On February 18, the TPB approved six major new projects or changes to existing projects to include in a federally required air quality analysis of the 2015 update to the region’s Constrained Long-Range Transportation Plan (CLRP). The analysis, which is scheduled to take place this summer, is required before the projects can be considered for final inclusion in the plan in October.

Among the major new projects slated for inclusion in the 2015 CLRP update is a set of proposals to add express toll lanes to a 35-mile stretch of I-66, from Haymarket in Prince William County to a location just shy of the Potomac River in Arlington. The proposals include plans for a new rapid bus service to operate on the express lanes, which will see tolls set at rates high enough to ensure free-flowing traffic. They also include numerous

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(Continued on page 3)

At the TPB’s February 18 meeting, several Board members asked for more information and greater assurances from the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) related to a set of proposals to add express toll lanes to I-66 in Northern Virginia.

The Board requested that additional information and assurances be provided before it is asked to approve the addition of the I-66 Express Lane projects to the region's Constrained Long-Range Transportation Plan (CLRP) in October.

Chief among the concerns was the need for more details on the enhancements to existing commuter and local bus routes, expanded park-and-ride lots to support carpooling and vanpooling, and improvements to bicycle and pedestrian trails and facilities promised as part of the multi-modal I-66 Express Lane projects.

In January, Linda Smyth, who represents Fairfax County, and Jay Fisette, who represents Arlington County, both asked why details of the proposed multimodal improvements were not mentioned in the proposal.

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Smyth also raised concerns about the impacts that construction of the project would have on major north-south arterials that cross the highway, noting that required bridge and overpass replacements could be highly disruptive to vehicle traffic as well as bicyclists and pedestrians.

The Board members’ concerns were echoed in nearly 200 comments the TPB received in a 30-day public comment period on the proposals that ended February 14. Many of the comments—from nearby homeowners, commuters who travel on the corridor, and advocacy organizations representing various interests—similarly sought greater detail about the multimodal improvements and commitments from VDOT that they would be made.

At the TPB’s meeting on February 18, VDOT presented the Board with updated proposals that included schematics illustrating the new commuter-oriented and rapid bus services that the agency envisions for the corridor by 2040. The agency also outlined its plans to develop further project details in coming months with the help of stakeholder advisory groups made up of technical staff from a variety of local, state, regional, and federal agencies with interests in the corridor. One group will be focused on working out the details of proposed enhancements outside the Beltway, especially new bus services, while the other will be focused on improvements inside the Beltway, especially bicycle and pedestrian improvements.

Helen Cuervo, who spoke on behalf of VDOT during the meeting, also said that the agency is taking seriously the concerns raised by Smyth and others about the impacts of construction not only on north-south routes and bicycle and pedestrian facilities, but also on nearby homeowners and stormwater management infrastructure.

Fisette commended VDOT for its work since January to provide additional details about the multimodal aspects of the proposals. “I think this information is a significant improvement,” he said. “I know there’s going to be some significant work in the next six months to refine that information even further, but the fact that it’s here now in the project description gives many people I know some semblance of comfort,” he added.

Smyth and another Fairfax County representative, Catherine Hudgins, also thanked VDOT for its work to provide additional information, and for its efforts to reach out to local elected officials in recent weeks to respond to their concerns about the projects.

But both Board members reiterated their interest in having more details about the projects and greater assurances from VDOT before the Board considers the proposals for final approval and inclusion in the CLRP in October.

“I expect, in the months before we actually adopt this, to see those refinements that you have talked about,” Smyth said. “I’m more than happy to work with you on it, but we need to get closer to where we know this has no more impact than is absolutely necessary.”

Hudgins echoed Smyth’s sentiment. “When we come back in the fall, I expect to have a greater sense of comfort with this project,” she said. “We’ve heard ‘multimodal’ before and have ended up with a different animal.”

Before the Board finished discussing the proposals and voted to include them in an air

(Continued on page 5)
bicycle and pedestrian improvements in the corridor.

