

Two Major Transportation Projects Approved

The Transportation Planning Board on October 19 approved amendments to the region's transportation plans including two major new projects: high-occupancy/toll (HOT) lanes on the Beltway in Virginia and the CapCom transportation coordination center.

These projects were included among a package of amendments to the Washington region's Constrained Long-Range Transportation Plan (CLRP) and the FY 2006-2011 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Under the federal Clean Air Act, the TPB was required to approve an air quality conformity determination for the CLRP and TIP showing that forecasted emissions will meet regional air quality requirements.

In order to be included in the CLRP and TIP, projects must also be found to have adequate

funding schemes.

The HOT lanes project will add 4 new lanes to the Capital Beltway between the Springfield Interchange and a point just south of Georgetown Pike (VA 193)—a total of 15 miles.

HOT lanes combine features of toll lanes with carpool lanes. Vehicles with one or two passengers will pay tolls to use the lanes, while carpools (three or more passengers) will ride for

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CLRP/TIP 2005

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Porter Honored for TPB Work



Takoma Park Mayor Kathy Porter received the 2005 award for outstanding elected official from the Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations. Story on page 5.

Plan Will Increase Transit Access to Activity Clusters

New rail projects in the region's 2005 Constrained Long-Range Plan (CLRP) will increase transit access to regional "activity clusters," according to an analysis presented to the TPB at its October meeting. The analysis also found that a high percentage of commuters use transit to travel to activity clusters, particularly "core" clusters in the District of Columbia, Alexandria, and Arlington County.

The concept of activity "centers" and "clusters" can be traced back to the TPB Vision, a policy document adopted in 1998 to guide the

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free. The tolls will be automatically adjusted based on congestion levels or time of day.

The project is expected to cost \$899 million, using a combination of public and private financing. This will be the first HOT lane project in the Washington region. Lanes have not been added to the Virginia side of the Capital Beltway since the mid-1970s.

The HOT lanes went through the same analysis and approval process as did the Inter-County Connector, which was put into the long-range plan and TIP last year. The TPB expects both projects to be ready for public use by 2010.

"The addition of HOT lanes to the region's transportation plans is another alternative to improve the flow of traffic," said Fairfax County Supervisor Catherine Hudgins, who serves as TPB Vice Chair.

In addition to approving the HOT lanes project, transportation departments in the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia officially agreed to fund a project currently known as CapCom, a transportation coordination center and program for the National Capital Region.

"CapCom will serve us on a day-to-day basis, not just during tragedies," said Maryland State Senator John Giannetti. CapCom would improve coordination among state transportation departments by allowing them to share information during all types of emergencies, from major traffic accidents to a potential terrorist attack.

The transportation departments agreed to support the project with \$400,000, shared equally among the District, Maryland and Virginia, over a five-year period beginning in 2005. CapCom has also received a congressional earmark of \$1.6 million as well as \$1 million in homeland security funds. ■

Significant Changes in the CLRP

1. Widen the Capital Beltway (I-495) by adding high-occupancy/toll (HOT) lanes between the Springfield Interchange and a point just south of VA 193 (Georgetown Pike). Length: 15 miles.

Completion: 2010. Cost: \$899 million (The TPB released a proposed financial plan from VDOT on March 16, 2005).

2. Upgrade VA 7900. The CLRP already includes a project to build HOV lanes along VA 7900 from Rolling Road to a point just east of I-95. The proposed

change for the 2005 CLRP would upgrade the facility to a limited access freeway. *Length: 3 miles. Completion: 2010 (HOV); 2020 (upgrade). Cost: \$16 million (entire project).*

3. Construct a new busway between Crystal City Metro Station and Potomac Yard in Arlington. *Length: Approximately half mile (phase one); 0.75 mile (phase two). Completion: 2006 (phase 1); 2008 (phase 2); 2012 (upgrade). Cost: \$6.3 million.*

4. Add auxiliary lanes to the interchange construction project at the Capital Beltway (I-95/I-495) and Arena Drive in Prince George's County. The CLRP already includes conversion of existing part-time interchange to a full-time facility. The proposed change for the 2005 CLRP would add auxiliary lanes north and south of the interchange. *Length: Less than 2 miles. Completion: 2010. Cost: \$29.7 million (entire project).*

5. Widen MD 27 between MD 355 and A-305 from 4 to 6 lanes to support development in Clarksburg, Montgomery Co. *Length: Less than 2 miles. Completion: 2006. Cost: Funded by private developer.*



Citizens Committee Seeking Nominations

If you are interested in becoming a candidate for membership on the 2006 TPB Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC), please contact COG/TPB staff by the end of November. The TPB's public involvement process encourages candidates who "represent environmental, business and civic interests in transportation, including appropriate representation from low-income, minority and disabled groups and from the geographic area covered by the TPB." Interested candidates should send a brief statement to John Swanson, COG/TPB staff, at jswanson@mwkog.org. For more information, call 202/962-3295. ■

Three Priorities Issues for the 2005 Long-Range Plan

Last January, the TPB asked the region's transportation implementing agencies, including the state DOTs and WMATA, to consider three priorities when submitting projects for this year's Constrained Long-Range Plan. These priorities are derived from the TPB Vision, the regional transportation policy framework adopted by the board in 1998.

