
**TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD
MEETING MINUTES**

April 15, 2025
Virtual Meeting

MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES PRESENT

James Walkinshaw – TPB Chair, Fairfax County
Rebecca Schwartzman – District of Columbia Office of Planning
Arman Safakhah – City of Laurel
David Snyder – City of Falls Church
Sonia Vasquez Luna – City of Manassas
Stephen Kenny – Montgomery County
Tom Peterson – City of Fairfax
Ashley Hutson – City of Manassas
Maria Sinner – Virginia Department of Transportation
Lamin Williams – Federal Highway Administration
Bill Cuttler – VDOT – NOVA
Canek Aguirre – City of Alexandria
Chris Van Alstyne – MCDOT
Dan Koenig – FTA
Dan Malouff – Arlington County
David Edmondson – City of Frederick
David Schilling – FTA
David Reid – Virginia Delegate
Kris Fair – Maryland Delegate
Drew Morrison – MDOT
Eric Olson – Prince George's County
Gladys Hurwitz – Loudoun County
Glen Warren – MWAA
Heather Edelman – District of Columbia
Laurel Hammig – NPS
Meredith Soniat – DDOT
Michelle Shropshire – VDOT
Nicholas Roper – VDOT
Richard Duran – FHWA
Scott Smizik – VDOT
Nancy King – Maryland Senate
Steven Hall – City of Manassas Park
Susan Cunningham – Arlington County
Heather Edelman – District of Columbia
Jennifer Boysko – Virginia Senate
Kari Snyder – Maryland Department of Transportation
Kristen Weaver – City of Greenbelt
Mark Mishler – Montgomery County
Mati Bazurto – City of Bowie
Matt Frumin – District of Columbia
Meagan Landis – Prince William County
Monique Ashton – City of Rockville
Neil Harris – City of Gaithersburg
Ryan Washington – MWAA

Victor Weissberg – Prince George’s County
Mark Phillips – WMATA
Walter Alcorn – Fairfax County

MWCOG STAFF AND OTHERS PRESENT

Kanti Srikanth
Lyn Erickson
Tim Canan
Laura Bachle
Sergio Ritacco
Rachel Beyerle
Deborah Etheridge
Andrew Austin
Pierre Gaunard
Cristina Finch
Amanda Lau
Janie Nham
Cristina Finch
Jane Posey
Mark Moran
Dusan Vuksan
Daniel Sheehan
Jessica Storck
Robert D’Abadie
Renee Ritchey
Sara Brown
Jeff King
Vicki Caudullo
Nicholas Donohue
Daniel Papiernik – Community Advisory Committee Chair
Bill Orleans - public

1. PARTICIPATION PROCEDURES, MEMBER ROLL CALL, AND PUBLIC COMMENT OPPORTUNITY

Chair Walkinshaw called the meeting to order. He provided instructions for the hybrid meeting.

Lyn Erickson conducted a roll call. Attendance for the meeting can be found on the first pages of the minutes. She confirmed there was a quorum.

Lyn Erickson summarized the comments received online. She shared that between noon Tuesday, March 18, and noon on Monday, April 14, the TPB received two letters, one comment in TPB’s general comment form, and 47 comments submitted via email. She said that the Coalition for Smarter Growth, Bill Pugh wrote that, “Despite the TPB’s direction last June, VDOT has not provided the information or study alternatives for which the member agencies asked. Specifically, there will be no analysis of traffic impacts to connecting roads until after the TPB vote, and no information on the feasibility and future cost to remove HOT lanes from Metrorail.” She said that the Coalition for Smarter Growth also states that alternatives to widening and HOT lanes have been screened out by using biased study criteria, resulting in a false choice of expanding with private toll lanes or doing nothing. She said that they assert other alternatives exist and should be studied, including bus/HOV shoulder lanes, expanded incentive programs, and transit-oriented development. She said that the letter includes an addendum that lists the relevant

portions of the June 2024 TPB board resolution R13-2024. Lyn Erickson said that Brian Ditzler provided a comment in opposition to the I-495 express lanes. He stated that public opposition was evident at VDOT's public meetings, with public opinion polling revealing that tolling is the least popular. Mr. Ditzler's comment states that VDOT hasn't studied the traffic impacts to arterial roads, and VDOT's alternatives don't include alternatives such as transit-oriented development and travel demand management.

Lyn Erickson shared another comment from Mr. Charles Irwin of Colorado Springs, Colorado, who writes to convey a proposed freeway system for the Washington, D.C. area that is part of his transcontinental highway system proposal to make highways great again. She shares that in his comment he maps our proposed routes between states, regional routes, and local routes coast to coast.

To conclude, Lyn Erickson shared that the TPB received 47 emails from Tuesday, April 8, until noon Monday, from a letter writing campaign, urging the TPB board to reject the currently proposed I-495 express lane project from Visualize 2050. The form letter asserts that VDOT's plans to include HOT lanes would take the right-of-way reserve for Metrorail and add traffic to connecting roads, creating a new bottleneck. The form letter calls on VDOT to analyze traffic impacts to local arterials, estimate the costs of removing the HOT lanes for future rail, and develop additional build alternatives, such as shoulder, bus/HOV lanes, and expanded carpool and transit incentives. All the comments can be found on the TPB meeting event page.

2. APPROVAL OF THE MARCH 19, 2025 MEETING MINUTES

Chair Walkinshaw moved approval of the minutes. The motion was seconded by Maryland State Delegate Kris Fair. Virginia Delegate David A. Reid abstained. The motion was adopted.

3. TECHNICAL COMMITTEE REPORT

TPB Technical Committee Chair Victor Weissberg said that the Technical Committee met on April 4. He said that two items were reviewed for inclusion on the TPB's April agenda. These items were: 1) Bike to Work Day Proclamation and 2) DMVMoves Update.

Victor Weissberg said that the Technical Committee also discussed the Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning Update, Visualize 2050 and TIP Status Report, Regional Activity Centers Update, Access for All (AFA) Advisory Committee Refresh, and the UPWP Technical Assistance Program – Overview and Coordination.

