

TPB Votes to Include HOT Lanes and Other Projects in Regional Transportation/Air Quality Analysis

Virginia's proposal to build four high occupancy/toll (HOT) lanes on the Capital Beltway has cleared a key hurdle in the regional transportation planning process.

On April 20, the Transportation Planning Board voted to include the HOT lanes in the regionwide system of projects that will be analyzed for air quality impacts as part of the 2005 amendments to the region's Constrained Long-Range Transportation Plan (CLRP) and the fiscal year 2006-2011 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

The air quality analysis is necessary for the TPB to determine whether the CLRP and TIP will be in conformity with regional air quality

improvement goals—called “mobile emissions budgets”—which are laid out in the regional air quality improvement plan. Any time the CLRP and TIP are changed, the TPB must first

See **2005 CLRP** on page 2

Regional Value Pricing Goals Approved

The TPB on April 20 approved a set of 11 goals to guide the development of a regional system of variably priced lanes. The TPB's Value Pricing Task Force, chaired by

Maryland State Delegate Carol Petzold, developed the goals.

Variably priced lanes, which do not yet exist in the Washington region, are toll facilities on which prices change automatically, based on congestion levels or other factors. As traffic gets heavier, prices typically go up. Variable pricing has become possible in recent years because technologies now permit electronic toll collection and automatic price adjustment.

The goals approved by the TPB promote regional coordination among jurisdictions as they consider variably priced lane projects in the coming years.

See **Value Pricing** on page 4

May 20 is Bike to Work Day



May 20 is Bike to Work Day, according to a proclamation approved by the TPB. Eighteen pitstops across the region will offer breakfast, entertainment and chances to win bicycles and other prizes. Pictured above is TPB Chairman Phil Mendelson speaking at last year's pitstop at Freedom Plaza in Washington. Register for Bike to Work Day at www.waba.org.

Long Range Plan *continued from page 1*

approve an air quality conformity determination.

The air quality conformity analysis includes the projects that were in last year's CLRP and TIP along with any changes proposed for this year.

The proposed 2005 changes for the CLRP included five major projects. The HOT lane project is by far the largest. The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) has proposed adding two new lanes in each direction, between the Springfield Interchange (I-395/495) and Georgetown Pike (VA 193). The project will be 15 miles long.

HOT lanes can be used by solo drivers who pay tolls, by carpoolers who drive for free or at a reduced rate, and by transit buses. If approved, the Beltway project would be the region's first HOT lanes.

The TPB is scheduled to vote in September on whether to approve the amended CLRP and TIP. For information on the CLRP project submissions and the CLRP development process, see www.mwcog.org/transportation. ■

**CLRP/TIP
2005**

Also on the April Agenda

Other items on the TPB's April agenda included:

- *Approval of the scope of work for the air quality conformity assessment for the 2005 Constrained Long-Range Plan (CLRP) and the FY 2006-2011 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).*

This scope of work includes the necessary technical tasks and public comment/interagency consultation requirements to conduct the air quality conformity assessment, to be performed on a schedule leading to adoption of the CLRP and TIP in September 2005.

The most significant change in this year's conformity assessment reflects recent developments in funding for the Metro system. In past years, the TPB's travel forecasting model had assumed that anticipated growth in ridership could not be fully accommodated on Metrorail after 2005 because funding was short

Subscribe Online

Readers of the *TPB News* can now subscribe to get the newsletter and other TPB-related materials online. It's easy! Just visit COG's website at www.mwcog.org/subscribe, enter your name and email address and sign up. Monthly notifications are sent out directing readers to find the *TPB News* on the web. In addition to the newsletter, readers can subscribe to the TPB's meeting materials, Technical Committee materials, and several other COG publications.

for new trains and other system improvements. But last year, the board of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) approved the Metro Matters funding package, which will cover the purchase of 120 new rail cars. This funding means that anticipated new riders for Metro can be accommodated until shortly after 2010.

Ron Kirby, Director of COG's Department of Transportation Planning, emphasized that the Metrorail ridership constraint in the TPB's travel forecasting model was being pushed back but not eliminated. "This means we'll be able to accommodate five more years of growth, essentially. But then the ridership cap goes back into effect at 2010 levels and stays there right throughout 2020 and 2030."

- *Discussion of a draft letter from the TPB to COG's Metropolitan Development Policy Committee (MDPC) commenting on the MDPC's approval of draft Round 7.0 Cooperative Land Use Forecasts for use in the air quality conformity analysis of the 2005 CLRP and FY 2006-2011 TIP.*

The Cooperative Forecasts provide the land use inputs for the TPB's analysis of the CLRP and TIP, including the air quality conformity assessment. The Cooperative Forecasts are developed through the MDPC, which is a policy committee at the Council of Governments separate from the TPB.

In March, the TPB directed staff to draft a letter to the MDPC expressing concerns about the anticipated shortfall in housing within the region relative to projected new jobs. At the April meeting, TPB members said they would like to strengthen the draft letter, which staff had written, and bring this item back to the board for attention at a future meeting. ■

Street Smart Funding Process Approved

The TPB on April 20 approved a process for regular annual funding for the *Street Smart* pedestrian and bicycle safety campaign.