The other major new project approved on February 18 is a plan by the District of Columbia to expand its dedicated bike-lane network by removing roadway capacity currently serving motor vehicles. The lane-reduction proposal calls for removing approximately nine lane-miles of capacity on ten different road segments to create dedicated space for bicycle traffic.

Also approved for inclusion in the air quality analysis is the removal of three planned streetcar projects—the Columbia Pike and Crystal City streetcars in Virginia, and a spur connecting the District’s H Street NE/Benning Road streetcar line to the Minnesota Avenue Metrorail station.

These and hundreds more projects already in the CLRP will now undergo a federally required air quality conformity analysis to determine whether future vehicle emissions under the CLRP will remain below approved regional limits known as “emissions budgets.” The analysis uses forecasts of future population and job growth patterns and the planned system of roadways and transit together with anticipated changes in vehicle and fuel technology to predict future emissions.

In September, the results of the analysis as well as a final draft of the 2015 CLRP, will be available for another round of public comment before final approval by the TPB in October.

Major Additions and Changes Proposed for the 2015 CLRP Update

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Dedicated Bicycle Lanes, Citywide
Reduce traffic lanes to create space for nine miles of new dedicated bicycle lanes.
Complete: 2015 Cost: $470,000
- 4th St. SW from M St. to P St.
- 6th St. NE from Florida Ave. to K St.
- 12th St. NW from Pennsylvania Ave. to Massachusetts Ave.
- 14th St. NW from Florida Ave. to Columbia Rd.
- Brentwood Pkwy. NE from 6th St. to 9th St.
- Florida Ave. from 2nd St. to West Virginia Ave.
- New Jersey Ave. NW from H St. to Louisiana Ave.
- Pennsylvania Ave. NW from 17th St to 29th St.
- Wheeler Rd. SE from Alabama Ave. to Southern Ave.

Removal of Benning Road Streetcar Spur Project
The 2014 Update to the CLRP included the addition of a streetcar spur line running from Benning Road along Minnesota Avenue to the Minnesota Avenue Metrorail Station. This project is being withdrawn from the CLRP.

VIRGINIA

I-66 Corridor Improvements inside the Capital Beltway
U.S. Route 29 in Rosslyn to I-495
Length: 10 miles
Complete: 2017 (tolling, multi-modal) 2040 (widening)
Cost: $350 million

I-66 Corridor Improvements outside the Capital Beltway
I-495 to U.S. Route 15 in Prince William County
Length: 25 miles
Complete: 2022 Cost: $2-3 billion

Removal of Columbia Pike Streetcar and Crystal City Streetcar projects
The Columbia Pike Streetcar project between Skyline Center and Pentagon City was added to the CLRP in 2008 and was scheduled to be complete in 2017. The Crystal City Streetcar from the Pentagon City Metrorail Station to Four Mile Run at the Alexandria city line was added in 2011 and was projected to be complete by 2019. Both projects are proposed for removal.

For more information on the proposed major changes for the 2015 CLRP visit:
TPB Honors Jerry Miller as He Retires After 25 Years of Service

At its February 18 meeting, the TPB took a moment to acknowledge the retirement of long-time senior staffer Jerry Miller, who spent more than 25 years serving the TPB and the region. Board Chair Phil Mendelson presented Miller with a plaque and honorary gavel, and thanked him for his contributions.

Miller joined the staff of the TPB in 1989, taking charge of a wide portfolio of responsibilities that included developing and managing the TPB’s annual work plan and budget, overseeing annual updates to the region’s constrained long-range transportation plan, and leading periodic analyses of available funding for transportation.

Miller also oversaw the administration of several federal and regional grant programs, supervised the TPB’s public participation activities, and coordinated with other COG departments on cross-disciplinary projects ranging from integrated transportation and land-use scenario planning to identifying regional greenhouse gas reduction strategies.

In his 25 years, Miller also orchestrated more than 200 monthly meetings of both the TPB and the TPB’s Technical Committee, guiding high-level discussion and decision-making from behind the scenes.

Of all of Miller’s contributions, one thing stands out most. Following the sudden and unexpected death of Ron Kirby in 2013, Miller stepped up to assume many of the duties that had belonged to the long-time director. He shared those responsibilities with another senior TPB staffer, Bob Griffiths.

