



TPBnews

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December 2015

CELEBRATING THE TPB'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY

This year marks the TPB's 50th anniversary, and on November 18 more than 100 current and former Board members and TPB staff gathered to celebrate the occasion.

A series of guest speakers shared their thoughts and reflections on the TPB's accomplishments over the years. Guest speakers included former TPB staffer Alan Pisarski, former TPB chairmen Kathy



2015 TPB Chairman Phil Mendelson and guest speakers from the November 18 celebration: Former TPB Chairmen John Mason (2001) and Kathy Porter (2000) and former TPB staffer Alan Pisarski.

Porter (2000) and John Mason (2001), and current TPB chairman Phil Mendelson.

Pisarski, who headed the TPB's data collection and analysis efforts for many years, remembered the TPB's early work to create a planning process rooted in technical analysis. He also remarked that forecasting future travel patterns is harder today than it's ever been because of rapidly

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WMATA BRIEFS TPB ON METRO FUNDAMENTALS

In 2015, the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, also known as WMATA or Metro, has faced a number of setbacks that impact the safety and reliability of its service.

With public trust in WMATA low, TPB Chairman Phil Mendelson, from the District of Columbia, invited the agency to the TPB for a series of presentations on the challenges WMATA faces as it seeks to improve the performance of its rail and bus service. Mendelson said that the goal of these presentations is to "determine ways that the TPB can constructively assist WMATA" with its challenges.

During the November 18 TPB meeting, Tom Webster, Director of the Office of Management and Budget Services at WMATA, made the first of these briefings. His presentation covered the fundamentals of Metro's service and the impact of that service on the region. It also included a description of WMATA's budgeting process and funding challenges.

Metro serves most of the TPB's jurisdictions. More than 1 million trips are made on the system during the average weekday, making it the second busiest rail system and sixth busiest bus system in the nation. Metro also provides the fifth largest paratransit service in the country. Fifty-four percent of the jobs in the

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Upcoming meetings and items of interest:

TPB Meeting: December 16, 2015

- Report of nominating committee for Year 2016 TPB Officers
- Discussion on the roles by which the TPB can support Metro

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TPB ESTABLISHED 50 YEARS AGO

The TPB was established on June 30, 1965, in response to a new requirement under federal law: that every urbanized area in the United States with a population greater than 50,000 people institute a “continuing, comprehensive transportation planning process carried out cooperatively by States and local communities.”



Photo: Washington Post

Since its earliest days, the TPB has been focused on carrying out the federally mandated metropolitan planning process, which has evolved over time to address new issues of national importance as they emerge, like

air quality, public involvement, congestion management, and freight movement.

The body has also taken up a number of other key regional issues and coordination activities, a demonstration that the value of the TPB comes not through exercising veto power over specific projects and plans but through bringing decision-makers together from around the region to find common ground and pursue shared goals. Examples of such issues include transportation and land-use coordination, pedestrian and bicyclist safety, and regional emergency response coordination.

Through its diverse and evolving work over the past 50 years, the TPB has established itself as a nationally recognized MPO and developed a reputation as a vital forum for regional coordination. As it looks to the next half-century, the TPB is positioned to build on this legacy to continue addressing ongoing regional challenges and to face the new ones that will arise. ♦

50TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

(Continued from page 1)

changing transportation and information technologies.

Porter and Mason both recalled major TPB accomplishments in the late 1990s and early 2000s, like the development of the TPB Vision, promoting the concept of Activity Centers and efficient land-use, and major improvements in the region’s air quality.

