

## **ITEM 12- Information**

April 16, 2014

Briefing on a Draft Initial Assessment of the 2014 Update of the CLRP and the Regional Transportation Priorities Plan (RTPP)

### **Staff**

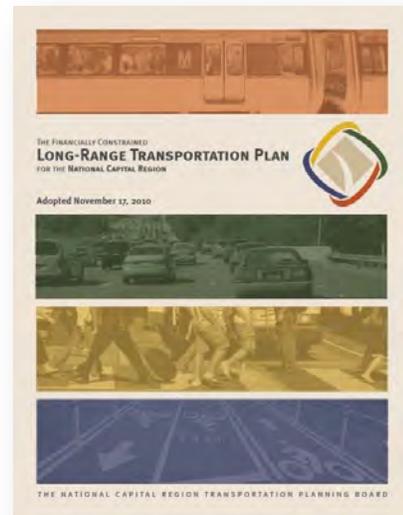
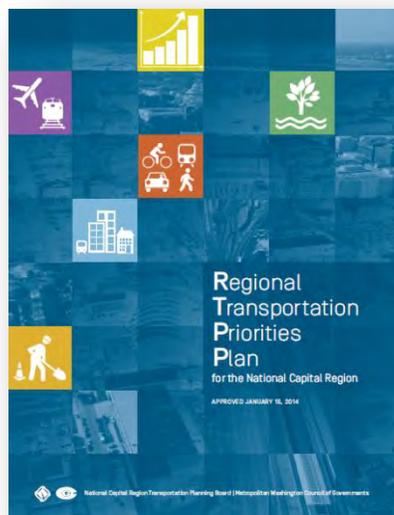
**Recommendation:** Receive briefing on the enclosed initial qualitative assessment of how the priorities identified in the RTPP compare to the transportation system in the CLRP as it is being updated with a new financial analysis and additional projects in 2014.

**Issues:** None

**Background:** In January, the TPB approved the RTPP which identifies strategies that are “within reach” both financially and politically and have the greatest potential to respond to the most significant transportation challenges. In response to a request at the February TPB meeting, staff have prepared this draft initial assessment.

# An Initial Comparative Assessment

of the *Regional Transportation Priorities Plan*  
and the *2014 Update to the Constrained  
Long-Range Transportation Plan*



April 10, 2014

**DRAFT**



**National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board**



# Initial RTPP-CLRP Assessment

## DRAFT

The Regional Transportation Priorities Plan is a new policy framework for transportation decision making in the National Capital Region. Approved by the Transportation Planning Board (TPB) in January 2014, the Priorities Plan identifies strategies with the greatest potential to respond to our region's most significant transportation challenges. It aims to identify those strategies that are "within reach" both financially and politically—recognizing the need for pragmatism in an era of limited financial resources and a lack of political will to raise significant amounts of new revenue.

The Priorities Plan was explicitly intended to influence the regional transportation planning process, including the annual update of the region's Constrained Long-Range Transportation Plan (CLRP). In the coming months, the TPB will consider key elements of the 2014 CLRP update, including projects proposed to be added to or changed in the plan and forecasts of available funding for maintenance, operation, and expansion of the region's transportation system.

This assessment is designed to inform discussions and deliberations related to the CLRP update process. It uses the best available information about the CLRP and its anticipated future performance to assess the degree to which it supports the strategies and objectives spelled out in the Priorities Plan. The assessment follows up on the Priorities Plan's own directive: "In the future, the TPB will undertake efforts to evaluate how well the projects and programs in the CLRP, taken as a whole, support regional priorities."

## 1 | BACKGROUND

### Origin

At its meeting on February 19, the TPB requested that staff provide information on how the proposed 2014 CLRP, including the projects and programs proposed to be added or changed this year, compares with the priorities laid out in the Priorities Plan. This direction from the board was consistent with the Priorities Plan itself, which called for a comparison of the CLRP and the Priorities Plan as part of future updates to the CLRP. At the TPB meeting on March 19, TPB staff presented a proposed approach for conducting such an assessment.

### Purpose and Approach

This draft Initial Assessment, which will be presented to the TPB in April, provides a high-level summary of how the proposed 2014 CLRP update supports the priorities spelled out in the Priorities Plan. It is designed to provide decision makers with readily accessible information that will help them understand the wider context of the CLRP as they discuss proposed changes to the plan this spring and consider the full 2014 CLRP for approval in the fall.

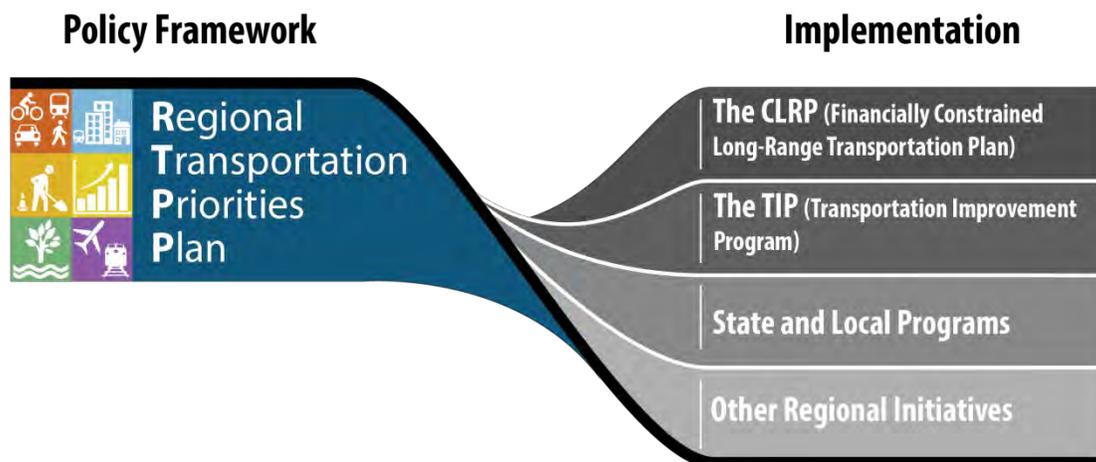
Some key features underlay the development of this Initial Assessment:

- The Assessment is largely qualitative.** For the most part, the Priorities Plan did not identify measurable targets for any of the strategies in the plan. Therefore, the Initial Assessment largely provides qualitative analysis that is supported, when possible, by data and illustrative examples.
- The Assessment is based on the full transportation system that is anticipated for 2040, not just new 2014 project submissions.** The assessment makes reference to projects that are already in the CLRP as well as projects that have been submitted for this year's update. The assessment does not use the Priorities Plan as a screen to rate, rank, or judge individual projects.
- This Assessment addresses strategies that were established in the Priorities Plan.** The Plan identified three overarching priorities and framed 18 strategies within those three priorities. Those strategies, particularly those that are addressed in the CLRP, provide the basis for this Initial Assessment. The required analyses of the CLRP process, including air quality conformity, are not addressed in this document. In addition, objectives and targets that have been established in other COG policy documents but not included in the Priorities Plan, such as targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, are not included in this Assessment. The performance analysis of the 2014 CLRP, which will be available later this year, will provide these data.
- The Assessment will be released in two phases.** Because the Priorities Plan was only approved in January and because the 2014 CLRP development process is still underway, staff have developed an initial assessment focused on Priorities Plan strategies that can most easily and most directly be

assessed based upon the existing CLRP and changes proposed as part of this year's CLRP update. This Initial Assessment is being provided in time for the April TPB meeting, when the Board will be asked to approve project submissions for inclusion in the Air Quality Conformity Assessment for the 2014 CLRP. In the fall, staff will provide the Board with additional information on the region's progress in supporting the strategies in the Priorities Plan. Findings from the full Assessment will be incorporated into the 2015 CLRP Call for Projects, which is currently scheduled to be released in draft form in October 2014.

- **The different phases of the Assessment will use whatever data and information is available at the time.** The 2014 CLRP is a work in progress. Project submissions for the 2014 CLRP update are currently available for review and will be referenced in this Initial Assessment. However, staff will not be able to analyze the performance of the full network proposed in the 2014 CLRP until much later in the year, once the new plan has been adopted by the TPB. Therefore, the Initial Assessment relies mostly on the 2013 CLRP Performance Analysis to provide relevant contextual information about anticipated trends based upon the latest planning trajectories. Information in the Initial Assessment about revenue projections and other funding issues will rely on whatever preliminary information is currently available from the ongoing 2014 CLRP Financial Analysis development process.
- **Much of the implementation of the Priorities Plan will not be reflected in the CLRP.** The Plan calls upon the region to act at local, state, and regional levels—and many of these actions will not be included in the federally required CLRP. Some implementation activities are small-scale capital improvements that are not required for inclusion in the CLRP, but will be featured in local funding programs. In other cases, implementation will be funded through private sector partnerships. Implementation also may not take the form of capital improvements; local or state policies and regulations will help to effect changes called for in the Plan. And regional initiatives, such as the Metropolitan Area Transportation Operations Coordination (MATOC) Program, play an important role in achieving progress toward the Plan's objectives, although they may not appear as specific projects in the CLRP. The chart below illustrates the overarching role that the Priorities Plan was intended to play, and the various processes through which implementation can be achieved and observed.

### Implementation of the Regional Transportation Priorities Plan



## Framework and Information Sources for the Initial Assessment

Staff have based the Initial Assessment upon the three broad priorities that were identified in the Priorities Plan. These priorities were presented as “building blocks” to illustrate the fact that our vision for the future must be built upon a solid foundation of system maintenance and effective institutional practices.



Within these three priorities, staff have identified those strategies that can most clearly be reflected in the CLRP or measured using existing analyses of the performance of the transportation system as it is planned.

### *For each of these strategies, the Initial Assessment includes the following:*

- Current Assessment.** Based upon our professional judgment and knowledge of the CLRP at this time, is our region achieving desired outcomes?
- Basis for Assessment.** What information, analysis, or data support the Current Assessment?
- Forthcoming Information.** Will more information become available in the next few months? Is there additional analysis we might perform to better understand the degree to which the region is achieving desired outcomes?

As noted above, this Initial Assessment uses the best available information to help show whether the transportation system laid out in the CLRP is supportive of the Priorities Plan. These are sources of information upon which it is largely drawn:

2014 CLRP, including 2014 Project Submissions

The current CLRP, as approved in 2013, already includes more than 500 projects planned to be built or implemented by 2040. The TPB received 11 major new projects or changes to existing projects for inclusion in this year's CLRP update.

2013 CLRP Performance Analysis

The 2014 CLRP Performance Analysis will not be available until later this year. However, the 2013 CLRP Performance Analysis provides useful and relevant information about trends that the 2014 CLRP analysis is likely to show, too.

Draft Round 8.3 Cooperative Land-Use Forecasts

The COG board in March 2014 approved the most recent round of regional forecasts of future jobs, population, and households for use in the 2014 CLRP conformity analysis. These land-use forecasts provide a basis for forecasting future travel demand, which will be carried out later this year to assess the performance of the 2014 CLRP.

Information Not Yet Available:

- Submissions for the FY2015-2020 Transportation Improvement Program (expected July 2014)
- 2014 CLRP Financial Analysis (expected Fall 2014)
- 2014 CLRP Performance Analysis (expected Winter 2014)

## 2 | INITIAL ASSESSMENT

### Priority 1: Meet Our Existing Obligations

The Priorities Plan says that our very first priority should be to keep our existing transportation system in a state of good repair, because it is the backbone of our economy and must be properly maintained and safe before we can move on to other investments.

#### **Ensure Maintenance of the Transit System (Ongoing Strategy 1)**

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The Priorities Plan says we should finish addressing any remaining backlog of deferred transit maintenance, set up systems to address maintenance challenges as they arise, and secure funding to ensure transit maintenance is carried out as needed.