There were no follow-up questions.

4. COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT & ACCESS FOR ALL ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT

TPB Community Advisory Committee Chair Daniel Papiernik said that the CAC met on April 10. He said the group was briefed on a few topics including: 1) Commuter Connections; 2) a regional bicycle and pedestrian plan; and 3) DMVMoves update. Daniel Papiernik said that to end the discussion they held an act locally round robin.

There were no follow-up questions.

5. STEERING COMMITTEE ACTIONS AND REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR

Kanti Srikanth said that the TPB's Steering Committee met on April 9 and approved three amendments to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). He said that the committee took the following actions:

-
- Maryland Department of Transportation requested an amendment to reflect the latest funding appropriations from its CTP to a few different programs. The highway safety improvement program, where \$40 million was added; the National Highway Performance Program, where about \$46 million was added program wide. A Surface Transportation Block Grant Program where another \$448 million was added, and lastly to the Area Resurfacing and Rehabilitation program, where an additional \$27 million was added.
 - The Virginia Department of Transportation added about \$800,000 in funding to the Seven Corners ring road study and added about \$3.3 million in revenue-sharing funds for the Shirley Gate Road project. In addition, there were changes to a couple of funding sources for the Richmond Highway Corridor improvements, where some NVTA funds were released and some regional STP state and local funds were added.
 - The Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation requested adjustments to funding sources and the addition of funds for three projects. For the L'Enfant Plaza Fourth Track project, certain FTA 5337 State of Good Repair funds were released, and FTA 5307 funding was allocated. Additionally, 5337 funds were released for the VRE Rolling Stock Modification and Overhaul Program. Approximately \$69 million in FTA 5337 NVTA state and local funds were allocated to the VRE Crystal City Station Improvements project.

Kanti Srikanth said that there was one letter sent. TPB sent a letter of support to Charles County as they are requesting some congressionally directed funds for their VanGO transit facility project.

Kanti Srikanth announced that Maryland's Transportation Alternatives Set Aside program is currently soliciting applications. He said that applications will be accepted through April 30, 2025, and applications must be submitted to MDOT's website. He said that a similar process is getting underway by the Virginia Department of Transportation to distribute the Virginia Transportation Alternatives Set Aside fund. He said that at this time they are accepting pre-applications through May 30, and for Virginia pre-application is a requirement for projects to be considered to receive funds.

Kanti Srikanth said that the U.S. EPA has completed its review of the air quality data that was submitted by the three states, and it has determined that the region met the latest 2015 ozone air quality standards. He stated that this finding now clears the way for the three states to request the region to be designated as an attainment area for national ozone standards. He said that since the region was non-attainment once, the region is obliged to submit a maintenance plan that will show how the region intends to stay in attainment over the next ten plus years. He said that TPB staff will be working with state air agencies and with the Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee in the coming months on developing the maintenance plan.

Kanti Srikanth ended by sharing that TPB staff Amanda Lau will be presenting in the North Carolina AMPO conference on how MPOs can revitalize public engagement efforts through strategic and effective communications, sharing the updated People's Guide to Transportation Decision-Making.

Virginia Delegate David Reid asked if Kanti Srikanth could share what the ozone level is that has now been reached as far as parts per billion and what the region's current ozone reading is.

Kanti Srikanth said that the design value reflects an average across all the monitors in the region and over a three-year period. He stated that with each concluding ozone season, the design value changes, and the latest design value is exactly at 70 parts per billion. He emphasized that, in this situation, the region must remain vigilant in controlling non-natural ozone emissions to ensure continued attainment, which is why the maintenance plan is necessary.

There were no other questions for Kanti Srikanth.

6. CHAIR'S REMARKS

Chair Walkinshaw said that the TPB is hearing two important briefings today, one on the I-495 Southside project, which members have lots of questions about, and the second one is on the Federal Transportation Reauthorization legislation. He said that the bill in Congress historically has been bipartisan and will need to be bipartisan to pass. He said he is looking forward to the presentation and conversation.

7. BIKE TO WORK DAY PROCLAMATION

Hamzat Sani provided a briefing on the regional Bike to Work Day event. He said that each May the Bike to Work Day event occurs, and it is co-organized by the TPB's Commuter Connections program along with the Washington Area Bicyclists Association. He said that this year's free event will be held on Thursday, May 15, coinciding with National Bike to Work Week. He emphasized how this year signals a change from what has been a Friday event to Thursday, in hopes of boosting attendance. He said that the event highlights biking to work as a fun, healthy, cost-effective, and practical option for thousands of daily commuters in the metropolitan Washington region.

Hamzat Sani said that the number of registrants from last year's Bike to Work Day event was approximately 14,000, and the committee's goal for 2025 is 15,000. He said that participants will receive a Bike to Work Day free t-shirt. He said that the t-shirts are given out to more than 100 pit stops within the 23 COG member jurisdictions in D.C., Maryland, and Virginia. He shared that WABA offers on-street and trail-riding classes for those looking for the confidence to bike to work.

Hamzat Sani explained that pit stops are hosted by local jurisdictions, advocacy groups, nonprofits, and employers throughout the region. He said that many pit stops also have local bike shops present, who may offer complementary tune-ups or demonstrate how to place their bicycles on the front-mounted racks. He said that local law enforcement and public officials often make appearances at pit stops where they can engage with their local residents.

Hamzat Sani said that today TPB is asked to proclaim Thursday, May 15, 2025, as Bike to Work Day throughout the entire National Capital Region. He said that this proclamation supports regional cohesion around one single event date, it generates media awareness for news stories and inspires all TPB members' jurisdictions to hold similar proclamations. He said that TPB members are also encouraged to register for Bike to Work Day and attend local pit stops in their area.

Chair Walkinshaw said that if there were no objections, he would take TPB action proclaiming May 15, 2025, as Bike to Work Day, as unanimous consent. He stated that he signed the proclamation at a previous COG Board meeting, so it is official.

There were no follow-up questions for Hamzat Sani.

