



UPCOMING MEETINGS
AND ITEMS OF
INTEREST:

TPB Meeting, May 18:

- Approval of an Amendment to the 2010 CLRP to Revise the Financial Plan for the Purple Line
- Report on the TPB Priorities Plan Scoping Task Force

More information may be found at:
www.mwcog.org/transportation

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TPB news

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MAY 2011

BIKE TO WORK DAY: MAY 20, 2011

At the April 20 meeting of the Transportation Planning Board (TPB), TPB Chair Muriel Bowser signed a proclamation establishing May 20 as Bike to Work Day in the Metropolitan Washington Region.

The proclamation asserts that bicycle commuting is an effective means to improve air quality, reduce traffic congestion, and conserve energy. Bicycle commuting benefits both employees and employers through better employee health and fitness, and reduced commuting and parking costs. It is noted on the proclamation that increasing numbers of employers have installed bicycle parking and shower facilities to help encourage employees to commute by bicycle. The proclamation also refers to Capital Bike-



Chair Bowser signs the 2011 Bike to Work Day Proclamation, held by Commuter Connections Director Nick Ramfos (left) and WABA Staff Greg Billing.

share, a regional bike sharing system that has been rolled out in the District and Arlington and is poised for expansion.

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THE FY 2011 FEDERAL BUDGET AND FUTURE PROSPECTS

After nationwide fear of a government shut-down, Congress finally passed a FY 2011 budget, enacted on April 15, 2011. This budget appropriates funding for the US Department of Transportation (US DOT), and therefore has implications for the federal surface transportation program around the country, including here in the National Capital Region. The TPB received a briefing on the budget and other related federal issues at its April meeting.

The Continuing Appropriations Act, or Public Law 112-10, includes some steep spending cuts to the federal transportation

program. For instance, \$943 million in one-time FY 2010 highway appropriations from the general fund were not repeated in FY 2011, and a \$2.9 billion cut to the high speed rail program renders the program void of funding in FY 2011. Amtrak capital grants were reduced by \$130 million, and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) New Starts funding – the program which funds major capital investments for projects such as the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project Extension – was cut by \$400 million. The FTA Greenhouse Gas Energy Reduction program was cut by \$25 million, leaving \$50 million

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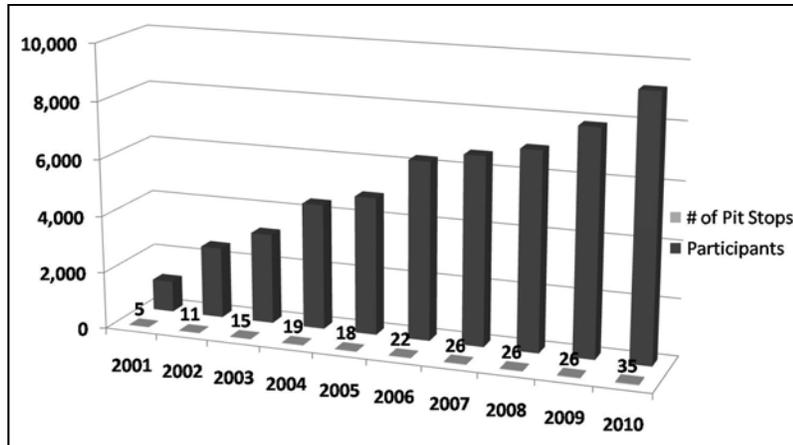
BIKE TO WORK DAY

“This is one of the most exciting events that we do in the region. This region has a huge demand for bicycling as a commuting mode.”

**- Karina Ricks,
District Department
of Transportation**

(Continued from page 1)

Bike to Work Day has been held annually in the Washington metropolitan region with a main rallying point or “Pit Stop” in downtown DC for more than a decade. In September 2000, the TPB’s Commuter Connections program partnered with the Washington Area Bicyclist Association (WABA) to form a regional Bike to Work Day Steering Committee that examined the feasibility of adding additional Bike to Work Day Pit Stops throughout the region, thus creating greater awareness of using cycling to work as a viable commuting alternative. Since that first joint effort on Bike to Work Day in 2001, registration for the event has grown and more pit stops have been added every year. From 1,000 participants at five pit stops in 2001, it is expected that on May 20, 2011, over 10,000 commuters will participate at 49 pit stops throughout the region.



