



UPCOMING MEETINGS
AND ITEMS OF
INTEREST:

TPB Meeting,
October 20:

- Approval of the 2010 Update of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan for the National Capital Region
- Briefing on the Draft Financial Analysis for the 2010 CLRP

October 14: Public Information Session on the Financial Analysis of the Region's Long-Range Transportation Plan

More information may be found at: www.mwcog.org/transportation

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TPB news

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OCTOBER 2010

TPB BRIEFED ON FINDINGS OF CLRP ASPIRATIONS SCENARIO

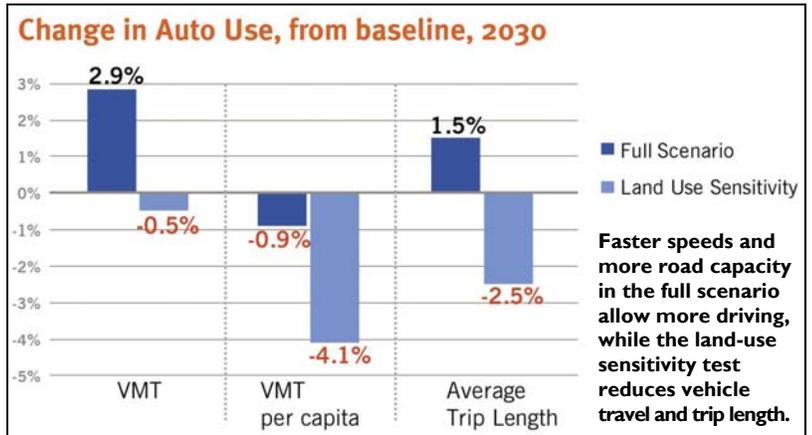
Findings from the CLRP Aspirations Scenario Study were presented to the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB) at its meeting on September 15, 2010. The scenario analyzes the impacts of introducing tolls, Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), and land use changes throughout the metropolitan Washington region relative to the baseline adopted Constrained Long-Range Plan (CLRP) for 2030.

The scenario looked at the effects of implementing a 1,650-mile regional system of priced lanes or tolls (including new lanes and conversions of existing lanes), a region

-wide 500-mile BRT system, and changes in land-use policies to promote denser, transit-oriented development.

The findings included increases in the amount of driving and significant decreases in congestion and travel delay. Bicycling,

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TASK FORCE ESTABLISHED TO SCOPE REGIONAL PRIORITIES PLAN

On September 15, the TPB voted to form a task force to determine the scope and process for developing a Regional Transportation Priorities Plan.

The task force is being formed as follow-up to the TPB event held on May 26 called the "Conversation on Setting Regional Transportation Priorities," which addressed regional transportation challenges,

and explored possibilities for enhancing the process of setting and implementing regional priorities. The impetus for that event was a request by the TPB's Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) asking the TPB to develop a "Regional Priorities Plan" that would serve as a financially unconstrained regional vision for transportation investment.

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REPORT ON LOCAL AND REGIONAL BUS TRANSIT SERVICES

On September 15, the TPB received a report on the status of the local and regional bus transit services that provide important transportation options for Washington region residents. The report responded to a request by the TPB at its March 17 meeting for information on ridership and costs for all bus transit services operating within the metropolitan area. The purpose of this request was to provide a better understanding of the role that local bus transit service plays in supporting the region's overall transit network.

There are 16 distinct public transit services in the region: Metrorail, Metrobus, and 14 local bus, commuter bus, and commuter rail services. In 2009, Metrorail provided 58 percent of the 1.4 million daily transit trips in the region, while Metrobus provided 26 percent. The remaining 16 percent of the transit trips were provided on local and commuter buses and commuter rail services.

An average of 650,000 bus trips were taken daily in 2009, with 440,000 of those provided by Metrobus and 210,000 provided by local and commuter bus systems. Montgomery County's Ride On is by far the largest locally operated bus service, providing 100,000 trips daily and accounting for almost half of all locally provided bus transit trips in the region. Fairfax County's Connector

service provided about 30,000 trips daily during 2009, while DC's Circulator, Alexandria's DASH, and Prince George's County's TheBus provided about 13,000 trips each.

The bus systems in the region face common challenges now and into the future as the demand for bus service continues to grow. Several operators, especially Ride On and Metrobus, are facing capacity constraints in fleet size as current garage space is at maximum occupancy and many old garages need to be rehabilitated. Transit centers and bus bays at Metrorail stations need to be repaired and expanded to meet current and future needs.