8. VISUALIZE 2050: UPDATE ON THE VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (VDOT) I-495 SOUTHSIDE EXPRESS LANES PROJECT

Cristina Finch presented key milestones to explain the Visualize 2050 planning process to date and the I-495 Southside Express Lanes (SEL) project. She said that the SEL was included as a study in Visualize 2045. She stated that in December 2023, Virginia DOT submitted the I-495 Southside Express Lanes as a full construction project for inclusion in Visualize 2050. She said that in May 2024, the TPB approved the air quality conformity scope of work deferring the decision to include the SEL project or not until June 2024.

Cristina Finch said that TPB staff have been conducting a second air quality conformity analysis with the SEL project. She said that in September 2025 the TPB will be asked to revisit the vote on whether to move forward with draft plan development including the SEL project or not.

Cristina Finch said that following the TPB's vote in September, TPB staff will complete the draft plan and will publish the plan for public comment in October or November 2025, comments will be shared with the board in November, and the TPB will act on the plan, Transportation Improvement Program, and air quality conformity reports in December 2025.

Michelle Shropshire presented an update on the Southside Express Lanes National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) study. She said that Northern Virginia has a 94-mile network of connected managed lanes on the interstates with one project under construction, the 495 NEXT project, and two projects under study: the Southside project and a bidirectional project on the I-95 corridor.

Michelle Shropshire said that VDOT is conducting an environmental assessment in compliance with NEPA for potentially extending the express lanes network across an 11-mile corridor on the southern section of Capital Beltway. She said that the 11-mile corridor spans from the Springfield interchange on the western termini and extends across the Woodrow Wilson Bridge to the Maryland 210 interchange at the eastern termini. She stated that this is the last section of the Capital Beltway where express lanes have not been implemented. She said that the proposed access points under consideration are Van Dorn Street interchange, Route 1 interchange, and I-295 interchange.

Michelle Shropshire presented project activities including the environmental assessment, public engagement activities, a second-round detailed traffic analysis and an interchange access report that studies traffic along the 495 corridor and surrounding arterial roads. She said that VDOT will look at delivery methods, and if it is determined that the project would be best delivered through a public/private partnership (P3), VDOT will use a competitive bidding process, a preferred proposal would be selected, project agreements negotiated, and private/partner commitments made.

Michelle Shropshire said that a delivery phase would encompass detailed design for the project and additional engagement opportunities with approval checkpoints from federal partners, other agencies related to permitting, or the Commonwealth Transportation Board.

Michelle Shropshire said that the three alternatives under study include adding one express lane in each direction, adding two express lanes in each direction, and a no-build alternative that is required as the baseline for comparison. She presented a representation of the sections of the two build alternatives. She noted that the alternative with two express lanes in each direction would transition to one express lane in each direction just past the I-295 interchange. She said that this would merge back into the existing Beltway alignment in Maryland. She said that the same number of general-purpose lanes—local lanes and through lanes—would remain under either build scenario.

Michelle Shropshire said that addressing current and future traffic challenges around using the unoccupied space built on the Woodrow Wilson Bridge without precluding a future rail project could be accomplished through NEPA commitments. She said there could be a commitment to convert the necessary space to rail in the future that would be approved and enforced by FHWA to approve the NEPA document.

Michelle Shropshire said that should the project proceed as a P3 project, the commitment for future conversion to rail would be included in that comprehensive agreement, which is a legally binding document. She said that VDOT has had success in other projects, such as I-66 outside the Beltway, where VDOT has included terms to convert the median area to rail a number of years after project completion. She said that that is not a compensation event.

Michelle Shropshire said that VDOT provided written correspondence to the board stating that it is fully supportive of a future rail transit project, and this project would not preclude that (See attached VDOT letter to TPB Chair Christina Henderson on April 30, 2024). She stated that VDOT has a demonstrated past project history on delivering these P3 projects with these commitments in contracts and NEPA commitments that solidify the preservation of rail when the region is ready to pursue that project.

Michelle Shropshire said that the study team has conducted a planning-level traffic study along the I-495 corridor to look at current conditions and projections for the three alternatives. She said that traffic conditions will get worse under the no-build scenario for the study section of the Capital Beltway. She stated that there is recurring weekday morning congestion in the westbound direction for vehicles traveling from Maryland toward Virginia and recurring congestion in the opposite direction during P.M. peak travel time.

Michelle Shropshire said that the traffic model analysis shows that in the A.M. peak for the 2050 build year, travel time for the local lanes would be 52 minutes under the no-build scenario versus 36 with the two express lanes build. She said that the afternoon shows that the local lanes travel time would be 54 minutes versus 35 minutes with the two express lanes build scenario. She said that she picked the local lanes as an example because VDOT's traffic analysis showed that under the no-build condition, traffic would be the worst for those local lanes on this segment of the Beltway.

Michelle Shropshire presented travel speed comparisons for local lanes as average speeds in miles per hour. She said that the VDOT graphic demonstrates that in local lanes there could be some areas of congestion on the general-purpose lanes in 2050 for either of the build scenarios. She said that there are improvements in speeds along the general-purpose lanes, especially in local lanes. She stated that this is consistent with the results from the traffic analysis that the two express lane alternative performs better than the one express lane, and that both build alternatives perform better than the no-build condition.

Michelle Shropshire presented multimodal benefits layered into VDOT express lanes projects. She provided examples of the Monument Drive parking garage that was paid for with 100 percent concessionaire funds on I-66 outside the Beltway. She said there is a new Fairfax County Connector express bus that is paid for with Commonwealth funds as well as an annualized transit payment from the concessionaire on 495 NEXT Transurban. She said that both of these projects and transit enhancements would not be possible without the managed lane network.

Michelle Shropshire said that VDOT has committed, as part of the 495 Southside project, to include a new bus service that was identified in the VDRPT transit and TDM study completed in early 2023 to inform the Southside project that is underway. She said that the bus service would be from Central West Prince George's County to Tysons Corner, Virginia. She stated that this service would be dependent on the Southside project moving forward as a successful P3 project, and it is being included in the air quality conformity model analysis.