The board agreed that it would annually request that its local government member jurisdictions voluntarily contribute an amount equal to five cents per capita. These contributions, along with anticipated federal monies provided through the region's three state departments of transportation, would fund the *Street Smart* program at approximately \$500,000 per year. Until now, the campaign has been funded on an ad-hoc, year-to-year basis.

Experiences from well-known behavior modification campaigns – such as those advocating seat belt use or stigmatizing drunk driving – show that persistence is key to success. Campaigns often must repeat the same messages for years before significant shifts occur in public attitudes and behaviors. But sustaining a message requires sustained financial support.

Predictable funding for *Street Smart* will allow staff to plan ahead and potentially expand the program. It will also increase coordination with other essential safety efforts, including police enforcement of pedestrian safety laws.

At the April TPB meeting, Takoma Park Mayor Kathy Porter emphasized the importance of getting law enforcement involved in future campaigns. "People already know they're not supposed to hit pedestrians, but unless they feel they're going to get a ticket by going through a crosswalk, the campaign won't have as much influence on their behavior," she said.

The *Street Smart* campaign consists of a one-month wave of radio, transit and print advertising. The campaign has been designed to



The regional *Street Smart* pedestrian and bicycle safety campaign includes radio, transit and print advertising. The third wave of the campaign will begin this June.

obtain the "biggest bang for the buck" by reaching out to young male drivers, the primary offenders in pedestrian accidents. Awareness of the *Street Smart* messages rose by 22 percentage points among male drivers, aged 18 to 34, after the last campaign in April 2004.

Approximately 24 percent of traffic fatalities in the Washington region are pedestrians or bicyclists. Once considered a largely urban issue, pedestrian safety is now recognized as a major suburban problem as well.

The region's jurisdictions decided in 2002 to launch the *Street Smart* campaign as a coordinated regional effort to achieve economies of scale in the regional media market. The third, month-long wave of advertising is scheduled for June 2005. ■

This newsletter is produced by John Swanson
MWCOC, 777 North Capitol St, NE, Suite 300
Washington, D.C. 20002-4239
202-962-3295; jswanson@mwcog.org
"TPB News" at www.mwcog.org/transportation

Value Pricing *continued from page 1*

The significance of public transit is stressed in a number of the goals, including goal 5, which states that "transit bus service should be an integral part of a system of variably priced lanes."

At its meeting on April 20, TPB members agreed that transit is important, but disagreed on whether the goals should explicitly state that toll profits should be directed to transit.

TPB Chairman Phil Mendelson introduced an amendment to change Goal 11 to specify that if variably priced lanes are profitable, "the surplus should be directed" to transit.

As drafted, Goal 11 stated that "should toll lanes operate at a revenue surplus, consideration should be given to enhancing transit services." Jo Anne Sorenson of the Virginia Department of Transportation stressed the importance of maintaining the flexibility provided in this drafted language.

Chairman Mendelson's amendment was defeated in a vote of 14-10 and the goals were approved without change. Christopher Zimmerman of the Arlington County Board and Eric Olsen of the College Park City Council voted against the final approval.

The Intercounty Connector in Maryland, which in 2004 was added to the TPB's Constrained Long-Range Plan (CLRP), is planned as a variably

Carville and Buchanan Make A Commuter Connection



Political pundits James Carville and Pat Buchanan agreed to share a ride into D.C. on April 20 as part of the kickoff to a new campaign sponsored by Commuter Connections and Gevalia Kaffee. Riding in from a Loudoun County Park and Ride location, Carville and Buchanan said that no matter how much they disagree on politics, they would rather carpool than face Washington traffic alone.

priced toll facility. This year, the Virginia Department of Transportation submitted a new project for the CLRP to widen the Beltway with variably priced high occupancy/toll (HOT) lanes.

The complete text of the goals is provided on the following page. ■

TPB Alphabet Soup

CAC	- Citizens Advisory Committee
CLRP	- Constrained Long-Range Plan
COG	- Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
DDOT	- District Department of Transportation
FHWA	- Federal Highway Administration
FTA	- Federal Transit Administration
HOT lanes	- High Occupancy/Toll lanes
MDOT	- Maryland Department of Transportation
MWAQC	- Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee
TIP	- Transportation Improvement Program
TPB	- Transportation Planning Board
VDOT	- Virginia Department of Transportation
WMATA	- Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

May Agenda

The TPB's May agenda is expected to include:

- Approval of a letter to COG's Metropolitan Development Policy Committee (MDPC) regarding the Round 7.0 Cooperative Forecasts.
- Endorsement of the WMATA backup operations control center for FY 2005 Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) funding and briefing on other transportation project submissions for UASI funding.
- Briefing on the draft FY 2006 Commuter Connections Work Program.
- Briefing on the plan for coordinating the 2006 Street Smart campaign with law enforcement.
- Update on actions to improve transportation coordination and communications during incidents.
- Briefing on the work plan for the financial analysis for the 2006 CLRP update. ■

Goals for a Regional System of Variably-Priced Lanes

TPB Task Force on Value Pricing for Transportation

Approved by the Transportation Planning Board, April 20, 2005

As the Washington region moves forward with plans to develop variably-priced lanes, it is anticipated that a system of variably-priced lanes will be implemented in phases, likely with one corridor or segment at a time. The following goals can help guide the regional development of variably-priced lanes that work together as a multi-modal system, while addressing the special policy and operational issues raised by the multi-jurisdictional nature of this area.