At the TPB meeting on February 18, Vice-Chair Timothy Lovain thanked Miller for stepping up in Kirby’s absence and for helping the TPB get through a difficult time.

Draft Work Programs for FY 2016 Presented

At the February 18 Board meeting, TPB staff presented drafts of the annual work programs and budgets for the TPB and for the TPB’s Commuter Connections program for FY 2016.

The TPB’s federally required work program, known as the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), outlines planned work activities in six major areas, including development of the CLRP and TIP, modeling future travel demand, and providing technical assistance to the state departments of transportation and WMATA.

The total proposed UPWP budget for FY 2016 is $13.3 million.

The Commuter Connections Work Program (CCWP) outlines $5.8 million in spending on the Commuter Connections Operations Center, the Guaranteed Ride Home Program, and mass marketing and employer outreach, among other activities.

Both draft work programs will be considered for approval by the TPB at its next meeting on March 18.
I-66 EXPRESS LANES PROPOSAL

(Continued from page 2)

quality analysis that is required before they can be added to the plan later this year, Fisette sought written commitments from VDOT on two issues related to the projects.

One was to ensure that toll revenues collected on the express lanes inside the Beltway—which the state, rather than a private firm, will operate—would be dedicated to multimodal improvements in or directly serving the corridor. VDOT agreed to amend the official descriptions for the projects to include such a guarantee.

Fisette also sought a commitment from VDOT to study the effectiveness of the multimodal improvements planned for the corridor once they’ve been implemented and before the agency moves forward with widening a portion of the highway inside the Beltway, which was also included as part of the tolling proposal. Fisette proposed and the Board adopted language requiring that VDOT conduct the study and report back to the TPB before moving ahead with the widening project.

2015 CLRP Schedule

For more information on the 2015 CLRP update, visit: www.mwcog.org/CLRP2015.

UPCOMING MARCH AGENDA ITEMS

The February TPB meeting is expected to include the following items:

- Approval of Amendment to the FY 2015 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and Approval of FY 2015 UPWP Carryover Funding to FY 2016
- Approval of FY 2016 Unified Planning Work Program
- Approval of FY 2016 Commuter Connections Work Program (CCWP)
- Approval of an Amendment to Update Projects and Funding in the District of Columbia Section of the FY 2015-2020 TIP
- Briefing on the COG Cooperative Forecasting Process
- Briefing on the Implementation of the TPB Regional Priority Bus Project under the Transportation Investments Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) Program
- Briefing on Regional Bus Staging, Layover, and Parking Location Study

OTHER FEBRUARY AGENDA ITEMS

The TPB’s February 18 meeting also included the following items:

- Notice of Proposed Amendment to Update Projects and Funding in the District of Columbia Section of the FY 2015-2020 TIP

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### Calendar of Events

All meetings are at COG unless otherwise indicated. If you are in need of special assistance to participate in meetings, please call (202) 962-3315 or (202) 962-3213 (TDD). Bicycle racks are located in the parking garage at 777 North Capitol St., NE (Enter from First St., NE).

#### March 2015

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<td>TPB Technical Committee (9 am)</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>TPB Steering Committee (noon)</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Bike to Work Day Steering Committee (10 am)</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Car Free Day Steering Committee (11:30 am)</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Freight Subcommittee (1 pm)</td>
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<td>Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee (1 pm)</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>Regional TDM Marketing Group Meeting (2 pm)</td>
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<td>Transportation Planning Board (noon)</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>Travel Forecasting Subcommittee (9:30 am)</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>Regional Public Transportation Subcommittee (noon)</td>
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<td>26</td>
<td>Aviation Technical Subcommittee (10:30 am)</td>
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Dates and times subject to change.

Please visit our website at www.mwcog.org for up-to-date information.

This document is available in alternative formats upon request. Please contact Bryan Hayes at (202) 962-3273 or bhayes@mwcog.org, or (202) 962-3213 (TDD). Please allow seven working days for preparation of material.