Michelle Shropshire said that the VDOT study team is looking at areas where gaps in the existing trail or sidewalk networks can be filled. She said that VDOT just completed four public information meetings, and the public comment period remains open until April 21. She stated that over 250 citizens attended the four meetings combined. She said that general themes of comments received so far include support for mass transit, general concerns about pricing and benefits of the project, roles and responsibilities of Virginia and Maryland in the project, and interest in bike and pedestrian improvements.

Michelle Shropshire said that VDOT contracted with a public research firm to conduct an independent public opinion survey in late February to early March 2025 of both Virginians and Marylanders who live near and travel through the study corridor to understand their views on the corridor and travel conditions and needs. She said that this was a 15-minute online survey with a statistically valid sample of over 600 replies. She

said that when asked if changes should be made to this section of I-495 within the near term of five to ten years, 73 percent in Virginia and 64 percent in Maryland agree. She said that choices that could lead to transportation or traffic improvements along the corridor, choices that included express bus, park and ride lots, and express lanes, received strong support with these questions.

Michelle Shropshire stated that when respondents were asked directly whether they are supportive of express lanes on this section of 495, the response for support was 58 percent. She said that VDOT asked if respondents were supportive of using the unoccupied space that exists on the Woodrow Wilson Bridge for express lanes, 59 percent of respondents supporting using that space. She noted that the space was built to accommodate for either express bus, HOV, or future rail. She said that another tool was used to garner public opinion regarding the corridor and needs showing that people are supportive of changes along the 495 Southside corridor, seeing the benefits of express lanes and the benefit of using the unoccupied space in the near term while the region decides on a future rail project.

Michelle Shropshire said that key decision points for the NEPA study underway include hosting a public hearing of the recommended preferred alternatives in June followed by a September meeting of the Commonwealth Transportation Board when the CTB will issue a decision on the recommended preferred alternative. She stated that the TPB board will vote on including the Southside project in the Visualize 2050 plan in September. She said that another public hearing on the environmental assessment will be held in late 2025, and the TPB will vote on the Visualize 2050 plan in December. She said that an FHWA decision on the environmental assessment is anticipated in early 2026.

Chair Walkinshaw confirmed that TPB board members will be able to submit questions in writing for VDOT's response and asked if the questions should go through TPB staff or should board members send them directly to VDOT.

Kanti Srikanth said that the TPB staff would be happy to compile the comments and share with VDOT.

Chair Walkinshaw said that if board members are not able to ask a question today to send those to Kanti Srikanth and Lyn Erickson to compile one packet for VDOT's response.

Victor Weissberg said that Prince George's County acknowledges that there are differences in planning processes between the two states with an example being Virginia's interstate access report (IAR) which VDOT staff mentioned which is similar to Maryland's interstate access point approval process. He said that it is his understanding that the IAR process is slated to occur upon completion of the NEPA, and FHWA cannot approve the IAR unless NEPA is completed. He said that the 495 SEL project is different than some of the other projects that Virginia advanced in the past in that it involves multiple jurisdictions. He asked if there is a possibility that the IAR can begin concurrently with the NEPA process even if not approved until after.

Michelle Shropshire said that VDOT kicked off the NEPA process in 2022, and the NEPA process will be concluded before VDOT kicks off its IAR. She said that VDOT has conducted a robust traffic analysis, and the data has been discussed with several localities, and the data has been presented over the course of several meetings with localities and stakeholders. She said the IAR process will follow the NEPA process.

Monique Ashton asked whether Virginia set aside funds collected to support WMATA and also future Metro development in this area. She said that there are many people who want to see Metro in the future but having a dedicated funding source could be helpful. She asked how cost sharing would go and when cost-sharing discussions would happen since some of the toll lanes and potential collection might be in Maryland. She asked if there is an upper limit to the toll cost, and in thinking about people who are on fixed incomes or low incomes, wanting to make sure that there is fair toll pricing if this goes through.

Michelle Shropshire said that key business terms would be set during the P3 procurement process. She said that VDOT has been an upfront beneficiary of concession funds for one of its past projects and that many of the projects have received annualized transit payments. She said that for those projects, the funds have gone through a regional entity for disbursement. She said that VDOT would envision something like that happening for this type of project. She said that funds would not be per se earmarked for a specific entity, but they would go through, using other projects as an example, for transit. She said that other projects have had commuter choice program disbursements, or through NVTA to be disbursed if they were up-front concession payments.

Michelle Shropshire said that tolls would be collected in Virginia, and there would not be tolling gantries per se in Maryland. She said that there is not a toll cap set in Virginia.

Chair Walkinshaw clarified that Monique Ashton's question was about revenue sharing rather than cost sharing.

Monique Ashton confirmed that the question was about revenue sharing.

Angel Deem said that this is new territory for Virginia DOT with the section of the Beltway spanning into Maryland. She said that in letters provided to the TPB board and Chair Christina Henderson in April 2024 (See letter attached from April 30, 2024), VDOT indicated that VDOT would continue the posture that the Commonwealth of Virginia has always taken with these agreements involving utilization of toll revenues, negotiating tolls with VDOT's concessionaire, and utilization of the toll revenues in the corridor where they were collected. She said that this would necessarily include Maryland. She stated it is premature to determine today the mechanics of that and exactly how that revenue would be disbursed. She said the stage is set for those conversations to happen as VDOT moves into the procurement arena where terms, as said by Michelle Shropshire, are set.

Angel Deem stated that the Virginia DOT commissioner provided that same message when VDOT submitted a letter in June 2024 to Prince George's County administrative leadership (See letter attached from June 13, 2024). She said that VDOT understands that is a key question and intends to do what has been done on these corridors and with these projects in this new arrangement between jurisdictions in both Virginia and Maryland.

