

TPB Technical Committee

September 8, 2006

Item # 5

From: Darren Smith

Sent: Thursday, August 17, 2006 10:52 AM

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Subject: Transmittal on behalf of the Chairman of the Transportation Planning Board

Attached please find a letter from Michael Knapp, Chairman of the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board, to Mayor Williams, Governor Ehrlich, and Governor Kaine. The letter regards exploring options to improve the transportation system in the Washington region, and references a PowerPoint presentation that is also attached to this e-mail.

Forwarded by:

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August 17, 2006

District of Columbia

Bowie

College Park

Frederick County

Gaithersburg

Greenbelt

Montgomery County

Prince George's County

Rockville

Takoma Park

Alexandria

Arlington County

Fairfax

Fairfax County

Falls Church

Loudoun County

Manassas

Manassas Park

Prince William County

Mayor Anthony A. Williams
District of Columbia
John A. Wilson Building
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20004

Governor Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr.
State of Maryland
State House
100 State Circle
Annapolis, MD 21401-1925

Governor Tim Kaine
Commonwealth of Virginia
P.O. Box 1475
Richmond, VA 23218

Dear Mayor Williams, Governor Ehrlich and Governor Kaine:

I write on behalf of the Transportation Planning Board (TPB), the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization for the National Capital Region, seeking your assistance in exploring options to improve the transportation system in the Washington area.

In recent months, the TPB has received presentations (the most recent of which is attached to this message) about strategies used in other regions of the country to more effectively link transportation and land use planning, including ways of promoting projects that further regional transportation and land use goals. In the Washington area, an extensive visioning process in the late 1990s arrived at a set of comprehensive, regional land use and transportation objectives and strategies. These objectives, which continue to guide the TPB, include concentrating development around existing and planned highway and transit infrastructure, and improving mobility through access to multiple transportation modes and options. The vision recognizes that transportation goals cannot be reached without addressing land use, and vice versa.

The 2005 federal transportation authorization (SAFETEA-LU) also calls for improved coordination of transportation and land use at the regional level, and provides metropolitan planning entities like the TPB with additional funds to help identify regional needs and develop regional strategies. However, funding remains scarce for localized efforts to identify specific transportation needs, and the capital projects that address those needs.

Regional planning organizations in other major metropolitan areas (including San Francisco, Atlanta, and Philadelphia) have sought to implement their own vision objectives through grant programs that fund specially selected transportation projects and activities that help facilitate desired land use patterns. These programs are administered regionally with selection criteria based on regional goals. Projects typically funded by these programs include pedestrian circulation plans for town center areas or business parks, access improvements to transit stations, and other projects that can lower congestion and improve safety in urban, suburban, and exurban areas alike.

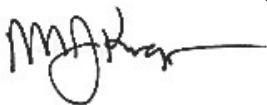
Hearing about these programs has engendered discussion among TPB members about the potential benefits of conducting such a program on a regional scale, including the ability to more easily share successful strategies and maintain consistent focus on how small-scale projects fit in to the context of larger regional challenges. It also has spurred dialogue about the barriers to implementing a similar program in the Washington area, most notably the dearth of funds not already committed to various crucial transportation needs.

In discussing prospective options, TPB members generally have concluded that while there are significant benefits to be derived from conducting such a program on the regional level, taking funds away from other needed activities and projects would be a major concern and obstacle. We are hopeful that, given the support shown by the three state-level administrations for linking transportation and land use objectives that some level of funding might be contributed by each to this initiative for the Washington region without detracting from existing transportation resources.

In the other major metropolitan areas that have undertaken similar efforts, a total sum of \$30 million has been used to get the program started. The TPB is willing to commit a substantial portion of its own available planning funds to develop a framework for administering such a program, including selection criteria based on the TPB's study of alternative land use and transportation scenarios.

No definite commitments are being sought at this time; rather, it will simply aid the TPB in further discussion of this issue at its September meeting to know if the potential exists to obtain additional funding in support of such a program. I will follow up with each of the Department of Transportation secretaries in advance of the next TPB meeting on September 20, and work with your respective administrations in further development of these ideas. Thank you for your consideration.