#### CURRENT ASSESSMENT

**The 2014 CLRP is expected to exhibit full state-of-good-repair funding for WMATA and for the region's other transit systems, according to preliminary information emerging from the ongoing 2014 CLRP Financial Analysis development process.**

#### BASIS FOR THE ASSESSMENT

- *WMATA has undertaken major efforts to bring Metrorail and Metrobus to a state of good repair, and additional efforts to keep the system in a state of good repair have been planned and will be funded. WMATA in 2011 launched a \$5 billion program to deal with deferred maintenance. This six-year effort, known as MetroForward, has already delivered improvements in safety, reliability, and customer service. MetroForward's funding includes \$3 billion that was provided through the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act (PRIIA) of 2008, which authorized \$1.5 billion in federal funding along with state matches totaling \$1.5 billion (\$500 million from each state). The additional funding for MetroForward was provided by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 and increased funding from the participating jurisdictions.*

The funding agreements for MetroForward will end in FY2017. WMATA estimates it will need sustained funding at current levels to maintain and replace assets on a regular life-cycle basis to ensure a state of good repair and continue current levels of service. These projects include safety improvements recommended by the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), railcar and bus replacement and repairs, and escalator replacements.

WMATA's funders have preliminarily indicated that full funding for WMATA's state-of-good-repair needs will be met in the 2014 CLRP. Details regarding this funding will be included in the 2014 CLRP Financial Analysis, which TPB staff is currently working with its regional partners to develop.

- *The region's commuter rail operators are anticipating the necessary resources to ensure a state of good repair on their respective systems.* The 2014 CLRP Financial Analysis is expected to show that state-of-good-repair needs for the MARC and VRE commuter rail systems will be fully funded on an ongoing basis. Some of these funding commitments have been highlighted in the VRE System Plan and the MARC Growth and Investment Plan, elements of which have been submitted for inclusion in the 2014 CLRP. Local bus operators in the region have also prioritized maintenance and state of good repair.

#### FORTHCOMING INFORMATION

Detailed information about the states' and jurisdictions' funding forecasts for transit maintenance will be included in the 2014 CLRP Financial Plan, which will be presented in draft form to the TPB in September.

## **Ensure Maintenance of Roadways and Bridges (Ongoing Strategy 2)**

The Priorities Plan states that we should ensure that our roadways and bridges provide safe, reliable, and comfortable travel for people and goods, and that needed maintenance projects are completed as a first priority for use of highway funding.

#### CURRENT ASSESSMENT

**The 2014 CLRP will demonstrate a full commitment to keeping the region's roadways and bridges in a state of good repair, backed in part by new revenues in Maryland and Virginia.**

#### BASIS FOR ASSESSMENT

- *2010 CLRP Financial Analysis demonstrates commitment to funding maintenance needs.* The 2010 CLRP Financial Analysis showed that 93 percent of all highway funding in the CLRP would be dedicated to operations and preservation of the roadway system, with only 7 percent dedicated to capacity expansion. This emphasis is expected to continue in the 2014 CLRP Financial Assessment, due later this year.

- *State highway agencies have further demonstrated their commitment to maintenance.* Maintenance of the existing roadway and bridge system is highlighted as a priority in the long-range transportation plans for Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia.
  - *Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT).* One of the goals put forth in Maryland's statewide transportation plan, known as the Maryland Transportation Plan (MTP), calls for efforts to preserve the existing transportation system. The objective of this goal is to "preserve and maintain State-owned or -supported roadways, bridges, public transit, rail, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, ports, airports, and other facilities in a state-of-good-repair." The plan recommends a number of actionable strategies to achieve the goal. Each year MDOT publishes an assessment, known as the Annual Attainment Report on Transportation System Performance, to track and evaluate the performance of Maryland's transportation system. This report contains a number of quality-of-service measures that specifically look at maintenance.
  - *Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT).* Virginia's current statewide transportation plan, known as VTRANS 2035, states: "Under current law, maintenance of existing transportation assets to ensure the safety of the public is the first priority in allocation of transportation resources." In addition, one of the investment priorities in the plan—"Address Environmental, Safety, and Maintenance Needs"—contains maintenance priorities that call for repairing deficient bridges and rehabilitating structurally deficient bridges.
  - *District of Columbia Department of Transportation (DDOT).* The District of Columbia's forthcoming long-range transportation plan, *moveDC*, will emphasize the importance of state of good repair. As part of the budgeting process, the draft plan calls for the following approach in prioritizing investments over the next 25 years: 1) fund basic state-of-good-repair and maintenance for existing programs; 2) allocate additional resources that accelerate the pace of reaching state-of-good-repair for all infrastructure; and 3) fund critical transportation infrastructure investments to address deficiencies, safety, or capacity needs.
- *New state transportation revenues will further support maintenance efforts.* In 2013, both Maryland and Virginia approved measures to increase state transportation revenues, the first statutory increases in such funding in either state in more than two decades. The measures will raise upwards of \$800 million more a year for transportation in each state, with much of the new revenue will be dedicated to maintenance and preservation efforts.

#### FORTHCOMING INFORMATION

Detailed information about the states' and jurisdictions' funding forecasts for road maintenance will be included in the 2014 CLRP Financial Analysis, which will be presented in draft form to the TPB in September.

## Priority 2: Strengthen Public Confidence and Ensure Fairness

The second priority in the Priorities Plan calls for across-the-board institutional practices to ensure accessibility for traditionally disadvantaged groups, promote efficiency through the use of technology, and engage and communicate with the public in a transparent fashion. For the most part, the strategies under this priority are not easily measurable by looking at projects or programs in the CLRP, or by analyzing the performance of those projects, taken together, in meeting future transportation needs. However, one of the strategies in this priority—“Ensure Accessibility for Traditionally Disadvantaged Groups”—can be partly assessed by examining the CLRP and its performance.

### **Ensure Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities, Low Incomes, and Limited English Proficiency (Ongoing Strategy 5)**

A key strategy under Priority 2 calls upon the region to ensure accessibility for persons with disabilities, low incomes, and limited English proficiency. In general, progress in achieving these objectives is not clearly measurable by looking at the CLRP. However because low-income populations are concentrated on the eastern side of the region, a comparative east-west regional analysis does provide useful information on the degree to which the accessibility needs of low-income populations are being met.