Chair Walkinshaw asked if Angel Deem would confirm that if the project were included in Visualize 2050 and if VDOT's process proceeded and then, at a later date, Maryland was unhappy or was not able to come to an agreement about revenue share, Maryland will then have the opportunity to negotiate that or to not support the project, and it wouldn't happen. He said that he thinks some folks may be concerned that if this project is included in Visualize 2050 and there is not a clear agreement or a percentage of revenue dedicated for use in Maryland, that somehow the project would just proceed, and Maryland would not get a fair deal out of it.

Angel Deem referred back to the letter VDOT submitted in June of last year to Prince George's County's administrative leadership where the VDOT commissioner says, quote, "that this project will not advance to implementation without the support of Prince George's County and the region." She said that this is a procedural process through the Commonwealth Transportation Board's decision on this project. She said that VDOT works with the region on the Visualize 2050 update, but Virginia's work still continues. She said that the project is not green lit all the way to completion at that point and that there are still many steps to go through, and that's why she refers the TPB board to the third slide in Michelle Shropshire's presentation where VDOT lays out the process that the Commonwealth of Virginia observes as it works through complex projects.

Michelle Shropshire said that when she mentioned the commuter choice program through NVTC that WMATA does currently qualify for that program and that is another avenue that would come to fruition.

Kristen Weaver asked about the survey because it seems the survey was not giving people the full range of options. She said that respondents were given a choice of the express lanes but were not given a choice, for example, whether they would prefer to see Metrorail happen sooner. She said that she is seeing, for example, that the express bus to employment centers has almost 57 percent of respondents liking that idea, but the choice to use toll lanes is only 34 percent. She said that it would be better to give people the full range of options and see if they really are supporting this, given all the choices they might have or they might like to advocate for, or if they're only choosing bad traffic versus something. She asked what about bad traffic versus a whole range of options to see what people are actually most in favor of. She asked if VDOT staff could talk about the choices in terms of not giving survey respondents a full range of what future options could be on those lanes.

Michelle Shropshire said that the slide deck includes just a sampling of the questions that were asked. She said that the survey was a 15-minute, online survey with a number of different questions asked. She said that VDOT was trying to garner information regarding the express lanes and public sentiment on that because it coincides with the purpose and need of the NEPA study. She said that there were multimodal aspects on the express lanes and transit in the survey.

Kristen Weaver said that if the region is trying to do long-term planning and trying to get feedback from people, we need to look at the big picture and the whole range of options and not narrowly focus on specific projects. She said that she suspects that if people were asked if they would like to see Metrorail versus express buses, there might a different response and sentiment on some of the surveys. She said that she would appreciate seeing results from some of the additional questions.

Michelle Shropshire said that the purpose for the NEPA study is to look at extending the managed lane network with transit components. She said that WMATA has a study that's ongoing, and she does not think that the study has reached a conclusion about a preferred alternative or timeframe.

David Reid said that he represents an area with the Dulles Greenway where there is no choice other than to use the toll road or go off the road, and Dulles toll road is the same thing. He asked whether the express lanes that have been completed offer a consumer choice so that a person can continue to ride on the free roads that have been paid by the Commonwealth of Virginia or by Maryland or the express lanes can be used by choice.

Michelle Shropshire said that the same number of general-purpose lanes would be available in the Southside corridor. She said that travelers have a choice of paying a toll with one or two passengers in the managed lane network or a free trip for three or more. She said that transit uses managed lanes for free providing reliable headways. She said that Virginia DRPT has information about how many bus trips used the managed lanes every day. She said that VDOT has information from the commuter choice program of up to 2,600 transit trips using the lanes every day, and 1,800 carpool trips using the managed lane networks in Virginia.

David Reid asked for clarification that everybody can continue to use the general-purpose lanes paying no toll.

Michelle Shropshire said that is correct.

David Snyder said that the TPB received comments earlier in the meeting that merit attention along with comments from the Coalition for Smarter Growth. He said that it would be helpful if VDOT could provide a

written response to the questions to help set the stage for decisions the TPB will have to make. He commented that in the slides on performance, he noticed where one express lane performed worse than the no-build. He asked if VDOT could help the board understand why that might be the case.

Michelle Shropshire said that VDOT will produce a summary of the comments received at the public information meetings that will address themes heard in the comments after the comment period closes on April 21. She said that there are some specific areas where the one express lane alternative may not perform as one would expect. She said the data has been reviewed extensively, and the reason has to do with demand, no-build conditions, and congestion points along the corridor that will still exist in the year 2050, which is the no-build year, and how traffic in the model is getting to those points. She stated that there are bottlenecks created between some merge points between local and through lanes, and that traffic is not able to get to that point in the model. She said that when the one express lane alternative is present, it starts providing some bottleneck relief. She stated that VDOT thinks that some of the no-build times may be underrepresented in the model. She commented that there will be refinements to the model in the IAR stage, but VDOT thinks the results are valid.

David Snyder stated that his question was about responding to the comments received today at the TPB meeting rather than the comments at the public hearings. He said that he thinks it would be helpful for the board members to understand VDOT's response to those public comments.

Chair Walkinshaw said that if there is a specific question in the public comments that a TPB member would like to ensure that VDOT responds to in writing, then to submit that comment to Kanti Srikanth and Lyn Erickson.

Chair Walkinshaw said that slide 9 showed the local general-purpose lanes but did not show the potential impacts on arterials in the corridor or neighborhood side streets. He asked Michelle Shropshire to speak to any work that has been done or will be done to examine the impact or potential impact of the project on arterials and neighborhood and side streets.

Michelle Shropshire said that the planning-level traffic analysis commensurate with the NEPA study is extensive but is focused on the I-495 corridor. She said that the next steps will be the interchange access report (IAR) where VDOT will refine the traffic analysis to look at arterials and corridor-adjacent roadways. She said that is when the information Chair Walkinshaw asked about will be available. She said that VDOT has different approval checkpoints in the process and will continue to refine the information being developed. She said there will be opportunities to make adjustments and address comments and concerns.