The chart above shows the number of people participating in Bike to Work Day since its inception, as well as the number of Pit Stops available each year.

Every three years, Commuter Connections administers a survey to all participants in the Bike to Work Day event. The purpose of the survey is to measure the impacts of event participation and assess the use of bicycles for commute travel before and after the event. The survey conducted after the 2010 Bike to Work Day showed that it was the first year of participating in the event for 32 percent of respondents. Seventeen percent of respondents never commuted by bike before participating in Bike

to Work Day and ten percent started bicycling to work after the event. Karina Ricks of the District Department of Transportation said that Bike to Work Day “is a great way to get people introduced to bicycling as a viable, efficient, fun way to get to work, and hopefully will result in increasing numbers in that mode split.”

TPB Chair Bowser acknowledged the growth of the event over recent years and issued a challenge to fellow TPB members: “I want to congratulate everybody who’s been involved, and also issue a challenge to all the members. If you can be involved in some way, even if it is just going to a pit stop in your jurisdictions or getting the word out to your networks about Bike to Work Day, I know that’s helpful.” Carol Krimm of the City of Frederick said that for the 2010 Bike to Work Day, “the mayor and all five members of the Board of Aldermen participated in Bike to Work Day. It was a big event.” Highlighting that it is possible to bike for a portion of a participant’s commute, Krimm added that, “we biked from City Hall to our MARC train station.”

Participants can get information about Bike to Work Day on Twitter and Facebook, and register for the event at www.waba.org. Bike to Work Day is free and open to all commuters in the Washington region. ♦

OTHER APRIL AGENDA ITEMS

The TPB’s April 20 meeting also included the following item:

- Approval of an Amendment to the FY 2011-2016 TIP to Include the WMATA FY 2012 Capital Improvement Program.

Information and materials for the monthly TPB meeting are posted on the TPB website one week prior to the meeting: www.mwcog.org/transportation/tpb. ♦

OVERVIEW OF REGIONAL BUS PROJECTS

On April 20, the TPB received a briefing on regional bus priority treatments and rapid bus projects ongoing throughout the region.

Rapid bus services and bus priority would provide the Washington metropolitan region with the opportunity to improve current bus operations and provide customers with fast, high-quality transit services. Improved bus speeds and schedule reliability would encourage increased ridership through improved quality of service offered to customers. Improved speeds and reliability would also result in cost savings through more efficient bus operation.

While the benefits are many, it is often challenging to implement rapid bus or bus priority treatments on an

existing road network because there are significant trade-offs involved. Bus-only lanes, queue jumps, and improved bus stops or stations require dedicated roadway space, while transit signal priority takes time from current signal cycles and the competing needs of parallel and intersecting vehicle traffic and pedestrian crossings.

Staff provided an update on the status of the \$59 million TIGER transportation stimulus funding received by the TPB in December 2010. The first of 42 project activities is complete: the installation of security cameras onboard 15 PRTC Buses. Additionally, under a separate initiative, WMATA has begun implementation of the Priority Corridor Network (PCN) with express services progressively introduced on major transit corridors. ♦

REGIONAL INCIDENT RESPONSE PLAN

At the April 20 TPB Meeting, the Board received a briefing from COG Executive Director David Robertson on the elements of COG's Major Regional Incident Response Action Plan. On March 9, the COG Board of Directors approved the Action Plan, the formation of a steering committee, and an eight-month schedule for identifying and seeking improvements to regional incident management arising from events such as the January 26 snow/ice event.

Public officials, business leaders and area residents have voiced concern with preparedness and response to the January 26 snow/ice storm that left thousands without electric power and triggered hours-long commutes for many drivers. Several of COG's policy boards and committees will provide input on this issue, including the Chief Administrative Officers Committee (CAOs),

the TPB, and the National Capital Region Emergency Preparedness Council (EPC). COG staff has also compiled initial information on local and regional actions associated with the January 26 snow event.

There are four focus areas in the Action Plan:

- Improve Real-Time Information or Situational Awareness Among Local, State and Federal Government Agencies with Operational Authority or Responsibilities.
- Improve Real-Time Information to the Media and the Public.
- Improve Regional Coordination.
- Strengthen and Focus Decision-Making.