#### CURRENT ASSESSMENT

**The Washington region has many programs and services available to serve the mobility needs of people with disabilities, limited incomes, and limited English proficiency. Those programs are not typically identified in the CLRP.**

**The 2014 CLRP will contain many projects that will improve transportation options in underserved areas on the eastern side of the region. However, disparities in accessibility to economic opportunity and unbalanced travel demand will continue because job growth is expected to continue to concentrate on the western side of the region.**

#### BASIS FOR ASSESSMENT

- *A variety of programs throughout the region, including those funded through federal grants, will continue to provide funding for projects that improve transportation access for people with disabilities and/or low incomes. The TPB previously administered the federal Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) program, which aimed to improve transportation for those with limited incomes, and the New Freedom program, which provides funding for transportation programs for persons with disabilities. The most recent federal surface transportation reauthorization, MAP-21, eliminated the JARC program and combined the New Freedom program with other grants programs to create the Enhanced Mobility program, which TPB will continue to administer.*

- *MetroAccess and other paratransit programs provide mobility services to people with disabilities – MetroAccess, WMATA’s paratransit program, provides door-to-door service to people with disabilities within three-quarters of a mile of fixed route transit service. Many other public and private transportation providers provide similar services throughout the region.*
- *Transit providers throughout the region provide vital information in multiple languages. WMATA supplies information on routes, schedules, and fares in multiple languages, and the agency has plans to expand this service to include more languages. In addition, important announcements are currently made in both Spanish and English at Metrorail stations and on Metrobuses.*
- *The 2014 CLRP will contain a number of transportation projects that will increase travel options on the eastern side of the region.*
  - New transit capacity. Several projects will enhance access to jobs for low-income and minority communities, and increase mobility for people without cars:
    - *Purple Line.* This 14-mile east-west light rail route will provide greater access to jobs currently concentrated or forecast to be concentrated along the western end of the line. The new transit line will also catalyze job growth along the eastern end of the line in Prince George’s County.
    - *DC Streetcar.* Four streetcar projects in the 2014 CLRP will connect neighborhoods east of the Anacostia River where there are higher concentrations of low-income households. These projects will provide greater access to jobs in existing or planned commercial corridors in the District and elsewhere.
      - H Street / Benning Road Line
      - Anacostia Initial Line
      - M Street SE/SW Line (proposed to be added in the 2014 CLRP update)
      - Minnesota Avenue Spur (proposed to be added in the 2014 CLRP update)
  - Improved access to Metrorail stations. The 2014 CLRP will include a number of key projects that will improve access to Metrorail stations on the eastern side of the region and support future job growth and economic development near those stations:
    - *Branch Avenue Metro station access enhancements*
    - *Greenbelt Metro station full interchange on the Capital Beltway (proposed to be added in the 2014 CLRP update)*
  - Key roadway improvements. The CLRP contains a number of roadway projects that aim to improve accessibility by automobile on the eastern side of the region:
    - *Intercounty Connector (ICC): completion from I-95 to US 1*
    - *Interchanges and road upgrades near Westphalia*
    - *MD 5/Branch Avenue: update/widen, including upgraded intersections*
    - *MD 4/Pennsylvania Avenue: update/widen, including upgraded intersections*
    - *MD 210/Pennsylvania Avenue: update/widen, including upgraded intersections*
    - *Suitland Pkwy and Rena/Forestville Road: upgraded interchange*
    - *MD 202: upgrades*

- *Westbound ramp from US 50 to Columbia Road*
  - *MD 450: widening, from Bowie to the Capital Beltway*
  - *US 1: widening, in College Park and Greenbelt*
  - *Baltimore-Washington Pkwy and MD 193: intersection improvement*
- *Jobs are forecast to continue to concentrate on the western side of the region.* The rate of job growth on the western side of the region will be much greater than on the eastern side, according to the land-use forecasts used in the 2013 CLRP. Fairfax County, Montgomery County, and the District of Columbia (west of the Anacostia River) are expected to retain the most jobs in 2040. Loudoun and Prince William counties are each expected to see job growth rates of 75 percent. Although Prince George's County is expected to have nearly one million residents in 2040, the number of jobs forecast is well below other similarly sized counties in the region.
  - *Residents of the eastern side of the region are forecast to face longer commutes.* Since congestion is forecast to increase throughout the region, and because jobs are expected to continue to concentrate on the western side of the region, those who live on the eastern side will face longer commutes to jobs in the west.

#### FORTHCOMING INFORMATION

TPB staff recognize that analysis of the eastern side of the region only provides a limited understanding of the degree to which low-income populations are served by the transportation system laid out in the CLRP. In addition, staff acknowledge that this analysis does not address the concerns of other disadvantaged populations, including people with disabilities and individuals with limited English proficiency. For future analysis, staff would welcome suggestions for methods to analyze the degree to which these strategies are being supported by transportation decision-making, both as part of the CLRP process and not.

## **Other Strategies Under Priority 2**

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Two strategies under Priority 2 are not implemented through projects and inputs identified in the CLRP. However, they are key components of the Priorities Plan and are essential for the balanced and efficient system that the TPB has promoted in its vision for the future. TPB staff welcome suggestions for determining how we might document and analyze planning and project development activities around the region that implement these strategies.

- ***Engage and Communicate with the Public***

Extensive public involvement and communications activities are woven into the planning and project implementation work of jurisdictions throughout the region. Nonetheless, public opinion research—including outreach for the Priorities Plan—consistently suggests that many people believe transportation planning and decision making is not adequately transparent and inclusive. Public

agencies at all levels must continually strive to improve the opportunities for meaningful collaboration and communication with the public.

- ***Promote System Efficiency through Management, Operations, and the Appropriate Use of Technology***

Jurisdictions throughout the region have made great progress in using technology to enhance the efficiency of transportation operations. Improvements include automatic payments systems, automated traffic monitoring, and electronic tolling. Such activities are expected to continue in the future. At the regional level, the state departments of transportation and other regional agencies are expected to continue to support MATOC, the Metropolitan Area Transportation Operations Coordination Program, in order to monitor traffic and weather conditions and coordinate the response to disruptive incidents.