9. PRELIMINARY INPUT TO FEDERAL TRANSPORTATION REAUTHORIZATION PROCESS

Kanti Srikanth opened his presentation on TPB's preliminary input and draft principles by stating that federal transportation funding flows to the states and local transportation agencies per federal transportation acts, and the latest federal law is the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act or IIJA, which was enacted in 2022. He stated that the IIJA's authorization to distribute federal funds is set to expire October 1, 2026, and Congress has begun working on a reauthorization bill.

Kanti Srikanth said that the U.S. Congress Subcommittee on Highways and Transit has published a schedule for reauthorization, and there is an opportunity for stakeholders to provide their input through the end of April. He said that the TPB is a stakeholder in the process. He said that previous TPB inputs were provided in 2008 and 2015 through the National Capital Region's congressional delegation.

Kanti Srikanth said that TPB staff have been working with the National Association of MPOs, the National Association of Regional Councils, and AASHTO as well as the TPB chair and vice chairs to craft a preliminary draft set of reauthorization themes or principles. He stated the five general themes are listed in the presentation slides. He said that TPB board members will have the opportunity to review the draft principles and provide comment by April 25. He stated that TPB staff will work with chairs and vice chairs on revisions and submit the principles to the federal portal.

Kanti Srikanth said that the TPB has tried to be general and high level with a focus on TPB's responsibilities. He stated that the state DOTs and transit agencies may have specific programmatic principles that TPB is not opposed to but are not particularly in TPB's wheelhouse.

Kanti Srikanth said that 83 percent of the Highway Trust Fund is generated from gas tax, diesel tax, and other vehicle taxes. He noted that the federal taxes on gasoline and diesel are a fixed amount that has not changed since 1993. He stated that the trust fund is distributed 80 percent to highway and 20 percent to transit, and that percentage split has generally not changed in the past 20 years. He said that within the accounts, funding is distributed through formula grants to all 50 states and the territories and through discretionary grants. He said between 1992 and 2022, the Highway Trust Fund outlay has increased from almost \$155 billion to \$674 billion, but revenue has not increased over this period while the purchasing power of the dollar has decreased.

Kanti Srikanth said that the structural imbalance in the Highway Trust Fund has been addressed through transferring money from general fund revenues into trust fund revenues. He said this has created uncertainty because Congressional budget approval to do this is an annual process. He stated that between 2008 and 2002, the federal government relied on an estimated \$257 billion of general fund transfers, and in 2022, there was \$118 billion in general fund revenues transferred.

Kanti Srikanth said that the TPB has consistently said since 2008 that there should be a fix so that the Highway Trust Fund revenue is sufficient to pay program obligations, and it should keep up with inflation. He said that is one principle in TPB's current draft.

Kanti Srikanth said that the second theme is a commitment to multimodal transportation to help address congestion, improve mobility and accessibility, and to mitigate climate impacts. He said that there has to be adequate federal funding for all modes of travel, and transportation agencies should have maximum flexibility in using federal funds across different modes. He said that 23 percent of commuters in the region use transit, but for non-commute trips, 45 percent use transit, carpool or vanpool, and the ability to invest in different modes becomes important.

Kanti Srikanth said that funding constraints are another theme as the demand for transportation infrastructure and services grows. He said that federal regulations should promote efficient and effective project planning when travel patterns and travel demands can change quickly. He said that patterns and demand can change faster than the ability for a transportation agency to study the issue, explore the different alternatives of addressing the issue, designing, funding, and constructing or implementing a solution, therefore the process should be more efficient. He said that efficiencies can be provided through streamlining project development requirements that agencies face and making federal funding available through multiple programs.

Kanti Srikanth provided the example of different programs that reduce vehicle emissions, each with its own constraints, requirements, and project eligibility. He said that one of the suggestions is to keep the funding and provide a larger pot of funding that is focused on the outcome so that transportation agencies at the state and local levels have more flexibility. He commented that when state, local, and regional entities have the opportunity to make programming decisions, they are able to use the resources that they have to match

the requirements and challenges they face as opposed to through a national discretionary grant where every region or jurisdiction is competing for grants. He said that national level investment is critical for large infrastructure projects, discretionary grants are important and need to be retained, but there is an opportunity to reexamine the extent of discretionary grants to see if more can be provided to the state and local considerations.

Kanti Srikanth said that the fourth item is reliability. He said that reliability is reduced when there is congestion and impacts on air quality and health from congestion along with the growing threat coming from serious weather, particularly over the past ten years as the severity and frequency of severe weather incidents have increased. He said that infrastructure reliability is also of direct importance to the economy and functioning of society, so federal reauthorization should continue to prioritize and provide funding for ensuring that our transportation infrastructure is in a state of good repair.

Kanti Srikanth said that large metropolitan areas contribute a significant portion of the nation's GDP, and it is important that transportation decisions are made in interdependent, interconnected jurisdictions that have cross-jurisdictional coordination and collaboration in examining the transportation needs, crafting a solution, implementing it, and operating it. He said that metropolitan planning organizations such as the TPB, are a forum where coordination comes together, so the TPB reauthorization principle is that the reauthorization should affirm the important role that MPOs play, and it should retain and strengthen them.

Kanti Srikanth requested comments on the themes by close of business April 25. He said that TPB staff will share the final version that was submitted to the portal with the board in early May.

Drew Morrison said that from Maryland DOT's perspective, MDOT would like to see a couple evolutions of the principles and more of a DC area valence and build around the policy goals that TPB has set around rail, safety, and the central role of WMATA. He said that he would share the comments. He stated that regarding the strategy, items 3(b) and 3(c), which had to do with consolidation of programs and discretionary grant strategy, are an item of concern for MDOT to be included in a consensus-based letter. He said that until it is better understood how this relates to other efforts that stakeholders are taking vis-a-vis the reauthorization, MDOT does not feel comfortable including those items in the letter but looks forward to working with everybody for a great letter by the end of the month.

10. DMVMOVES UPDATE

Nick Donohue introduced his comments by going back over the core issue that Metro's purchasing power, particularly on the capital side, has done down over time with historical inflation that has increased the cost of materials and supplies necessary to run the Metro system and that a lot of WMATA's capital funding comes from fixed revenue sources that were put in place a number of years ago and have not grown over time. He said that the work of DMVMoves is to come up with a funding concept that has two core components.