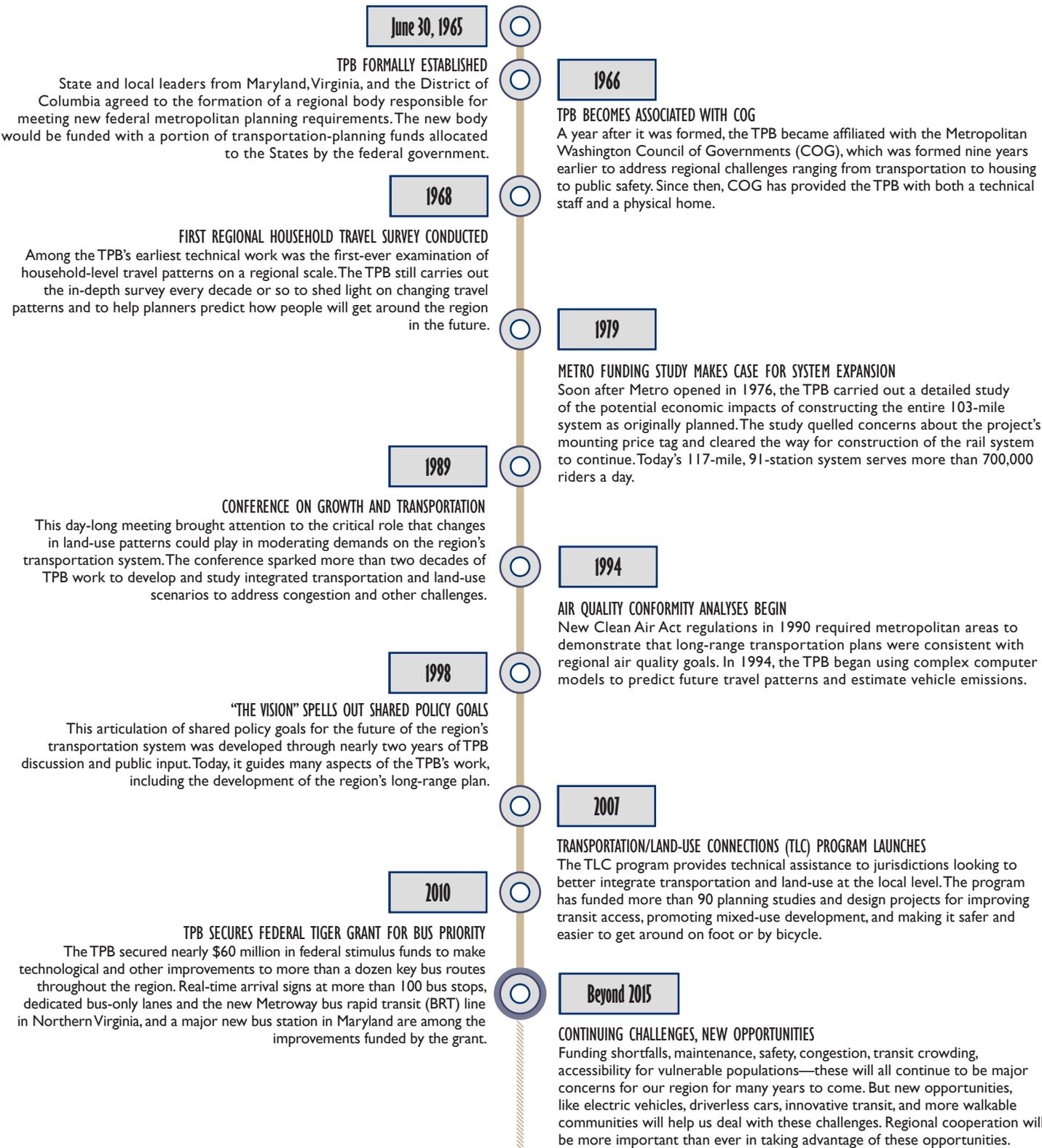
Mendelson, who has served four one-year terms as TPB chairman over the last 15 years, concluded the event by reflecting

on the TPB’s accomplishments but noting that the region still has a lot of work to do to continue accommodating growth and promoting economic vitality.

The November 18 anniversary event also featured a short commemorative video highlighting the TPB’s accomplishments over the past 50 years. ♦

Watch the full commemorative video and find video clips and photos from the November 18 event at www.mwcog.org/TPB50th.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE TPB'S FIRST 50 YEARS



For more highlights from the TPB's history visit: www.mwcog.org/TPB50th

METRO MAKES REGIONAL CASE FOR “CORE CAPACITY” IMPROVEMENTS

Maintenance and safety are top priorities for Metro, but so is expanding capacity in the system’s downtown core over the next ten years to handle more riders.

In a presentation to the TPB on November 18, Metro Shyam Kannan briefed Board members on a \$6-billion package of proposed capital improvements to relieve crowding on the busiest lines and at the busiest stations, mostly in the core. Kannan is the managing director of planning at Metro.

Among the improvements in the proposal: running all eight-car trains during rush hours, expanding mezzanines and adding fare gates and escalators at the busiest stations, and implementing priority bus treatments to reduce delays on key, high-ridership bus routes. Kannan said the improvements would enhance service reliability, safety, and frequency of service.

Kannan stressed the regional nature of the system’s so-called “core capacity” challenge.

“In a hub-and-spoke system like this one,” he said, “the core needs to function at peak capacity for all of the other pieces to work. When any segment in the core suffers a disruption, all of the other pieces and all the other services start to deteriorate, too.”

Kannan showed the Board recent ridership data that demonstrates the regional nature of stations in the downtown core.

“Despite the fact that these stations might be located in the District of Columbia, many are used primarily by residents of Virginia and Maryland,” he said. Union Station, one of the busiest stations in the system, is

used mainly by Marylanders, he explained. Likewise, Foggy Bottom is used mainly by Virginia residents.

“These improvements may take place within one ZIP code, but serve those who have addresses from around the metropolitan region,” he said.

But a lack of funding commitments from the agency’s state and local partners stands in the way of making these improvements, Kannan also stressed.