### Priority 3: Move More People and Goods More Efficiently

The strategies outlined in Priority 3 represent a shift from large-scale, supply-side investments of the past to more strategic approaches to alleviating congestion and crowding, and to accommodating future growth. This priority calls for a mix of supply- and demand-side strategies, multimodal options, and a focus on concentrating future growth in mixed-use Activity Centers.

Six of the strategies under Priority 3 can clearly be supported by the kinds of transportation projects and land-use forecasts that are included in the CLRP. Those six strategies are the subject of the assessments below.

#### **Expand Capacity on the Existing Transit System (Long-Term Strategy 1)**

The Priorities Plan calls upon the region to fund basic capital improvements on our existing transit systems—Metro, commuter rail, and local transit—to expand capacity in key locations, especially the regional core.

##### CURRENT ASSESSMENT

**The 2014 CLRP is expected to include funding to expand the capacity of both the MARC and VRE commuter rail systems. Proposals to add capacity to the core of the Metrorail system, including all eight-car trains during rush hours and core station improvements, are not currently expected to receive full funding commitments in the 2014 CLRP.**

##### BASIS FOR ASSESSMENT

- *MARC and VRE commuter rail investment plans include funding to expand capacity on existing lines.* In their 2014 CLRP submissions, both Maryland and Virginia submitted maintenance and expansion plans for their respective commuter rail systems—MARC in Maryland, and VRE in Virginia. The updated investment plans together include approximately \$2 billion in enhancements for which adequate funding has been identified. VRE has identified nearly \$1 billion in funded improvements, including buying additional railcars, expanding station platforms and parking facilities, and upgrading equipment storage and maintenance facilities to accommodate more riders on existing lines. MARC has identified about \$1 billion in funded improvements, too, including the purchase or refurbishment of hundreds of railcars and locomotives, numerous station improvements, and expanded service on all three lines, including more weekend and off-peak service on the Penn Line to Baltimore.
- *Funding for core capacity improvements in Metro 2025 has not yet been identified.* The Priorities Plan called upon the region to fund the Metro 2025 component of Metro's *Momentum* strategic plan. Metro 2025 includes running all eight-car trains during rush hours, expanding mezzanines and

adding fare gates and escalators at the busiest stations to handle more riders, and implementing priority bus treatment on a limited number of key, high-ridership bus corridors, among other improvements. The 2014 CLRP project submissions, which were released for public comment on March 13, 2014, did not include funding for these improvements.

Because of the lack of funding for these Metro improvements to accommodate projected ridership growth, the 2014 CLRP is expected to continue to include a “transit ridership constraint” that limits the growth in transit trips through the regional core beyond 2020. Under this constraint, the TPB’s models reflects the assumption that crowding on Metro will push some travelers into other modes of travel, mainly driving. Such a ridership constraint has been included in the CLRP since 2000.

#### FORTHCOMING INFORMATION

Further information regarding funding forecasts for capacity expansions on the existing transit system will be available in the 2014 CLRP Financial Analysis, which is scheduled to be released in draft form in September 2014. WMATA’s funding partners have indicated that they are seeking funding for core capacity improvements, which may lead to amendments to the CLRP prior to the next CLRP update in 2015.

### **Concentrated Growth in Activity Centers (Long-Term Strategy 2)**

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The Priorities Plan calls for the region to concentrate more development in the region’s 141 Activity Centers, as designated by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments. Greater concentration of development in Activity Centers will achieve transportation efficiencies by making travel modes other than driving alone more practical and convenient, and by shortening the distances people need to travel to meet their daily needs.

#### CURRENT ASSESSMENT

**An increasing share of the region’s housing and job growth is forecast to occur in Activity Centers, according to COG’s latest Cooperative Land-Use Forecasts. Approved local land-use policies and transportation investments will continue to support and encourage this shift toward more concentrated development in Activity Centers.**

#### BASIS FOR ASSESSMENT

- *Compared to past land-use forecasts, we are expecting more growth in Activity Centers. COG’s Draft Round 8.3 Cooperative Land-Use Forecasts, which were approved by the COG Board in March 2014 for use in the 2014 CLRP conformity analysis, anticipates that between now and 2040, 61 percent of new households forecast to be added to the region will be located in the 141 Activity Centers. Of the more than 1 million new jobs forecast to be added in the region, 76 percent of them will be located in Activity Centers. The forecasts from four years ago predicted*

less growth in Activity Centers. For 2040, those forecasts (Round 8.0) anticipated 81,000 fewer jobs, 58,000 fewer households, and 169,000 fewer people in Activity Centers, compared to the latest forecasts.

*High-capacity transit will reach more Activity Centers by 2040.* Today, 53 percent of the region's 141 Activity Centers are served by high-quality transit—Metrorail, commuter rail, light rail, or bus rapid transit. According to a preliminary assessment of the 2014 CLRP, planned transit improvements in Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia, will bring this share to 66 percent.

	Total	Percent
2014	<b>74</b> (of 141)	<b>53%</b>
2040	<b>93</b> (of 141)	<b>66%</b>

- *The majority of new trips will be to or from Activity Centers in 2040.* Of the 4 million more trips expected to be taken on the region's transportation system in 2040, 58 percent will originate in Activity Centers and 66 percent will end in Activity Centers. Such Activity Center-based travel is more likely to be non-motorized, and trip lengths are likely to be shorter than trips which begin or end in Activity Centers.

#### FORTHCOMING INFORMATION

Updated information on forecast differences in future travel patterns in Activity Centers will be available in the 2014 CLRP Performance Analysis. Results of future TPB household travel surveys, especially those in geographically-focused areas, will also shed light on differences in travel patterns inside and outside of Activity Centers.

### **Enhanced Circulation within Activity Centers (Long-Term Strategy 3)**

The Priorities Plan calls for an array of transportation options for short trips within Activity Centers. That means improving bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, proving short-range bus services, and enhancing street connectivity.