Nick Donohue said that the first ask is for \$450- to \$500 million a year, starting in FY 28, to ensure a state of good repair for the WMATA system but also make modernization investments like rail automation and advance signaling that can improve the capacity of the system. He said that an ask on the bus side is a scalable \$50- to \$100 million a year that would address increasing the frequency of bus service through the implementation of bus priority treatments on roadways where there are high-capacity, high-frequency routes.

Nick Donohue said that in 2024, WMATA was projecting an operating deficit in FY 28 of \$140 million. He said that due to a number of strategies WMATA has implemented through savings, increased ridership, and

cost efficiencies, WMATA now predicts that the deficit will now be zero. He said that today WMATA has a state of good repair backlog of about \$4 billion. He said that prior to dedicated regional funding, the number was above \$7 billion. He said that if the region does not take action, there will state of good repair backlog growth that over time could exceed back to the 2015-2016 timeframe. He said that almost no transportation agency has a zero backlog for state of good repair, so this level of investment is lowering it from where it is today and sustaining it over time.

Nick Donohue stated that the funding request would also increase frequency on Metrorail and Metrobus by leveraging the existing system. He said that advance signaling and rail automation can allow WMATA to increase the frequency on the existing Metrorail system and run more trains on existing lines at a cost than building a new rail tunnel or new rail lines would do. He said that DMVMoves is also looking at lowering the per unit cost of providing some services.

Nick Donohue said that on the policy side, DMVMoves is looking at how to improve the customer experience across the region's 14 different transit operators including opportunities to create synergies through bus procurement, regional call centers, and improving wayfinding and customer information. He said that operators are also looking at to integrate and align fare policies. He stated that documenting the assumptions around the funding discussion is important. He said that now that there has been seven to eight years of experience with the three percent subsidy cap, evaluating that cap and looking at whether modifications are appropriate or necessary is part of DMVMoves.

Chair Walkinshaw stated that if board members have questions to share those with Kanti Srikanth.

11. ADJOURN

Chair Walkinshaw stated that the next meeting would be held May 21, There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:01 P.M.



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Stephen C. Brich, P.E.
Commissioner

1401 East Broad Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219

April 30, 2024

The Honorable Christina Henderson, Chair
National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board
Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
777 North Capitol Street, N.E., Suite 300
Washington, DC 20002-4201

RE: I-495 Southside Express Lanes Study

Dear Chair Henderson:

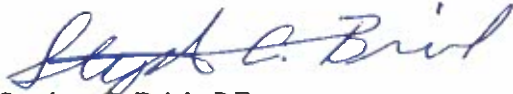
The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) continues to value the partnership with the Transportation Planning Board (TPB) as we collectively seek to update the Visualize 2050 Constrained Long Range Plan (CLRP). The efforts and collaboration amongst TPB and its member states, jurisdictions, legislative representatives, and regional authorities is critical to the support of regionally significant projects. As you are aware, project submissions for Visualize 2050 by VDOT include the I-495 Southside Express Lanes project. This critical project seeks to develop a multimodal solution with a goal of moving the most people as efficiently as possible through this congested segment of the Capital Beltway. The project presents the opportunity to create and expand transit connections within the region while also providing congestion relief and increased travel reliability. The project is consistent with the TPB's adopted goals for the development of Visualize 2050, specifically through its objective to reduce travel times for transit services and the free use of the express lanes network by these services and other high occupancy vehicles.

Over the last several months, we have heard concerns regarding the preservation of space on the Woodrow Wilson Memorial Bridge (WWMB) for future rail transit. The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) study completed in 2000 delineated the inside lanes of the bridge for future rail transit and its ensuing Record of Decision memorialized this requirement. I am writing to clearly state that VDOT is fully supportive of future rail transit over the WWMB and as such is continuing to pursue rail preservation by advancing alternatives that can be pursued in the near term while including flexibility for the long term, are cost effective, and can be built largely within the footprint of the existing corridor. The concepts under NEPA review incorporate rail preservation either through retaining existing, unoccupied space or by incorporating a commitment to convert necessary space to rail transit in the future when Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) and the region are positioned to implement service across the WWMB. Incorporating this commitment as part of the NEPA process and its ultimate federal approval means this requirement is legally enforceable. VDOT's adherence to this requirement will not result in costs for WMATA to convert the space when they are ready to implement service. Further, VDOT has stated, and I reiterate, that terms within any future contract or concessionaire agreement would similarly incorporate a requirement for conversion to rail transit in the future consistent with the preferred alternative approved through the NEPA process. This means a future agreement would make clear the need for the concessionaire to vacate the space necessary to operate heavy rail.

The Honorable Christina Henderson
April 30, 2024
Page Two

Regarding transit investments, it has been the practice of the Commonwealth to incorporate on-going transit payments from express lane projects in Northern Virginia to enhance multimodal options in the respective corridor. It is VDOT's intent to continue the advocacy for our established practice with this project. However, since this project is still at preliminary stages, we are not able to identify the amount nor the nature of funding for transit investments in the corridor at this time. To underscore the Commonwealth's commitment to this approach, it is worth noting that since 2017 VDOT alone and in conjunction with our express lane partners have provided \$156 million to the Commuter Choice Program which has been used to fund park and ride lots, bus purchases, shared use paths, and transit stations.

In closing, we understand the importance of future rail transit on the Woodrow Wilson Bridge and are committed to ensuring the space will be available. I hope you will continue to support the Commonwealth's efforts to solve the region's most challenging congestion in the near term while also retaining the flexibility necessary to adjust our problem-solving approaches in the future.
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Stephen C. Brich".