“At this point in time we’re not even beginning to meet the identified needs,” he said. “There are zero dollars—zero dollars—committed to these improvements today.”

Prompted by Kannan’s comment, Board member David Snyder asked his colleagues on the Board, “Are we ready to take on the Metro issue in all of its elements and provide a strategic plan to get us out of what has been so well illustrated here today? I think it’s past time that we take it on in its total complexity,” he said.

Kannan’s November 18 presentation was the second in a series of three designed to help Board members understand Metro’s needs and how the TPB can support efforts to maintain and enhance the regional transit system. The first presentation in the series, also on November 18, outlined Metro’s financial and budgetary outlook. (See article on page 1 for more information.) In December, the Board will receive the third briefing, which will focus on the role that the TPB and local jurisdictions can play to support WMATA now and in the future. ♦

METRO FUNDAMENTALS

(Continued from page 1)

Washington region are located within one half mile of a Metrorail station.

Webster said that, “without Metro, approximately 200,000 more parking spaces would be needed in the core and congestion would increase.”

In addition to moving people around the region, Webster said that Metro supports the development of the real estate market and generates as much as \$3 billion in tax revenue annually across local jurisdictions.

WMATA’s \$3 billion budget for the 2016 fiscal year was approved in May and combines operating and capital expenditures, most of which is used for Metrorail. Operations and maintenance of Metro transit services costs \$1.8 billion. The capital budget is \$1.2 billion and is used to support Metro’s efforts to rebuild the transit system and improve safety while maintaining a state of good repair.

Funding comes through a complex mix of federal grants—including PRIIA which expires in 2018—and local funds. The local funds are provided through the current Capital Funding Agreement (CFA) which was made in 2010 and expires in 2016. Talks between jurisdictions and WMATA are underway to renew funding. The CFA establishes the capital improvement program and annual work program for WMATA, while committing jurisdictions to funding.

“Safety and state of good repair only get us so far,” said Webster. He pointed out that as the region is expected to grow—a 24 percent increase in residents and 36 percent in jobs—demands on Metro’s system will also grow. As it becomes more expensive to operate and maintain the Metro system, due to the increase in labor costs and the need for more maintenance, there is a greater need for funding from jurisdictions to expand system capacity.

Webster’s presentation was followed by a briefing on WMATA’s strategic plan. (See article on page 4). ♦

OTHER NOVEMBER AGENDA ITEMS

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

- Briefing on the draft Call for Projects and schedule for the Air Quality Conformity Analysis of the 2016 Amendment to the CLRP and the FY 2017-2022 TIP
- Metrorail Safety Oversight: Current practice and planned changes

The briefing on Metrorail Safety oversight was interrupted by a fire alarm and was not completed. The item has been rescheduled for the December meeting.

Before the meeting there was a TPB 50th Anniversary celebration. Following the meeting there was a meeting of the TPB Working Group on Unfunded Capital Needs. ♦

UPCOMING DECEMBER AGENDA ITEMS

The December 16 TPB meeting is expected to include the following items:

- Report of nominating committee for Year 2016 TPB Officers
- Approval of the Call for Projects and schedule for the Air Quality Conformity Analysis of the 2016 Amendment to the CLRP and the FY 2017-2022 TIP
- Discussion on the roles by which the TPB can support Metro
- Metrorail Safety Oversight: Current practice and planned changes ♦

Not able to attend the monthly TPB meeting?

Listen to a live stream of the TPB meeting, check out recordings from past meetings, and review Board materials at

www.mwcog.org/TPBmtgLIVE.

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).

December 2015

- 4 TPB Technical Committee (9 am)
- 4 TPB Steering Committee (noon)
- 10 Citizens Advisory Committee (6 pm)
- 15 Commuter Connections Ridematching Committee (10 am)
- 15 Regional TDM Marketing Group (noon)
- 15 TDM Evaluation Group (2 pm)
- 16 Transportation Planning Board (noon)**

January 2016

- 7 Freight Subcommittee (1 pm)
- 8 TPB Technical Committee (9 am)
- 8 TPB Steering Committee (noon)
- 13 Bike to Work Day Steering Committee (10 am)
- 14 Citizens Advisory Committee (6 pm)
- 19 Employer Outreach Committee (10 am)
- 19 Commuter Connections Subcommittee (noon)
- 20 Transportation Planning Board (noon)**
- 22 Travel Forecasting Subcommittee (9:30 am)
- 26 Regional Public Transportation Subcommittee (noon)
- 28 Aviation Technical Subcommittee (10:30 am)

February 2016

- 5 TPB Technical Committee (9 am)
- 5 TPB Steering Committee (noon)
- 11 Citizens Advisory Committee (6 pm)
- 17 Transportation Planning Board (noon)**
- 23 Regional Public Transportation Subcommittee (noon)

Dates and times subject to change. Please visit our website for up-to-date information:
www.mwcog.org/calendar

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

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