#### CURRENT ASSESSMENT

**Trips in Activity Centers will be increasingly taken on foot, by transit, or by bike, according to the 2013 CLRP performance analysis.**

### BASIS FOR ASSESSMENT

- Compared to the rest of the region, a higher proportion of people living or working in Activity Centers will not be reliant on automobiles. The 2013 CLRP Performance Analysis forecasts that the majority of new transit, walking, and biking trips expected between now and 2040 will occur in Activity Centers. This forecast clearly indicates that Activity Centers are generators of non-motorized travel. Sixty-eight percent of new transit trips and 66 percent of new non-motorized (bicycle and pedestrian) trips are expected to originate in Activity Centers, while 88 percent of new transit and 66 percent of new non-motorized trips are expected to end in Activity Centers.
- A range of small-scale improvements contribute to positive change. Jurisdictions throughout the region are implementing changes to make non-motorized, short-range travel more attractive and viable. Such changes may include incremental improvements—such as new sidewalks in targeted locations—or they might comprise wholesale redesign of Activity Centers, such as the planned transformation of Tysons into a walkable community. Typically, such improvements are not included in the CLRP.

### FORTHCOMING INFORMATION

Updated information on forecast differences in future travel patterns in Activity Centers will be available in the 2014 CLRP Performance Analysis. Results of future TPB household travel surveys, especially those in geographically-focused areas, will also shed light on difference in travel patterns inside and outside of Activity Centers.

## **Implement BRT and Other Cost-Effective Transit Alternatives (Long-Term Strategy 4)**

The Priorities Plan calls for the implementation of street-level transit systems to provide cost-effective connections between Activity Centers and/or major rail stations. These services can expand the range of available transit options in locations that are unlikely to be served by heavy rail, reaching more people in more places, and supplementing existing transit services in high-demand corridors. Such systems can include high-quality bus rapid transit (BRT), light-rail, and streetcar systems.

### CURRENT ASSESSMENT

**The 2014 CLRP is expected to include a number of BRT, light-rail, and streetcar projects, many of which are due to become operational by the end of the current decade. Under the 2014 CLRP, the share of Activity Centers served by high-quality transit will grow to 66 percent by 2040.**

## BASIS FOR ASSESSMENT

- *The 2014 CLRP is expected to include the following street-level transit projects:*
  - Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)
    - *Route 1 BRT, Van Dorn to Pentagon.* Connecting two Metrorail Stations, this BRT line will serve the Mark Center, a regional Activity Center which will accommodate major BRAC-related growth. The BRT line will operate in dedicated lanes where possible, providing greater reliability of service that approximates rail travel at a much lower cost to build and operate.
    - *Corridor Cities Transitway (CCT).* This BRT line will extend the reach of high-quality transit in the busy I-270 corridor in Maryland, with a total of 16 stations serving six regional Activity Centers.
  - Other Street-Level Transit (Light Rail and Streetcar)
    - *Purple Line.* The Purple Line will be the region's first suburb-to-suburb light rail transit line, providing direct links between Activity Centers without passing through the congested regional core. The 16-mile circumferential transit line will feature 21 stations with connections to four Metrorail lines.
    - *Columbia Pike Streetcar.* This streetcar line will provide more capacity along the most heavily-traveled public transit corridor in Northern Virginia not currently served by Metrorail.
    - *DC Streetcar System.* The District's planned streetcar system will provide an additional transit option for District travelers, helping to answer the Priorities Plan's call for the region to develop diverse systems that will serve diverse needs. The streetcars will provide greater access to jobs by connecting neighborhoods with existing or planned commercial corridors in the District and elsewhere.
      - Two streetcar segments are already in the CLRP:
        - > H Street/Benning Road, from Benning Road Metro station to Union Station
        - > Anacostia Initial Line, connecting the Anacostia Metro Station with the Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling
      - Three additional segments of the DC Streetcar System have been proposed for inclusion in the 2014 CLRP:
        - > Union Station to Georgetown, from H Street NE to Wisconsin Avenue NW, mainly along K Street NW
        - > M Street Southeast/Southwest, from Good Hope Road SE to Maine Avenue SW, crossing the 11th Street Bridge
        - > Benning Road Spur, from Benning Road to Minnesota Avenue Metro station

## FORTHCOMING INFORMATION

In addition to projects already included or submitted for the CLRP, a variety of BRT and street-level rail projects are under development in a number of jurisdictions throughout the region. Such projects are likely to be included in future CLRP updates.

## **Implement Tolling and Road Pricing (Long-Term Strategy 5)**

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The Priorities Plan calls upon the region to consider implementing tolling and road-pricing mechanisms to manage demand and raise new revenue for transportation. Managing demand through pricing makes more efficient use of roadway facilities by encouraging greater use of carpools, vanpools, and transit instead of single-occupancy vehicles.

### CURRENT ASSESSMENT

**Three major highways in the region, one in Maryland and two in Virginia, use tolling and pricing mechanisms to manage demand and raise new revenue, or will in the near future. The projects are all currently included in the CLRP. As a new addition, the 2014 CLRP is expected to include a study of adding toll lanes to three more highways in the region, all located in the District of Columbia. The study will look at the possibility of converting existing highway lanes to toll lanes, a first for the region.**

### BASIS FOR THE ASSESSMENT

- *The CLRP currently includes three variably priced lane projects.* These projects provide the opportunity to encourage more efficient use of road capacity, provide high-quality transit, and connect regional Activity Centers. Two of these projects—Virginia’s 495 Express Lanes and Maryland’s Intercounty Connector—are largely completed.
  - *Intercounty Connector (ICC).* This fully tolled facility connects important Activity Centers in the I-270 corridor in Montgomery County with Activity Centers in the I-95 and US 1 corridors in Prince George’s County. The first phase of the ICC opened in 2011. The final segment, between I-95 and US 1, is scheduled to open in 2014.
  - *495 Express Lanes.* This project added express toll lanes adjacent to existing general purpose lanes along 14 miles of one of the most congested highways in our region. While the facility was largely completed in 2013, work continues on extending the lanes from Georgetown Pike to the American Legion Bridge.
  - *95 Express Lanes.* This project will add express toll lanes adjacent to existing general purpose lanes along 29 miles of I-95 from the Capital Beltway to Stafford County. The lanes will encourage greater use of more efficient travel modes, including a number of express buses which already operate in the corridor.