Stephen C. Brich, P.E.
Commissioner of Highways

C: The Honorable W. Sheppard Miller, III, Secretary of Transportation
Mr. Kanti Srikanth, TPB, Executive Director
Ms. Cathy McGhee, P.E., VDOT, Chief Deputy Commissioner
Ms. Angel Deem, VDOT, Chief of Policy
Mr. Bill Cuttler, P.E., VDOT-NoVA, District Engineer
Ms. Maria Sinner, P.E., VDOT-NoVA, ADA Planning and Investment



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
1401 EAST BROAD STREET
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA 23219-2000

Stephen C. Brich, P.E.
COMMISSIONER

June 13, 2024

Mr. Floyd E. Holt
Deputy Chief Administrative Officer
Prince George's County, Maryland
1301 McCormick Drive
Largo, MD 20774

Dear Mr. Holt:

Thank you again for our recent discussion and Prince George's County's continued engagement with the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) team working on the Commonwealth's project submissions for the Visualize 2050 Constrained Long Range Plan (CLRP) update. As we discussed and I reiterated on a call with your team on June 7, 2024, the I-495 Southside Express Lanes Project is a regionally significant project intended to address the remaining segment of interstate along the Capital Beltway in Virginia without an Express Lanes component. Inclusion of an Express Lanes component along this critical segment from the Springfield Interchange across the Woodrow Wilson Memorial Bridge (WWMB) to MD 210 in Prince George's County provides a generational opportunity to deliver near-term congestion relief to Virginia and Maryland commuters, create and expand transit connections in the region, and increase travel reliability throughout the National Capital Region.

In 2021, the I-495 Southside Express Lanes study area was identified in the Commonwealth Transportation Board's adopted I-95 Corridor Improvement Plan as an area for additional study. As a result, the study was included in VDOT's Six Year Improvement Program and the National Capital Region's Visualize 2045 CLRP and VDOT is underway with the NEPA analysis to identify a preferred alternative for the corridor. The upcoming action by the Transportation Planning Board (TPB) to include the project in the air quality conformity analysis is a critical next step that is a requirement of the NEPA process. For purposes of this air quality analysis the project is proposed as the addition of two Express Lanes to represent the maximum cross section with potentially the highest impact on air quality. The preferred alternative approved through the NEPA process may or may not match this assumption. Modeling this maximum cross section, or worst-case scenario, ensures the air quality analysis does not underestimate mobile source emissions.

Importantly, the NEPA process cannot conclude and VDOT cannot receive NEPA approval from the Federal Highway Administration until the project has been included for construction in the CLRP and its approved air quality conformity analysis. VDOT's timeline for the advancement of this critical project is linked to this requirement and any delay of its inclusion in the CLRP will result in a delay of over two years, further delaying the delivery of tangible benefits to the region. In addition to the time delay, a decision to not include the project now will result in the Commonwealth expending additional resources to update analyses that inform the NEPA study to ensure its validity upon its inclusion in the CLRP. In response to the suggestion that the I-495 Southside Express Lanes project is not ready for inclusion in the CLRP, I would point out that it is both appropriate and acceptable for projects included in a CLRP update to have either not begun NEPA or to have the NEPA analysis underway. The projects approved by the TPB in May 2024 evidence this.

As the Commonwealth advances the NEPA study, potential project benefits specifically for needs identified for Prince George's County, along with traffic analysis and resource impacts will be vetted with environmental agencies, the public and key stakeholders. As we advance, we are confident the project will demonstrate a considerable opportunity to unlock congestion and increase transit investments in the corridor. The project provides a foundation to establish robust transit ridership that will serve as a customer base for the future extension of Metrorail across the WWMB. The Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) completed the I-495 Southside Transit/Transportation Demand Management Study in April 2023 for the purpose of identifying a range of multimodal solutions in the corridor to inform VDOT's NEPA study. As you are aware, the only transit service between Virginia and Maryland across the WWMB is the Metrobus NH2 route connecting Alexandria and National Harbor, however the current levels of congestion across the bridge result in little to no travel time savings for this service. The DRPT study recommendations include investments for transit service across the bridge such as express bus routes from Prince George's County to Tysons. Should the I-495 Southside Express Lanes project advance under a concessionaire agreement as currently anticipated it could provide a dedicated source of revenue for such investments as well as a dedicated route for buses to take increasing their reliability and ridership. The long-standing practice of the Commonwealth to incorporate on-going transit payments from express lanes projects to enhance multimodal options in the respective corridor clearly demonstrates the importance the Commonwealth places on reliable and robust transit investments. The I-495 Southside Express Lanes project presents the opportunity to deliver on enhanced multimodal options in this critical corridor.

Let me assure you again that VDOT is fully committed to preserving capacity for future rail on the WWMB and has only advanced alternatives that meet this requirement. VDOT is also fully committed to continue pursuing transit investment opportunities as part of our Express Lanes program. These assurances underscore our demonstrated intent to work collaboratively to solve the region's transportation challenges. Simply stated, the Commonwealth cannot and will not advance this project to implementation without the support of Prince George's County and the region. Further delay is not in the best interest of the citizens and visitors that travel the I-495 corridor. The time to act is now.

Mr. Floyd E. Holt
June 13, 2024
Page 3 of 3

I trust the clarifications provided here along with the April 30, 2024, letter provided to TPB Chair Henderson (attached here for your reference) address the questions and concerns of Prince George's County and I ask for your support for the inclusion of the I-495 Southside Express Lanes project in the Air Quality Conformity Analysis project inputs for Visualize 2050.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Stephen C. Brich". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Stephen" and last name "Brich" clearly legible.

Stephen C. Brich, P.E.
Commissioner of Highways

C: Ms. Oluseyi Olugbenie, Deputy Director, Public Works & Transportation,
Prince George's County, Maryland
Mr. Eric Olson, County Council, Prince George's County, Maryland
Ms. Christina Henderson, Chair, National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board
Mr. Kanti Srikanth, Executive Director, Transportation Planning Board
Mr. Jeffrey C. McKay, Chairman, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors
Ms. Cathy McGhee, P.E., VDOT Chief Deputy Commissioner
Mr. Bill Cuttler, P.E., VDOT Northern Virginia District Engineer
Ms. Angel Deem, VDOT Chief of Policy