In approving the CLRP on October 21, the board reviewed the extent to which the CLRP addresses the three priorities.

1. Implement *traffic signal optimization*. "Optimization" is an engineering concept in which traffic signals are timed to reduce delays while ensuring safety. In 2002, the TPB established the goal of re-timing an additional 900 signals out of a total of 4,700 total signals. In percentage terms, this goal would increase optimized signals from 45 to 64 percent of the total. Reports by the transportation agencies indicate that the region exceeded this goal, increasing the number of optimized signals by 1,100, which means that 68 percent of signals are now optimized.

2. Further improve interagency *coordination for incident management*. Regional leaders have intensified activity on this goal since the attacks of September 11, 2001. A regional transportation coordination program, provisionally known as CapCom, received \$2 million in the federal transportation legislation that was approved by Congress in July. The TPB passed amendments to the region's Transportation Improvement Program to include this funding for CapCom. For more on CapCom, see "*Two Major Transportation Projects Approved*," pages 1-2.

3. Identify how projects or proposals support the *regional core and regional activity centers*. As described in the TPB Vision, regional activity centers are intended to be focal points for jobs and housing, and nodes for transportation linkages. At the October 21 board meeting, the TPB was briefed on the extent to which the CLRP supports activity centers. See "*Plan Will Increase Transit Access to Activity Clusters*" on page 1, continuing below.

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development of the CLRP. Goal 2 of the Vision states that the region's transportation system should promote a "healthy regional core and dynamic regional activity centers with a mix of jobs, housing, and services in a walkable environment."

TPB and COG worked together to develop regional activity center maps, which were published in 2002 and will be updated based on the recently adopted Round 7 cooperative forecasts. To simplify the maps and to describe related or companion areas within major transportation corridors, activity centers were grouped into larger "clusters."

The transportation/land use connection

In early 2005, the TPB asked implementing agencies to place a high priority on considering how projects support the regional core and regional activity centers when submitting projects for the CLRP and TIP. (See box above for information about additional TPB priority areas

for 2005.) To help illuminate the relationship between activity centers, planned transportation improvements, and forecast land-use patterns, TPB staff conducted an analysis of the draft 2005 CLRP. The analysis focused on activity clusters, rather than centers, because the clusters are better aligned with the transportation analysis zones used to forecast future land use and travel patterns.

The analysis showed that in 2002, only 11 out of 24 activity clusters had Metrorail stations. By the year 2030, an additional 5 clusters will gain Metrorail or light rail stations, thanks to the extension of Metrorail to Dulles Airport and Loudoun County in Virginia, and construction of the Corridor Cities Transitway along I-270 in Maryland. In both 2002 and 2030, 11 out of 24 clusters have commuter rail stations.

On the other hand, not all rail stations are located in activity clusters. In 2002, 64 out of 83 Metrorail stations were located in activity

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clusters. Most of the rail stations outside activity clusters are located in the eastern half of the District of Columbia and Prince George's County in Maryland. Not enough jobs and housing are located in these areas to qualify as regional activity clusters, but the potential for new transit-oriented development is high. All new Metrorail stations and 16 out of 21 new light rail stations will be located in activity clusters.