- *As a new addition for the 2014 CLRP, the District of Columbia has proposed including a study of adding toll lanes to three highways.*
  - District of Columbia Managed Lanes Study. This study will look at implementing high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes (including converting general purpose lanes or constructing new lanes) and subsequently converting those HOV lanes to express toll lanes. This project will consist of a network of three independent, but linked, corridors that will be priced to improve predictability and reduce solo driving. The three corridors are 14th Street/Rochambeau Bridge; I-395/I-695, Southeast-Southwest Freeway; and I-295. Although these projects are not funded for construction, the study's inclusion in the CLRP is noteworthy because it will examine the potential conversion of existing general purpose lanes to priced lanes, a first for the region.

#### FORTHCOMING INFORMATION

A TPB staff survey in 2010 (and unofficially updated in 2013) found that throughout the region there are many studies, both past and ongoing, that consider highway or express lane tolling at the regional and corridor levels. In future updates to the CLRP, we can expect to see some proposals emerge from these studies as projects to be included in the CLRP.

## **Alleviate Roadway Bottlenecks (Near-Term Strategy 2)**

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The Priorities Plan calls for targeted roadway improvements that provide congestion relief for drivers in key locations throughout the region and that support other regional goals.

#### CURRENT ASSESSMENT

**The 2014 CLRP will include a number of interchange and road widening projects designed to alleviate key highway bottlenecks. Some of these projects will specifically address top bottlenecks and high-delay corridors identified by the TPB in its triennial aerial survey of freeway congestion**

#### BASIS FOR ASSESSMENT

- *Top bottlenecks and high-delay corridors are receiving attention.* The TPB's Freeway Congestion Monitoring Program uses aerial photography to estimate travel speeds and congestion levels during morning and afternoon peak travel times. The latest survey, carried out in 2011, identified the "top ten" bottlenecks on the region's freeway system, as well the "top five" longest-delay corridors. The CLRP contains projects or studies that could help relieve congestion around six of the top ten bottlenecks, two of the top five "longest-delay corridors" during the morning peak period, and three of the top five during the afternoon peak.

CLRP Projects and Studies Near The Top 10 Bottlenecks in the Metropolitan Washington Region Identified by 2011 Freeway Congestion Monitoring Program ("Skycomp")

Rank	Facility	Direction	From	To	CLRP Project	CLRP Study
1	I-395	Northbound	VA 27	VA 110	-	DC: Managed lanes study I-395, I-695, I-295 (submitted)
2A	I-495	Inner Loop	VA 193	GW Pkwy	-	-
2B	I-395/SW Fwy	Southbound	4th St.	12th St.	-	DC: Managed lanes study I-395, I-695, I-295 (submitted)
4	I-66	Eastbound	VA 7	Dulles Access	VA: I-66, Construct 2 lanes in select spots inside I-495 (2020)	-
5A	I-495	Inner Loop	MD 355/ I-270	MD 185	-	-
5B	I-495	Outer Loop	VA 267	VA 123	VA: I-495 HOT Lanes (2015, 2030)	-
7A	I-495	Outer Loop	I-95	MD 650	-	-
7B	I-495	Inner Loop	Gallows Rd.	US 50	VA: I-495 HOT Lanes (2015, 2030)	-
8A	I-66	Eastbound	VA 234 bypass	VA 234	-	-
8B	11th St. Bridge	Westbound	I-295	Southeast Fwy	DC: 11th St. Bridge Reconstruction (2013)	-

CLRP Projects and Studies Near The Longest Delay Corridors in the Metropolitan Washington Region Identified by 2011 Freeway Congestion Monitoring Program ("Skycomp")

AM Peak Period

Rank	Facility	Direction	From	To	CLRP Project	CLRP Study
1	I-95/I-395	Northbound	US 1	GW Pkwy	VA: I-495 HOT Lanes (2015, 2030)	-
2	I-66	Eastbound	VA 234 bypass	I-495	-	-
3	I-495	Outer Loop	US 1	I-270	-	-
4	I-495	Inner Loop	I-95	I-66	VA: I-495 HOT Lanes (2015, 2030)	-
5	GW Pkwy	Eastbound	Chain Bridge Rd.	I-66	-	-

PM Peak Period

Rank	Facility	Direction	From	To	CLRP Project	CLRP Study
1	I-495	Inner Loop	VA 7	I-270 Spur	VA: I-495 HOT Lanes (2015, 2030)	-
2	I-395	Northbound	VA 110	Penn. Ave	-	DC: Managed lanes study I-395, I-695, I-295 (submitted)
3	I-495	Outer Loop	MD 187	VA 236	VA: I-495 HOT Lanes (2015, 2030)	-
4	I-95	Southbound	I-495	VA 123	VA: I-95 HOT Lanes (2015)	-
5	I-66	Westbound	I-495	VA 234	-	-

- Five specific highway projects in the CLRP will address many of the most congested roadways in the region:
  - *495 Express Lanes (Virginia)*
  - *95 Express Lanes (Virginia)*
  - *I-66 “Spot Improvements” Inside the Beltway (Virginia)*
  - *11th Street Bridge Reconstruction (District of Columbia)*
  - *District of Columbia Managed Lanes Study (proposed to be added in the 2014 CLRP update)*

#### FORTHCOMING INFORMATION

The TPB’s 2014 aerial traffic survey will identify a new list of bottlenecks and longest-delay corridors. Findings from this study are expected to be available for analysis and comparison with proposed capital improvements by the end of the year. The study will make it possible to examine the effects of highway improvements that have been made since the last survey in 2011.

### **Other Strategies Under Priority 3**

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Seven of the strategies under Priority 3 would not typically be implemented through projects and programs identified explicitly in the CLRP. In some cases, funding may only be found in local Capital Improvement Programs (CIPs) because the projects will only use locally available dollars or are not considered regionally significant. In other cases, implementation will be achieved with private funding or through changes in policies and regulations, none of which is included in the CLRP.