Worsening traffic congestion continues to reduce service quality and increase operating costs, even as bus systems must contend with tight budgets that have led to service cuts, fare increases, and proposed staff reductions. TPB Member Chris Zimmerman of the Arlington County Board commented on how this impacts the ability to deliver bus service: "we have traffic congestion, which means it costs more to deliver the same number of people. We basically need to run more buses in a given period of time in order to move the same number of folks."

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OTHER SEPTEMBER AGENDA ITEMS

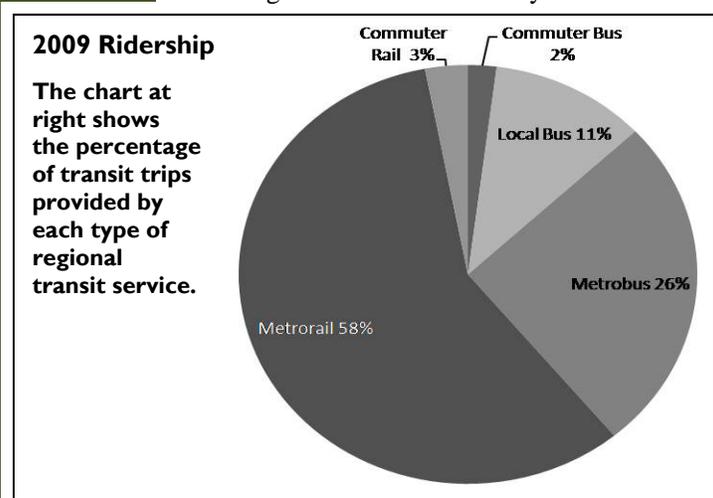
The TPB's September 15 meeting also covered the following items:

- Briefing on the COG Grant Application to the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Sustainable Communities Planning Grant Program.

Information and materials for the monthly TPB meeting are posted on the TPB website one week prior to the meeting: www.mwcog.org/transportation/tpb. ♦

"Whether you're in close or out farther, people actually do want to get on buses now, and they will choose to do that rather than be stuck in traffic behind the wheel of a car, even when it's not getting them there any faster. We're simply not doing what we have to, to meet that demand."

- Chris Zimmerman, Arlington County Board



Nat Bottigheimer of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) reiterated the impact of traffic congestion on bus service, using as an example the “Beat the Beltway Blues” connection service from Bethesda to Tysons Corner. He said that the bus ran efficiently on the highways, but got stuck in traffic once it got to Tysons Corner, making it difficult to circulate and get people to their destinations. He said, “there needs to be that connectivity once a bus gets where it’s going. Intersection prioritization projects can help extend the effectiveness of service that’s happening on the regional network level.”

As ridership continues to grow, there is unmet customer demand, particularly in the outer suburbs which have limited transit service. Trends indicate that locally pro-

vided bus service will continue to grow and play an increasing role in the regional transit mix. Future growth of bus service is being planned for at the regional level and at local levels across the metropolitan area through a number of significant initiatives:

- The TPB award of nearly \$60 million in U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) Transportation Investment Generating Economic Revenue (TIGER) Program funding for Bus Priority Enhancements across the region;
- The WMATA Priority Corridor Network Study and implementation of its recommendations; and
- Various local studies to identify opportunities for bus rapid transit on major highways and arterials. ♦

FUNDING TRANSITION FOR MATOC PROGRAM

On September 15, the TPB received a briefing on the status of funding for fiscal year 2011 for the Metropolitan Area Transportation Operations Coordination (MATOC) Program. The MATOC Program will be providing service under continuing funding through the state departments of transportation as of October 1, 2010. The MATOC Program was originally funded through a \$1.6 million federal grant secured by Congressman Moran, which expired on September 30, 2010.

MATOC activities include obtaining and communicating timely information during major incidents; enabling operating agencies and the traveling public to make informed and coordinated decisions; maintaining a web-based transportation information system; and facilitating the adoption of standard operating procedures by transportation agencies. Established in 2008, MATOC is a joint program of the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia DOTs and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA). Its mission is providing regional situational awareness of transportation conditions and incidents to improve traveler safety and reduce transportation delays.

The University of Maryland is the organizational home of MATOC as of October 1, 2010. MATOC will continue to provide on-going interaction between MATOC operations staff and agency operators throughout the region. The staff will utilize the Regional Integrated Transportation Information System (RITIS) software tool, which enables staff to share significant incident information across the region. A MATOC

Facilitator was hired in July, and two new operations staff have since been added to the team. This staffing level will enable MATOC to provide coverage five days a week for 16 hours a day.

The TPB was also briefed on recent events in which MATOC participated. For these events, MATOC staff:

- Sent out notifications to transportation agencies as soon as confirmed information was available regarding the incidents;
- Provided ongoing incident update notifications regarding road closures, detours, transit impacts, and incident close-outs; and
- Through its notifications, aided agency decision making on transportation management.