Warmest Personal Regards,



Michael J. Knapp
Chairman
National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board

cc: Michelle Pourciau, Director of Transportation, District of Columbia
Rick Rybeck, District of Columbia Department of Transportation
Sharon Anderson, Office of the Mayor, District of Columbia
Robert Flanagan, Secretary of Transportation, State of Maryland
Samuel Minnittee, Maryland Department of Transportation
Lyn Erickson, Maryland Department of Transportation
Key Worcester, Office of the Governor, State of Maryland
Pierce Homer, Secretary of Transportation, Commonwealth of Virginia
Jo Anne Sorenson, Virginia Department of Transportation
Kanathur Srikanth, Virginia Department of Transportation

*Strengthening the Linkages
Between Transportation
and Land Use Planning
in the Washington Region*

Presentation to the Transportation Planning Board

Ronald F. Kirby
Director of Transportation Planning

July 19, 2006

Recap of Previous Discussion

- At the June 21 TPB meeting, Board members were presented with:
 - The context of current and projected transportation and land use plans and conditions in the region
 - A summary of previous and ongoing TPB activities focused on linking land use and transportation
 - Three options for potential TPB initiatives, modeled after programs in other regions around the country . . .

Option 1

Patterned after MTC (San Francisco)

- Administer a grant program for both planning and capital activities, with funding awarded to projects based on merit and adherence to set criteria
 - Reserve around \$30 million annually in funds from STP, TE, CMAQ, or other sources, to fund selected projects
 - Develop selection criteria to use in evaluating submitted projects
 - Oversee project selection and contract development
 - Track project progress
 - Carry out ongoing program review and assessment
- Based on MTC experience, could expect to fund only one in five submitted projects

Option 2

Patterned after DVRPC (Philadelphia)

- Administer a grant program for planning activities only, with funding awarded to projects based on merit and adherence to set criteria
 - Reserve \$1-2 million annually from STP funds or other sources to fund selected projects
 - Develop selection criteria to use in evaluating submitted projects
 - Oversee project selection and contract development
 - Track project progress
 - Carry out ongoing program review and assessment
- Based on DVRPC experience, could expect to fund only one in four submitted projects

Option 3

Use TPB Planning Funds to Identify Priority Needs and Promote Solutions

- Using resources out of the TPB Unified Planning Work Program, and informed by results of RMAS, identify priority transportation “gaps” or needs (large- and small-scale) crucial to advancing regional land use goals
- Help build consensus around needs
- Facilitate discussion about possible solutions to these focused needs, explore funding options, and promote inclusion of priority projects in the region’s Constrained Long Range Plan (CLRP)

Project Assessment Committee Structure for Options 1 & 2: Experience from other MPOs

- The committees are comprised of the following:
 - Local, state, and regional agency representatives
 - Representatives of non-profit and academic communities
 - Citizen members
- Both MTC and DVRPC use this structure

Project Selection Criteria for Options 1 & 2: Experience from other MPOs

- Other MPOs have based selection criteria on their vision documents and scenario study processes
 - MTC (San Francisco) criteria based on 2002 “Smart Growth Strategy”; ***include community involvement, transportation-land use integration, breadth of transportation choices, encouragement of compact development, and support of neighborhood “placemaking”***
 - ARC (Atlanta) criteria resulted from identification of regional priority locations: ***activity centers, town centers, corridors, and “emerging” centers or corridors***. Projects are to encourage mixed-use, mixed-income development in these locations and multi-modal access, and have strong public involvement
 - DVRPC (Philadelphia) criteria were derived from the *Horizons 2025* Plan which identified ***locations with a need for redevelopment*** and strategies to encourage redevelopment with transportation investment

*Examples of Projects
Funded by Grant Programs
in Other Regions*

MTC (San Francisco) Program: Project Examples

- Vallejo – Sereno Village Apartments and the Sereno Transit Center
 - Suburban community of affordable apartment units built by non-profit organizations near a bus facility
 - \$382,500 grant (with \$50,000 local match) to the City of Vallejo for *pedestrian and transit access improvements*



MTC (San Francisco) Program: Project Examples



- Richmond Transit Village
 - Proposed mixed-use development in an economically depressed area
 - \$865,500 grant (with \$112,100 local match) to the Richmond Redevelopment Agency for pedestrian and transit access improvements, a plaza, and relocation of surface parking