Chair Bowser asked that a member of the TPB be invited to serve on the steering committee to ensure that the regional transportation perspective is included. ♦

UPCOMING MAY AGENDA ITEMS

The TPB's May 18 agenda is expected to include the following items:

- Approval of an Amendment to the 2010 Constrained Long Range Transportation Plan (CLRP) to Revise the Financial Plan for the Purple Line.
- Report on the TPB Priorities Plan Scoping Task Force.

- Briefing on the Federal Certification Report for the TPB Transportation Planning Process .
- Briefing on Regional Priority Bus Projects.

Information and materials for the monthly TPB meeting are posted on the TPB website one week prior to the meeting: www.mwcog.org/transportation/tpb. ♦

TPB HONORS CLI PARTICIPANTS



Participants from the TPB's Community Leadership Institute (left to right): Monika Kerdeman, Mark Scheufler, Amanda Campbell, Chair Bowser, Brian Winterhalter, Gary Ponder, and Stu Whitaker.

On April 20, the Board recognized several participants from the TPB's Community Leadership Institute (CLI). The CLI is a series of two half-day workshops for community leaders and activists designed to enhance their ability to get involved in transportation decision-making whenever and wherever it occurs. Twenty-two participants were involved in the most recent session, which was held on March 31 and April 2, and marked the eighth edition of the CLI since its inception. For more information about the CLI, please visit www.mwcog.org/transportation/activities/cli/ ♦

FEDERAL FUNDS

(Continued from page 1)

remaining, and \$630 million in unused pre-1999 earmark funds were rescinded from the budget altogether. Finally, the budget also rescinded \$2.5 billion in highway contract authority formula apportionments, which limits obligations to federal-aid highway programs by canceling unused balances of previously authorized funds.

In spite of these reductions, the future of infrastructure funding is not as bleak as it might seem. One victory that came out of the budget's passage is significant funding designated for the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery program – commonly known as the competitive TIGER program – which in February 2010 awarded the TPB with \$59 million for a regional priority bus network. Though the TIGER program was reduced by 12 percent from the FY 2010 level – from \$600 million to \$528 million – this competitive grant program remains a top priority for Senator Murray (D-WA), who is Chair of the Senate Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development. Since the budget's passage, industry experts have speculated that an announcement for a TIGER III program could be released as early as this summer.

With the passage of the FY 2011 budget, the big transportation hurdle now facing Congress is the pending expiration of the federal surface transportation authorizing legislation. The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act – A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) originally expired on September 30, 2009, but has been extended six times since that date. The most recent extension, known as the Surface Transportation Extension Act of 2011 continues the legislation through September 30, 2011 at its baseline spending levels. Stretching SAFETEA-LU through September will allow Congress additional time to develop a more comprehensive surface transportation authorization bill to replace SAFETEA-LU.

While there is a strong sense that the key federal players, such as USDOT Secretary Ray LaHood and Congressman John Mica, who is the Chair of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, all share an interest in passing new authorizing legislation this year, significant challenges lie ahead. The most notable of these challenges is the funding crisis that has contributed to the consistent underinvestment in the nation's infrastructure. In the wake of the faltering economy, new legislation must address methods to pay for infrastructure investment. Yet so far, high-level discussions about funding have

remained inconclusive. For instance, while the administration's FY 2012 budget request to Congress suggests strong support for \$556 billion in transportation funding over the next six years through legislation that would include program consolidation, competitive grant programs, and a national infrastructure bank, the administration has rejected increasing the gas tax as a way to raise revenues for infrastructure spending.

The TPB welcomed this briefing on federal activities, and followed up with significant conversation, particularly about the opportunities that exist with a new TIGER solicitation. Jonathan Way of Manassas reminded the TPB that the TIGER I program was awarded with 100 percent federal funding, but that TIGER II was structured to be funded with an 80 percent federal contribution and a 20 percent local

match. Ron Kirby, Director of Transportation Planning at COG, confirmed that a TIGER III program would probably mirror the funding structure of TIGER II, and indicated that projects submitted with a higher local match would likely be viewed more favorably by USDOT. He also reminded the TPB that the overriding goal of the TIGER program is to invest in infrastructure projects that will have a significant impact on the nation, a metropolitan area, or a region.

