

Regional Bus Subcommittee (RBS) – 2011 Work Programme

Based on discussion at the RBS meetings, the following is proposed as the work programme for 2011.

1) 2011 Regional Bus Priority Projects list

Background

In 2008, the RBS undertook the development of a Regional Priority Bus Projects List for submission to the Transportation Planning Board. The purpose of the list was to highlight projects that would improve access to transit and bus circulation, focusing on capital projects that could be programmed into a 6-year TIP.

Results were presented to the TPB at the end of 2008, 75 candidate projects were evaluated based on regionally significant criteria, resulting in the identification of 13 priority projects, in the categories of:

- Bottlenecks/Running-way Improvements,
- Bus Stops,
- Transit Staging Areas, and
- Other Bus Facilities.

Additional categories of priorities examined by the RBS included.

- Bus Storage and Maintenance Facilities,
- Regional Marketing and Customer Information,
- Emerging Corridors,
- HOT Lane Transit Ramps and
- WMATA Priority Corridor Network.

In part as a result of this effort, some of the proposed projects are now being funded, including by the region's TIGER grant.

As three years have passed since the 2008 effort, a consensus was reached at RBS meetings that it is time to revise and update the Regional Bus Priority Project list. The update will renew interest and emphasis on capital projects that could improve travel for the riders that board buses 650,000 every weekday in the region. An evaluation of the 2008 work will assess what has been accomplished over the past three years, while the 2011 revision will focus on new or revised priorities for regional bus systems. In addition, the new regional bus priority project list will also support the work of TPB's Priorities Plan Scoping Task Force, long-range bus planning for the region, and other products of the RBS and TPB.

Work Item

A submission form for regional bus priority projects will be distributed to RBS members to complete. This form will be similar to the form used in 2008 for consistency. In addition,

members will have an opportunity to review the projects listed in 2008 and the criteria used developed to identify regional priority projects. Members are expected to complete the form, identifying new, revised, or completed bus priority projects for their agency that have regional significance.

2) Updating the *Moving Forward* Brochure

Background

The *Moving Forward* Brochure was published in September 2008, and provided a public document on the status and goals of bus systems in the region. The brochure was a product of the *Status Report on the Bus Systems in the National Capital Region* published in February 2008, a twenty-page memorandum which provided basic information of each of the regional bus systems, including ridership and costs, and also identified common needs and current issues.

Much of the data provided in the *Status Report* was updated in 2010 in an *Overview of Local and Regional Transit Systems* memorandum and presentation given to the TBP. Accordingly, rather than produce a new Status Report, new bus systems' needs and issues information will be captured in the priority projects list and incorporated in the updated brochure as relevant.

Work Item

A presentation of the 2008 document will be distributed to RBS members, along with initial suggestions and comments for possible revision or updates. Members will be asked to propose changes to the document and supply new data or information as needed. Along with the information collected in the priorities list above (work item 1), this information will be used to draft a 2011 version of the brochure for printing and public distribution.

3) Bus Network Mapping

Background

As part of its long-range planning efforts, the TPB is seeking to develop forecasts for transit routes and schedules in the medium-term (next three to six years). These will go to inform planners developing scenarios and alternatives analyses for regional bus service investments. This will be similar to the work WMATA has undertaken in developing its Priority Corridor Network (PCN) for bus priority improvements and Montgomery and Fairfax Counties' plans for BRT, going on to integrate the information at a regional level. As a first step, network mapping will look at both service corridors and service frequency (i.e., a 15-minute map). Performing complementary efforts at a regional level will expand on the current studies of each jurisdiction and provide a basis for indentifying current and long-term regional needs for bus improvements and increased bus service.

Work Item

RBS members will be asked to identify the major corridors of travel in their operating areas, and to provide information on their own bus operations serving any of those corridors. The goal will be to identify a Regional Arterial Bus Corridor Network with 3- and 6-year phases, which

would identify needed and forecast services. As a complementary effort, the RBS will also seek to develop a “15-minute” map that identifies corridors with high frequencies of bus services, leading to identification of gaps or needed links. Future work will go towards identifying hot spots and prioritizing needed investments.

4) Technical Session on Real-Time Transit Information.

Background

Discussions at RBS meetings have identified a strong interest in improving regional communication and cooperation in the sharing of real-time transit information, for both customers and operators. Specifically, there are three aspects of real-time transit information which members are likely to have in common: 1) getting expert technical assistance, 2) procurement of systems and displays, and 3) sources of funding.

In addition, the TPB’s Management, Operations and Intelligent Transportation Systems (MOITS) committee is examining how to combine future transit data, including automated passenger counts, automated vehicle location data, and congestion/GIS data, for input to the regional database (i.e., RITIS). Coordinated transit data formats, transmission, and storage would improve regional cooperation efforts.

Work Item

In cooperation with MOITS, a workshop of real-time transit information will be hosted at COG. Invitations will be extended to subcommittee members and to jurisdictional and agency staff with relevant interests. Nominal date proposed for February or March 2011.

5) Other RBS Activities

Background

In addition to the above items, the RBS will undertake the routine annual activities for the subcommittee, including:

- Private Providers Task Force and Annual Meeting – May 2011
- Assess opportunities for Federal grants
- Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) inputs
- Constrained Long Range Plan (CLRP) inputs
- Collect Annual Ridership and Budget data for regional bus systems.

RBS Annual Activities Guide	
January	Call for projects and input to UPWP.
February	CLRP data and inputs
March	Regional Needs Report input to TPB.
April	Initiate Federal grant reviews/applications TIGER etc.
May	Annual private operator meeting to meet FTA requirements
June	Review regional budgets and interactions and Commuter Connections promotion of bus and rideshare.
July	<i>No meeting</i>
August	Annual performance review of FY numbers from regional systems.
September	Approval of CLRP/LRP transit projects and assumptions.
October	Special projects work.
November	Selection of officers.
December	<i>No meeting</i>