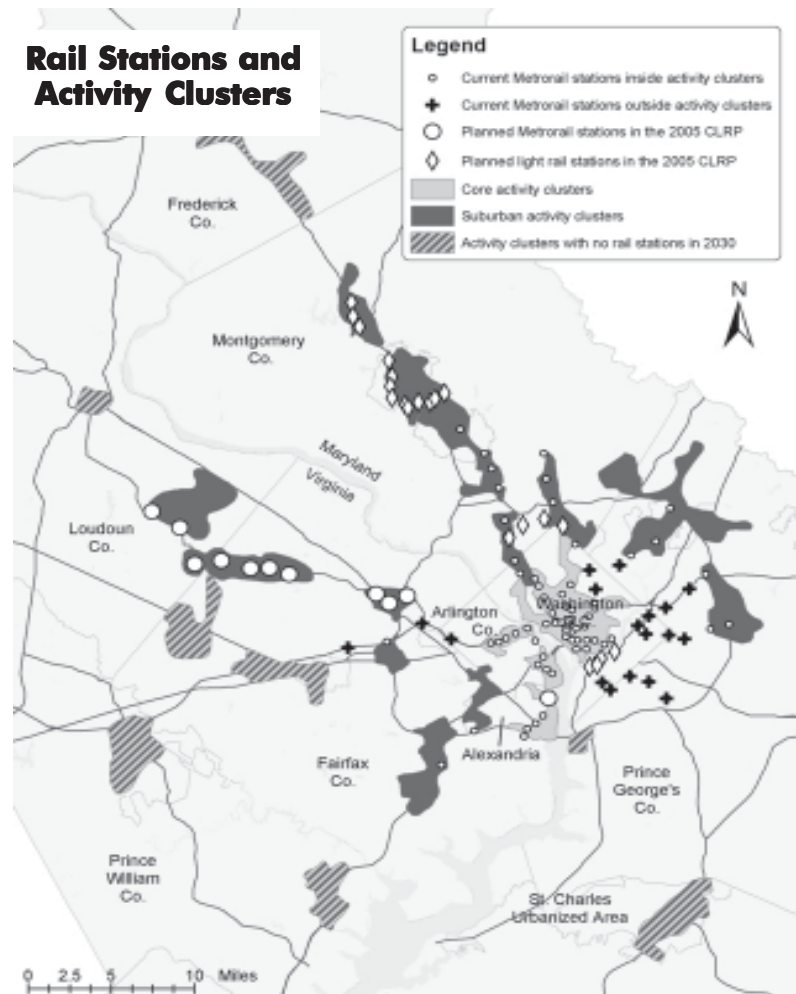
Jobs, housing and commuting

Across the entire region, only 38 percent of households were located in activity clusters in 2002; by 2030, the number will increase to 40 percent. The concentration of jobs in activity clusters will remain steady at 70 percent. Although the absolute number of jobs and households is forecast to increase in core clusters, the regional share of jobs and households in these clusters is forecast to decrease. The fastest growth rates are expected in the suburban activity clusters.

Commuting patterns are expected to reflect these changes in land use. The share of all auto commute trips that go to suburban activity clusters is forecast to increase from 44 percent in 2002 to 47 percent in 2030. The share of auto commute trips that go to areas outside activity clusters is also forecast to increase, from 33 to 35 percent. In contrast, the share of auto commute trips that go to core activity clusters is forecast to decrease from 23 percent to 18 percent. Over 90 percent of transit commute trips go to activity clusters, both now and in future forecasts.

The percent of commuters that take transit is particularly high in the core clusters, at 39 percent in 2002 and increasing to 43 percent in 2030. This transit "mode share" is five times the mode share in suburban clusters and 10 times the mode share for areas outside the clusters.

The analysis also considered how transit commute mode share would change if the transit "constraint" in the CLRP were lifted. Because



The TPB analysis looked at the relationship between activity clusters and the region's long-range transportation plan.

there is not enough funding to accommodate new transit passengers in core areas, transit ridership into and through the core is capped at 2010 levels. If this constraint were lifted, the 2030 transit commute mode share would increase from 43 to 45 percent in core clusters. Across the entire region, transit commute mode share would increase from 16 to 17 percent.

TPB members expressed interest in the analysis, but were concerned that activity clusters are too large to represent the type of compact development that supports walking and transit use. "What we are seeing is that there isn't as good a correlation [between land use and transportation planning] as we would like," said TPB Chair Phil Mendelson.

Mr. Mendelson requested that additional information about the forthcoming update to the regional activity center and cluster maps be presented at a future TPB meeting. ■

Porter Wins National Award

Takoma Park Mayor Kathy Porter was awarded the 2005 Outstanding Elected Official Award by the national Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (AMPO) for her work in transportation planning in the metropolitan Washington area. She has represented Takoma Park for 12 years on the TPB.

Porter was recognized for advocating regional transportation funding solutions, pedestrian safety, and improved transit information as well as actively working with populations that lack access to transportation such as minority communities, low-income residents, and people with disabilities. Last October, she championed Disability Awareness Day, an event where TPB members accompanied people with disabilities from Maryland, Virginia and the District of Columbia and a member of the media to highlight the important role accessible transportation plays on their trips to work.

"Transportation and pedestrian safety are important issues for local governments," Porter said. "I am honored to receive this award and especially pleased to lead the effort to include the voices of minorities, low-income residents and people with disabilities."

