- 6 TPB Steering Committee (noon)
- 10 Management, Operations, and Intelligent Transportation Systems (MOITS) Technical Subcommittee (12:30 pm)
- 12 Citizens Advisory Committee (6 pm)
- 17 Commuter Connections Ridematching Committee (10 am)
- 17 Regional TDM Marketing Group (noon)
- 18 Transportation Planning Board (noon)**
- 24 Regional Bus Subcommittee (noon)
- 25 Regional Taxicab Regulators (1 pm)
- 27 TPB Technical Committee (9 am)
- 27 TPB Steering Committee (noon)

## July 2014

- 9 Car Free Day Steering Committee (10 am)
- 10 Citizens Advisory Committee (6 pm)
- 15 Employer Outreach Committee (10 am)
- 15 Commuter Connections Subcommittee (noon)
- 15 Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee (1 pm)
- 16 Transportation Planning Board (noon)**
- 18 Travel Forecasting Subcommittee (9:30 am)
- 22 Regional Bus Subcommittee (noon)
- 24 Aviation Technical Subcommittee (10:30 am)
- 24 Access for All Advisory Committee (noon)

## September 2014

- 10 Bike to Work Day Steering Committee (10 am)
- 10 Car Free Day Steering Committee (11:30 am)
- 11 Human Service Transportation Coordination Task Force (12:30 pm)
- 11 Citizens Advisory Committee (6 pm)
- 16 Regional TDM Marketing Group (10 am)
- 16 Commuter Connections Subcommittee (noon)
- 16 Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee (1 pm)
- 16 Commuter Connections Ridematching Committee (2 pm)
- 17 Transportation Planning Board (noon)**
- 19 Travel Forecasting Subcommittee (9:30 am)
- 22 Car Free Day
- 23 Regional Bus Subcommittee (noon)
- 24 Regional Taxicab Regulators Task Force (1 pm)
- 25 Aviation Technical Subcommittee (10:30 am)

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 Bryan Hayes at (202) 962-3273 or [bhayes@mwkog.org](mailto:bhayes@mwkog.org), or (202) 962-3213 (TDD). Please allow seven working days for preparation of material.

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