ARC (Atlanta) Program: Project Examples

- Perimeter Center
 - Largest corporate office market in the Southeast; also greatest jobs-housing imbalance in region
 - \$150,000 in planning funds and almost \$7 million in capital funds have gone toward increasing mobility for all transportation modes
 - Projects included sidewalk connectivity, intersection improvements, a shuttle circulator, and other improvements
 - Proposals for construction of 2,000 new residential units



ARC (Atlanta) Program: Project Examples



- West Lake MARTA Transit Area
 - Study extends beyond traditional 1/2-mile radius
 - *Focus on barriers to station access, unrealized transit potential, redevelopment opportunities, provision of wide range of housing choices, and potential to transform area into pedestrian-friendly environment*

DVRPC (Philadelphia) Program: Project Examples

- Beverly City, NJ – Waterfront Plan and Transit-Oriented Development
 - Lack of recreation opportunities, access, and protection of the existing waterfront
 - Study addressed design for a waterfront park, relocation of parking lots, improvements for pedestrians, and improving connections to a light rail station
 - Effort has spurred development interest, including a proposal for townhomes, multi-story buildings with stores and galleries, an amphitheater, lighthouse, and park

DVRPC (Philadelphia) Program: Project Examples

- Pottstown, PA – High Street Redesign and Traffic Calming
 - High-volume, high-speed “main street” through business district
 - Study identified measures such as back-in angled parking, creation of a center turn lane, establishment of exclusive bicycle travel lanes, and the provision of new signage, markings, and signals to direct motorists and pedestrians
 - Improvements now complete as planned



*How could a transportation –
land use grant program for the
Washington Region work?*

Accommodating a Multi-State Region

- Funds that come from each state would only go toward projects in that state
 - For the program in the Philadelphia Region, 2/3 of funds come from PA and 1/3 from NJ; grants are distributed in the same proportion
- Projects would be selected by a single regional assessment committee and approved by the TPB

Selection Criteria Development for the Washington Region

- Selection criteria for a grant program for this region would be based on:
 - TPB Vision Goals, Objectives, and Strategies
 - Results of the Regional Mobility and Accessibility Study

The TPB Vision (1998)

A Foundation for Action

Policy Goal #2

“ . . . healthy regional core and dynamic activity centers with a mix of jobs, housing, and services in a walkable environment.”

Policy Goal #7

“ . . . better inter-jurisdictional coordination of transportation and land use planning.”

Policy Goal #2, Strategy #2

“Encourage local jurisdictions to provide incentives for concentrations of residential and commercial development along transportation/transit corridors within and near the regional core and regional activity centers, such as zoning, financial incentives, transfer of development rights, priority infrastructure financing, and other measures.”

Funding

- Other MPOs have funded grant programs with a combination of STP, CMAQ, TE, and other sources
- The situation in this region is more complex; each of the three state-level jurisdictions has a different method of allocating these funds to projects
- To the maximum extent possible, a similar program here would be set up to avoid diminishing funding sources already committed to needed transportation activities
 - Could consider seeking direct funding support from the governors of Maryland and Virginia and the mayor of the District of Columbia, or new appropriations of federal dollars

Selection Criteria

- Other MPOs have based selection criteria on their vision documents and scenario study processes
- Selection criteria for a program in this region would be designed to promote projects that help accomplish one or more of goals derived from the TPB Vision and the Scenario Study, beginning with these:
 - Facilitate addition of more households to the region in close proximity to activity centers
 - Support more development, especially employment, on the eastern side of the region
 - Support existing Activity Centers as well as potential new Activity Centers (particularly on the eastern side of the region and in the outer jurisdictions)

Next Steps

- Based on comments received at the July 19, 2006 TPB meeting, staff will prepare a detailed proposal for the TPB's consideration at its September 20, 2006 meeting
- It is suggested that the proposal include:
 - Conducting a “gap analysis” to identify not yet addressed challenges to implementation of desired transportation/land use scenarios
 - If warranted by the results of the “gap analysis”, a framework for a grant program, including project selection criteria and process, and associated funding sources
 - The “gap analysis” and program development to be completed for action by the TPB before the end of this calendar year