At the conclusion of the briefing, TPB Chair Muriel Bowser encouraged the TPB and TPB staff to seize the pending TIGER III opportunity by continuing to develop and articulate a comprehensive set of transportation priorities for the region: "Over the next several weeks, I know that [we'll] be concentrating on a kind of roadmap for how we might respond" to the TIGER solicitation. ♦

TPB HOSTS FIRST REGIONAL FREIGHT FORUM

On Wednesday, April 27, the TPB hosted the Regional Freight Forum, which brought together industry stakeholders and public agency experts.

The Forum featured three panels of freight industry and public agency experts focusing on national and regional demand forecasts, the status of the regional freight system, and how to prioritize freight investments in the Washington region and throughout the Mid-Atlantic.

Former US Deputy Secretary of Transportation Mortimer Downey (right) delivered a luncheon presentation on the importance of freight movement. Downey is currently the Chairman of the Coalition for America's Gateways and Trade Corridors.

TPB'S TLC PROGRAM

The TPB has issued a solicitation for technical assistance applications for the FY 2012 Transportation/Land-Use Connections (TLC) Program. The TLC Program provides support to local governments in the Metropolitan Washington region as they work to improve transportation and land use coordination. Through the program, the TPB provides communities with technical assistance to catalyze or enhance planning efforts. Any member jurisdiction of the TPB is eligible to apply. Applications are due May 18. Please visit www.mwcog.org/tlc for more information. ♦

The TPB Freight Subcommittee will develop a Summary Report based on the Freight Forum discussions for presentation to the TPB. ♦



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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 N. Capitol St., N.E. (Enter from 1st St., N.E.).

May 2011

- 6 TPB Technical Committee (9 am)
- 6 TPB Steering Committee (noon)
- 10 Management, Operations and Intelligent Transportation Systems (MOITS) Policy Task Force and Technical Subcommittee Joint Meeting (12:30 pm)
- 11 Bike to Work Day Steering Committee (10 am)
- 11 Car Free Day Steering Committee (11:30 am)
- 12 Freight Subcommittee (1 pm)
- 12 TPB Citizens Advisory Committee (6 pm)
- 17 Commuter Connections Subcommittee (noon)
- 17 Bicycle & Pedestrian Subcommittee (1 pm)
- 18 Transportation Planning Board (noon)**
- 19 Aviation Technical Subcommittee (10:30 am)
- 20 Travel Forecasting Subcommittee (9:30 am)
- 24 Annual Public Transit Forum (11 am)

June 2011

- 3 TPB Technical Committee (9 am)
- 3 TPB Steering Committee (noon)
- 9 TPB Citizens Advisory Committee (6 pm)
- 14 Management, Operations and Intelligent Transportation Systems (MOITS) Policy Task Force and Technical Subcommittee Joint Meeting (12:30 pm)
- 15 Transportation Planning Board (noon)**
- 21 Commuter Connections Ridematching Committee (10 am)
- 21 Regional TDM Marketing Group (noon)
- 22 Regional Taxicab Regulators Task Force (1 pm)
- 28 Regional Bus Subcommittee (noon)

July 2011

- 7 TPB Access for All Advisory Committee (noon)
- 7 Freight Subcommittee (1 pm)
- 8 TPB Technical Committee (9 am)
- 8 TPB Steering Committee (noon)
- 12 Management, Operations and Intelligent Transportation Systems (MOITS) Policy Task Force and Technical Subcommittee Joint Meeting (12:30 pm)
- 13 Car Free Day Steering Committee (11:30 am)
- 14 TPB Citizens Advisory Committee (6 pm)
- 19 Employer Outreach Committee (10 am)
- 19 Commuter Connections Subcommittee (noon)
- 19 Bicycle & Pedestrian Subcommittee (1 pm)
- 20 Transportation Planning Board (noon)**
- 21 Aviation Technical Subcommittee (10:30 am)
- 22 Travel Forecasting Subcommittee (9:30 am)
- 26 Regional Bus Subcommittee (noon)



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 Sarah Crawford at scrawford@mwcog.org, (202) 962-3237 or (202) 962-3213 (TDD). Allow seven working days for preparation of material.

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