MATOC has direct contact with all the emergency operations centers in the region and can provide suggestions across jurisdictional boundaries. Michael Zezeski, Chair of the MATOC Steering Committee, said MATOC provided support during the emergency situation at Discovery Communications in Silver Spring, Maryland, on September 1. He said that MATOC was working with Montgomery County, which had closed a number of roads in Silver Spring. MATOC suggested that the District provide detours and information to motorists in the District.

The TPB expressed particular interest in getting more information on how MATOC helps in situations such as the Discovery Communications incident that significantly impact transit passengers and operations. ♦

SCENARIO STUDY FINDINGS

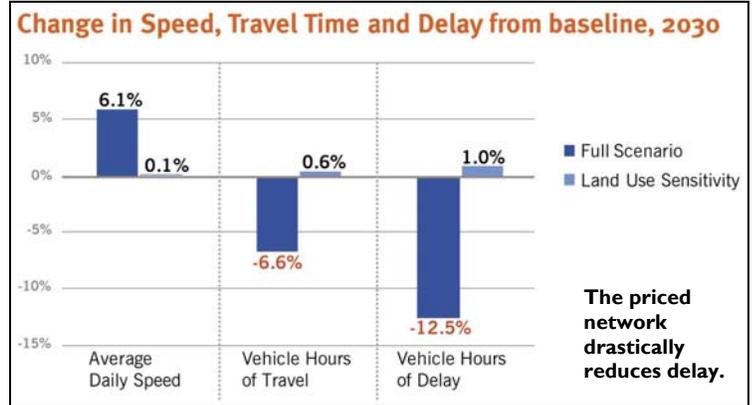
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walking, and transit use all increase significantly, and carpooling experienced a small uptick.

The TPB also studied the effects of making the land-use changes without introducing the priced lanes or BRT. Bicycling, walking, and transit trips increase significantly in this land-use sensitivity test, while the amount of driving decreases and congestion increases slightly.

Noting how much could be accomplished under the land-use-only scenario, Harriet Tregoning, Director of the District of Columbia Office of Planning, said, “Without spending any money and by focusing on using our existing land and transportation system more efficiently, we can have a very large impact on reaching our goals.”

While several members expressed a desire to see analysis of a network of priced lanes with much less new capacity and more conversion of existing lanes, TPB member Victor Weissberg of Prince George’s County said that in his County, “We see value pricing as a bit of a double-edged sword. It’s either tax-



ing those who can least afford it [if existing lanes are converted], or it’s adding capacity and increasing VMT and trip length. Either way, it’s problematic.”

“The scenarios presented today help us ask some fundamental questions about how to dramatically improve the performance of the region’s transportation system,” said TPB Chairman and Falls Church City Councilmember David Snyder. “No one should get too wrapped up in the individual numbers, but rather use the scenarios to understand the potential role of each of the components – land use, tolls, and more transit.”

As part of this item, the TPB also received a briefing on a summary of major corridor studies considering managed or priced lanes in the Washington region. In addition, the TPB has received a grant from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to study the public acceptability of pricing major roadways in the region. The project will employ focus groups and public opinion surveys to test a variety of pricing options and assess opportunities and obstacles to implementation. The project aims to identify the challenges and opportunities that decision makers would face if they were to move forward with the implementation of distance-based road pricing or other forms of value pricing. The TPB will lead this assessment of the public acceptability of priced lanes with assistance from the Brookings Institution. The work is to begin this month, and continue through October 2011. ♦

At its September 15 meeting, the TPB recognized Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) staff member Jo Anne Sorenson for her 12 years of service to the TPB.

Ms. Sorenson retired from her position at VDOT in September.



TASK FORCE TO SCOPE PRIORITIES PLAN

(Continued from page 1)

The task force is currently scheduled to meet four times, every other month between October and April. The following schedule of meetings provides a proposed work plan that the committee will be asked to discuss at its first meeting:

- October 20: Kickoff meeting; receive briefing on background information and discuss key questions.
- December 15: Review key questions related to the scope and process, and seek consensus on the task force's preferred approach.
- February 16: Review and refine a draft scope and process.
- April 20: Finalize and approve the scope and process for developing a Regional Transportation Priorities Plan.

At the October 20 meeting, staff will brief the task force on background materials that were identified in the Conversation summary report as important for consideration:

- A draft regional inventory of unfunded transportation priority projects identified at the local and state levels.
- Information on the financially unconstrained planning activities of other MPOs.

- Description of new tools to improve public information on the current planning process.