In 2000, as TPB Chair, Porter brought together congressional and state lawmakers in a high-profile public forum to raise awareness of the region's transportation funding crisis. Under her leadership, the TPB also created an Access for All Advisory Committee to ensure dialogue between area leaders and communities that can sometimes get left out of transportation planning process.

"I have a great respect for Kathy Porter," said Access for All Advisory Committee member Dr. Raymond Keith. "Her sincerity and commitment provides AFA members hope that we can accomplish something."

TPB Chair Phil Mendelson received the award on Porter's behalf on October 14 during an AMPO conference in Denver. AMPO is a national organization serving the needs of metropolitan planning organizations, such as the TPB. ■

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What if... the Washington region grew differently?

A public forum on alternative land-use and transportation scenarios

Wednesday, November 16, 2005

7:30 -9:00 pm

Piney Branch Elementary School

7510 Maple Ave

Takoma Park, MD

On the evening of November 16, citizens will have a chance to learn how different patterns of growth might affect driving, congestion, and transit use in our region. The TPB's Citizens Advisory Committee is sponsoring the meeting. For more information, contact John Swanson of the TPB staff at 202-962-3295.

November Agenda

The TPB's November agenda will include:

- Appointment of nominating committee for 2006 TPB officers
- Status Report on the financial plan update for the 2006 Constrained Long-Range Plan (CLRP)
- Next steps to identify dedicated funding for the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA)
- Briefing on draft Call for Projects document and schedule for the air quality conformity assessment for the new 2006 Constrained Long-Range Transportation Plan (CLRP) and the FY 2007-12 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
- Briefing on proposed amendments to the FY 2006 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) to address requirements in this year's federal transportation reauthorization legislation
- Briefing on the fine particles (PM2.5) conformity analysis for the 2005 CLRP and FY 2006-11 TIP
- Briefing on the definition of the regional core and regional activity centers and clusters and future updates
- Briefing on the implementation of traffic signal optimization in the region. ■

Calendar of Events

Dates and times subject to change. All meetings are at COG unless otherwise indicated. If you are in need of special assistance to participate in meetings, please call (202) 962-3315 or (202) 962-3213 (TDD). Bicycle racks are located in the parking garage at 777 N. Capitol St., NE (Enter from 1st Street).

November 2005

- 4 TPB Technical Committee (9 am)
- 4 TPB Steering Committee (noon)
- 8 Management, Operations and Intelligent Transportation Systems (MOITS) Policy and Technical Task Forces Joint Meeting (12:30 pm)
- 9 Bike to Work Day Steering Committee (10 am)
- 10 Joint Technical Working Group for the Regional Mobility and Accessibility Study (noon)
- 14 TPB Citizens Advisory Committee (6 pm) *NOTE: This meeting has been rescheduled from original date of November 10*
- 15 Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee (1 pm)
- 15 Commuter Connections Subcommittee (noon)
- 16 Transportation Planning Board (noon)**
- 16 "What if the Washington Region Grew Differently?"**
CAC Public Forum, 7:30-9:00 pm,
Piney Branch Elementary School,
7510 Maple Ave, Takoma Park, MD
- 17 Aviation Technical Subcommittee (10:30 am)
- 18 Travel Forecasting Subcommittee (9:30 am)
- 22 Travel Management Subcommittee (9 am) *tentative*

December 2005

- 2 TPB Technical Committee (9 am)
- 2 TPB Steering Committee (noon)
- 6 Regional Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Marketing Group (10 am)
- 13 Commuter Operations Center Subcommittee (10 am)
- 13 Management, Operations and Intelligent Transportation Systems (MOITS) Policy and Technical Task Forces Joint Meeting (12:30 pm)
- 15 TPB Citizens Advisory Committee (6 pm)
- 16 Joint Technical Working Group for the Regional Mobility and Accessibility Study (noon)
- 21 Transportation Planning Board (noon)**

January 2006

- 4 Telecommuting Ad-Hoc Group (10 am)
- 6 TPB Technical Committee (9 am)
- 6 TPB Steering Committee (noon)
- 10 Management, Operations and Intelligent Transportation Systems (MOITS) Policy and Technical Task Forces Joint Meeting (12:30 pm)
- 11 Bike to Work Day Steering Committee (10 am)
- 12 TPB Citizens Advisory Committee (6 pm)
- 13 Joint Technical Working Group for the Regional Mobility and Accessibility Study (noon)
- 17 Employer Outreach Ad-Hoc Group (10 am)
- 17 Commuter Connections Subcommittee (noon)
- 17 Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee (1 pm)
- 18 Transportation Planning Board (noon)**
- 20 Travel Forecasting Subcommittee (9:30 am)
- 26 Aviation Technical Subcommittee (10:30 am)
- 26 TPB Access for All Advisory Committee (noon)

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