1. Operations, enforcement, reciprocity, technology, and toll-setting policies should be coordinated to ensure seamless connections between jurisdictional boundaries. The region should explore options for accommodating different eligibility requirements in different parts of the system of variably-priced lanes without inconvenience to the users.
2. The variably-priced lanes should be managed so that reasonably free-flowing conditions are maintained.
3. Electronic toll collection devices should be integrated and interoperable among the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia, and should work with other multi-state electronic toll collection systems, such as E-Z PassSM.
4. To ensure safety and to maintain speeds of variably-priced lanes on high-speed facilities, one lane with a wide shoulder consistent with applicable FHWA guidelines should be provided at a minimum. Optimally, two lanes should be provided in each direction (or two lanes in the peak direction by means of reversible lanes) where possible.
5. Given the significant peak-hour congestion in the Washington area, transit bus service should be an integral part of a system of variably-priced lanes, beginning with project planning and design, in order to move the maximum number of people, not just the maximum number of vehicles.
6. Transit buses should have reasonably free-flowing and direct access to variably-priced lanes from major activity centers, key rail stations, and park-and-ride lots, so that transit buses do not have to cross several congested general purpose lanes.
7. Transit buses using the variably-priced lanes should have clearly designated and accessible stops at activity centers or park-and-ride lots, and signal priority or dedicated bus lanes to ensure efficient access to and from activity centers.
8. The region urges that the Congress and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) recognize variably-priced lanes as fixed guideway miles so that federal transit funding does not decrease as a result of implementing variably-priced lanes.
9. The Washington region currently has approximately 200 miles of HOV lanes and a significant number of carpoolers, vanpoolers and other HOV-eligible vehicles. If the introduction of variably-priced lanes changes the eligibility policies for use of existing HOV facilities, transitional policies and sunset provisions should be set and clearly stated for all the users.
10. As individual phases of a system of variably-priced lanes are implemented, users of the lanes should be able to make connections throughout the region with minimal inconvenience or disruption.
11. Toll revenues from variably-priced lane projects may finance construction, service debt, and pay for operation and maintenance of the priced lanes. Should toll lanes operate at a revenue surplus, consideration should be given to enhancing transit services.

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).

May 2005

- 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 (1:30 pm)
- 12 TPB Citizens Advisory Committee (6 pm)
- 13 Joint Technical Working Group for the Regional Mobility and Accessibility Study (noon)
- 17 Commuter Connections Subcommittee (noon)
- 17 Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee (1 pm)
- 18 Transportation Planning Board (noon)**
- 20 Travel Forecasting Subcommittee (9:30 am)
- 20 TPB Access for All Advisory Committee (noon)
- 24 Travel Management Subcommittee (9 am) *tentative*
- 24 "Sixteenth Annual Public Transit Forum" (11 am-1:30 pm)
- 26 Aviation Technical Subcommittee (10:30 am)

June 2005

- 3 TPB Technical Committee (9 am)
- 3 TPB Steering Committee (noon)
- 7 Regional Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Marketing Group (10 am)
- 9 COG Geographic Information Systems Committee (1 pm)
- 9 TPB Citizens Advisory Committee (6 pm)
- 10 Joint Technical Working Group for the Regional Mobility and Accessibility Study (noon)
- 14 Management, Operations and Intelligent Transportation Systems (MOITS) Policy and Technical Task Forces Joint Meeting (1:30 pm)
- 15 Transportation Planning Board (noon)**
- 21 Travel Management Subcommittee (9 am) *tentative*
- 21 Commuter Operations Subcommittee (10 am)
- 21 Transportation Management Association (TMA) Advisory Group (noon)

July 2005

- 1 TPB Technical Committee (9 am)
- 1 TPB Steering Committee (noon)
- 6 Telecommuting Ad-Hoc Group (10 am)
- 12 Management, Operations and Intelligent Transportation Systems (MOITS) Policy and Technical Task Forces Joint Meeting (1:30 pm)
- 14 TPB Citizens Advisory Committee (6 pm)
- 15 Joint Technical Working Group for the Regional Mobility and Accessibility Study (noon)
- 19 Employer Outreach Ad-Hoc Group (10 am)
- 19 Commuter Connections Subcommittee (noon)
- 19 Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee (1 pm)
- 20 Transportation Planning Board (noon)**
- 22 Travel Forecasting Subcommittee (9:30 am)
- 22 TPB Access for All Subcommittee (noon)
- 28 Aviation Technical Subcommittee (10:30 am)

Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
 777 North Capitol Street, N.E., Suite 300
 Washington, D.C. 20002-4239

FIRST CLASS MAIL
 U.S. Postage Paid
 Washington, D.C.
 Permit #9770