Although we cannot use the CLRP to assess the degree to which they are being implemented, these strategies are key components of the Priorities Plan and are essential for the balanced and efficient system the TPB has promoted in its vision for the future. TPB staff welcome suggestions for determining how we might document and analyze planning and project development activities around the region that implement these strategies.

- **Improve Access to Transit Stops and Stations (Near-Term Strategy 1)**

Local jurisdictions throughout the region are taking steps to improve bus stops and rail station areas, and to improve pedestrian and bicycle access to transit. The TPB is currently conducting a study under the federal Transportation, Community, and System Preservation (TCSP) Program to identify high-impact pedestrian and bicycle access improvements to underutilized rail transit stations. In the future, new efforts can be expected to improve accessibility at the region’s 19,000 bus stops, especially at high-priority locations.

- **Support and Promote Electric Vehicles (Near-Term Strategy 3)**

Actions to encourage the purchase and use of electric vehicles were identified in a 2012 COG report. Such actions would require a variety of local- or state-funded infrastructure, policies, and regulatory changes.

- **Promote Commute Alternatives (Near-Term Strategy 4)**

Programs to encourage alternative commute modes are in place throughout the region. The TPB's Commuter Connections program provides such services at the regional level, while numerous local governments and private employers have programs in place to provide information about commute alternatives and to encourage and support commuters who use commute modes other than driving alone.

- **Expand Pedestrian Infrastructure & Expand Bicycle Infrastructure (Near-Term Strategies 5 & 6)**

Jurisdictions at every level of government are working to build infrastructure and improve safety for walking and biking. The TPB's Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan identified more than 500 important regional projects. Every year the TPB's Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee identifies a list of the top unfunded bicycle and pedestrian projects from a regional perspective.

- **Apply Priority Bus Treatments (Ongoing Strategy 3)**

The region is prioritizing these kinds of improvements and we are looking to do more. The Metrobus Priority Corridor Network (PCN), which would be fully funded under the *Metro 2025* component of WMATA's *Momentum* strategic plan (see page x), would apply significant priority treatments to 24 key, high-ridership routes to speed buses and improve on-time reliability. The TPB's federal TIGER grant, awarded in 2010, provided funding for some of these and other priority bus treatments throughout the region.

- **Update and Enforce Traffic Laws (Ongoing Strategy 6)**

Jurisdictions throughout the region are applying non-engineering solutions— through updated laws, better enforcement, and more public outreach—to make the transportation system safer, especially for pedestrians and bicyclists.

### 3 | MOVING FORWARD

#### Future Work Activities

TPB staff is planning a variety of activities to follow up on this Initial Assessment, conduct outreach, and promote integration between the Priorities Plan and other planning activities at COG.

##### Additional Comparative Assessment Activities

As a follow-on to this Initial Assessment, TPB staff will develop an additional assessment in time for the September TPB meeting. In the coming months, staff will engage with its partners to complete this additional work.

As part of the development of the 2015 CLRP, TPB staff will take the following steps:

- Work with partners to use the Assessment to identify focus areas or points of emphasis to incorporate into the 2015 CLRP Call for Projects, which is currently scheduled to be released in draft form in October 2014.
- Develop the annual 2014 CLRP Performance Analysis, which will be guided by the Priorities Plan framework and will be designed to inform decision making for the 2015 CLRP. The Performance Analysis is expected to be completed by the end of the calendar year.
- Work collaboratively with the local and state jurisdictions and agencies in the region to develop a process for describing—in a formal letter or other documentation—the ways in which the projects and programs that a jurisdiction submits for inclusion in the CLRP will address the priorities in the Priorities Plan. Such documentation was called for on page 77 of the Priorities Plan.

##### Conducting Outreach and Promoting Integration

TPB staff will conduct other activities to promote the implementation of the priorities in the Priorities Plan and seek integration between the Priorities Plan and other policy documents at COG, especially *Region Forward*. Much of the activity described below has been included in the TPB's FY2015 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP).

- Outreach on the Priorities Plan.** TPB staff will engage policy officials and staff of the TPB's member jurisdictions, as well as members of the general public, to stimulate dialogue on the Priorities Plan and to further the realization of its objectives. Outreach activities will promote discussion that connects the regional policy framework provided by the Priorities plan with the planning and decision-making activities conducted by the TPB's members.

- **Enhanced Linkages to COG's "Place + Opportunity" Report.** Many of the strategies and priorities laid out in the Priorities Plan are closely connected to COG's *Place + Opportunity* Report, which focuses on strengthening and enhancing the region's 141 Activity Centers. In FY2015, COG/TPB staff will identify ways to further promote those linkages through analysis and outreach.
- **Conduct Other Planning Activities and Analysis Related to the Priorities Plan.** In addition to the work identified above, staff will identify and conduct other analysis and planning activities related to key issues and themes identified in the Priorities Plan. Activities may include developing new or revised transportation and land-use scenarios, conducting analysis of those scenarios, and other research and analysis efforts. This analysis may also include evaluation of transportation metrics and targets that were established in other COG documents, particularly *Region Forward*. In addition, new MAP-21 statewide and metropolitan planning regulations, which are expected to be released this spring, will provide guidance on setting performance measures and targets, and conducting analysis.
- **Coordinate COG Planning Activities Through the Region Forward Coalition.** TPB members have expressed an interest in enhanced integration of the Priorities Plan with other planning efforts at COG, including *Region Forward*, *Place + Opportunity*, as well as work on climate change and air quality. Staff recommends that the Region Forward Coalition is the appropriate venue for determining how these different planning activities can be coordinated.

## Conclusion

This assessment is a work in progress. TPB staff look forward to a receiving suggestions and comments, and engaging in discussions regarding the information provided in this initial document. Based upon feedback from TPB members and other stakeholders, staff will determine what additional information can be presented to the TPB in the fall in advance of the final approval of the 2014 CLRP. Staff look forward to working to determine how future CLRP updates, as well as other planning activities, can better reflect the objectives of the Regional Transportation Priorities Plan.