Task Force Chair Todd Turner, TPB Vice Chair and representative from the Bowie City Council, will lead an informal discussion in which participants will have the opportunity to provide input on key questions raised and discussed at the May 26 Conversation. These questions center on the key elements of a regional transportation priorities plan, including what the plan should *not* be. Procedural questions focus on the elements of a regional transportation planning process, including methodology, key activities, and steps in the process.

The membership of the task force represents a cross-section of interests, jurisdictions and roles within the TPB process, including TPB members, technical committee members, and representatives from the CAC and the TPB Access for All Committee. Most of the members were participants at the Conversation event on May 26. ♦

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UPCOMING OCTOBER AGENDA ITEMS

The TPB's October 20 agenda is expected to include the following items:

- Approval of an Amendment to the 2009 CLRP and FY 2010-2015 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) that is not Exempt From Conformity for HOV Ramp Operational Changes on I-66 as Requested by the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT).
- Approval of the 2010 Update of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan for the National Capital Region.
- Update on the Regional "Street Smart" Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Education Campaign.
- Briefing on the Draft Financial Analysis for the 2010 CLRP.
- Briefing on Air Quality Conformity Analysis for the Draft 2010 CLRP and FY 2011-2016 TIP.
- Briefing on the Round 8.0 Cooperative Forecasts of

Population, Households and Employment in the Washington Region.

- Briefing on the Draft 2010 CLRP and FY 2011-2016 TIP.
- Briefing on the Draft Call for Projects and Schedule for the Air Quality Conformity Assessment for the 2011 CLRP and FY 2012-2017 TIP.

Information and materials for the monthly TPB meeting are posted on the TPB website one week prior to the meeting: www.mwkog.org/transportation/tpb. ♦

Bids and Solicitations

For current COG solicitations available for bid/proposals, please visit "Doing Business with COG:" www.mwkog.org/doingbusiness/cogbid/



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 N. Capitol St., N.E. (Enter from 1st St., N.E.).

October 2010

- 1 TPB Technical Committee (9 am)
- 1 TPB Steering Committee (noon)
- 12 Management, Operations and Intelligent Transportation Systems (MOITS) Policy Task Force and Technical Subcommittee Joint Meeting (10 am)
- 14 Human Service Transportation Coordination Task Force (3 pm)
- 14 TPB Citizens Advisory Committee (6 pm)
- 19 Employer Outreach Committee (10 am)
- 19 TDM Evaluation Group (noon)
- 19 MOVES Task Force (10 am)
- 20 Task Force on Regional Priorities Planning (10 am)
- 20 Transportation Planning Board (noon)**
- 26 Travel Management Subcommittee (9:30 am)
- 26 Regional Bus Subcommittee (noon)
- 28 TPB Access for All (AFA) Advisory Committee (2:30 pm)

November 2010

- 4 Freight Subcommittee (1 pm)
- 5 TPB Technical Committee (9 am)
- 5 TPB Steering Committee (noon)
- 9 Management, Operations and Intelligent Transportation Systems (MOITS) Policy Task Force and Technical Subcommittee Joint Meeting (12:30 pm)
- 10 Bike to Work Day Steering Committee (10 am)
- 11 TPB Citizens Advisory Committee (6 pm)
- 16 MOVES Task Force (10 am)
- 16 Commuter Connections Subcommittee (noon)
- 16 Bicycle & Pedestrian Subcommittee (1 pm)
- 17 Transportation Planning Board (noon)**
- 18 Aviation Technical Subcommittee (10:30 am)
- 18 Human Service Transportation Coordination Task Force (12:30 pm)
- 19 Travel Forecasting Subcommittee (9:30 am)
- 23 Travel Management Subcommittee (9:30 am)
- 23 Regional Bus Subcommittee (noon)

December 2010

- 3 TPB Technical Committee (9 am)
- 3 TPB Steering Committee (noon)
- 9 Human Service Transportation Coordination Task Force (12:30 pm)
- 9 TPB Citizens Advisory Committee (6 pm)
- 14 Management, Operations and Intelligent Transportation Systems (MOITS) Policy Task Force and Technical Subcommittee Joint Meeting (10 am)
- 15 Task Force on Regional Priorities Planning (10 am)
- 15 Transportation Planning Board (noon)**
- 21 Ridematching Committee (10 am)
- 21 MOVES Task Force (10 am)
- 21 Regional TDM Marketing Group (noon)
- 22 Regional Taxicab Regulators Task Force (1 pm)



Dates and times subject to change. Please visit our website at www.mwcog.org for up-to-date information.

This document is available in alternative formats upon request. Please contact Sarah Crawford at scrawford@mwkog.org, (202) 962-3237 or (202) 962-3213 (TDD). Allow seven working days for preparation of material.

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