



BIKE TO WORK DAY IS MAY 17

At its meeting on April 17, the TPB approved a Proclamation designating May 17 as Bike to Work Day for the Washington region. Bike to Work Day was launched as a regional event by Commuter Connections and the Washington Area Bicyclist Association (WABA) over a decade ago. Participation has increased from several hundred participants in the programs first year to almost 13,000 in 2012. The goal for 2013 is 14,000 participants, a ten percent increase from 2012.

Bike to Work Day events are being organized at 72 locations around the region in an effort to increase public awareness of the viability of bicycle commuting. These events will encourage the business community

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TPB Vice-Chair Patrick Wojahn signed the 2013 Bike to Work Day Proclamation held by Commuter Connections Director Nicholas Ramfos and Greg Billings of the Washington Area Bicyclist Association (WABA).

TPB RECEIVES INITIAL ANALYSIS OF THE UPDATED “CLRP ASPIRATIONS” SCENARIO

Combining a regional network of express toll lanes and bus rapid transit with concentrated housing and job development near transit could result in significant increases in travel by bicycle and walking and reduced delay for drivers.

That’s according to a briefing at the TPB’s April 17 meeting spelling out some of the initial findings of an analysis of the most recent update to the TPB’s “CLRP Aspirations” Scenario. The CLRP Aspirations Scenario, which was initially built off of the 2008 CLRP and reported to the TPB in 2010, integrates a

regional network of toll lanes and bus rapid transit with more concentrated growth in mixed-use activity centers. The update uses the 2012 CLRP as the baseline, along with the Version 2.3 travel demand model and the more detailed transportation analysis zone structure.

The new version of the scenario calls for a network of over 900 lane-miles of express toll lanes in the region, about 150 of which have already been built or are under construction—on the Capital Beltway and I-95

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Upcoming meetings and items of interest:

TPB Meeting: May 15, 2013

- Briefing on Changes in Regional Commuter Patterns since 2007
- Update on the Development of the TPB Regional Transportation Priorities Plan

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TPB APPROVES LETTER TO US DOT ON PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The TPB is gearing up to face new responsibilities for performance-based planning under MAP-21, the federal surface transportation bill that went into effect last October. At its April 17 meeting, the TPB received a briefing on the law's new requirements, which are intended to create a performance-based approach to transportation decision-making in order to support national goals.

The TPB also approved a letter to the U.S. Department of Transportation regarding performance measures and targets for congestion in the Washington region, which was originally proposed by Sam Zimbabwe of the District Department of Transportation at the February 20 TPB meeting.

During their conversation about the submission of the letter to US DOT, Board members paid particular attention to the recent 2012 Urban Mobility Report on Congestion released by the Texas A&M Transportation Institute, which ranked Metropolitan Washington the most congested metro area in the country in terms of average congestion delay per commuter.

Chris Zimmerman, of the Arlington County Board, emphasized that although the report is a popular source for indexing congestion, the report fails to measure time for all peo-

ple commuting. Rather, he said, the report "measures the time for the people who happen to be commuting in the most congested mode." Zimmerman advocated that the TPB should develop a method to measure overall traffic congestion. "We should be making the point that what we need to do is move more people in any given period of time, not simply move more vehicles," Zimmerman said.

Gary Erenrich, who represents Montgomery County, echoed Zimmerman's remarks, stating that it is important to consider the "the multimodal nature of travel" throughout the region in developing performance targets. Erenrich suggested that a measure for non-auto driver modes would be appropriate to consider, and emphasized that the region is "extremely high on ride-sharing" and "second-highest in the country in terms of transit ridership." Erenrich added that a "single measure like a TTI index, although it's useful and helpful in understanding congestion, is not in itself sufficient to understand our region."

TPB members largely agreed that the letter to US DOT should reflect the notion that this region would benefit from developing measures on the ability to move people, amended the letter accordingly, and passed it with unanimous consent. ♦

UPCOMING MAY AGENDA ITEMS

The May 15 TPB Meeting is expected to include the following:

- Approval of an Amendment to Update Projects and Funding in the District of Columbia Section of the FY 2013-2018 Transportation Improvement Program.
- Briefing on Changes in Regional Commuter Patterns Since 2007.
- Update on the Development of the TPB Regional Transportation Priorities Plan.

- Update on Next Steps for Considering a Regional Green Streets Policy for the Washington Region.
- Notice of Proposed Amendment to the FY 2013-2018 TIP to Include the WMATA FY 2014 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. ♦

"We should be making the point that what we need to do is move more people in any given period of time, not simply move more vehicles."

*- Chris Zimmerman,
Arlington County
Board*

TPB RECEIVES UPDATE ON METROBUS TECHNOLOGIES

At the January 2013 TPB meeting, Phil Mendelson of the District of Columbia requested that the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) brief TPB members on the status of NextBus technology, as well as other technologies and programs used by WMATA to encourage Metrobus ridership. At its April meeting, the TPB received a briefing from Jack Requa, Assistant General Manager of Bus Services for WMATA.

NextBus was successfully launched in July 2009 on all 315 Metrobus routes. Currently, 85 percent of the fleet is capable of tracking with a two-minute polling interval. WMATA has implemented a Transit Database, which acquires Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) data. The AVL data is then passed to the NextBus, Inc. Customer Information System (CIS) to perform the bus arrival prediction function. “NextBus DC” is a third-party developer who had a special arrangement directly with NextBus, Inc. to use a non-standard method of obtaining bus predictions. The “NextBus DC” app was not officially supported by WMATA, and WMATA was not a party to the private arrangement between the developer and NextBus, Inc. WMATA encourages customers to use other sources for NextBus data—those provided by third parties as well as by WMATA—all of which remain operational and available to the public via smartphone apps or the Metro mobile site on the web.

WMATA is also employing additional technologies to provide customers with up-to-the-minute information about bus locations. Customer Information System signage is currently installed at the Pentagon and Rosslyn bus bays, and 50 additional automated signs will be installed by fall 2013. There are also plans to install hundreds of LCD and LED signs at bus shelters and transit centers. Metro has been working with local transportation departments on new standards for transit signal priority that will support implementation of bus priority in many corridors. Transit signal priority is currently functional on Georgia Avenue in the District and on Columbia Pike in Virginia. Requa outlined a number of additional operational, service, mechanical, and planning efforts that should also help increase and further streamline bus ridership.

Requa closed by describing some of the challenges to attracting bus ridership and making bus lines operate as efficiently as possible. These include traffic congestion, which fluctuates on a daily basis; funding for fleet expansion; right-of-way issues, particularly related to reserving street space exclusively for buses; and meeting demand on facilities where bus transit is in high demand.

Chris Zimmerman of the Arlington County Board encouraged Metro to measure the performance of transit signal priority to understand whether it is “in fact improving adherence to schedule for the buses.” He asked Requa to expand upon dedicating right-of-way to bus transit. Requa said that “bus lanes in the jurisdictions will be a benefit not only to WMATA, but to the other systems that are using the same streets.” Marc Elrich of the Montgomery County Council said the most difficult discussion in the community is to help residents understand that taking away a travel lane for bus use will not cause the roadway to come to a grinding halt. He said the region needs a better public education campaign explaining how this lane conversion works, complete with graphics and examples. He added that “if we wanted to build a first-class transit system and we could take away the curb lanes on the major arteries, we would have the most inexpensive expansion of mass transit that you could possibly imagine.”

Board members engaged in a discussion of how to expand bus service, specifically related to the frequency of service on major bus routes. Requa said that the answer lies in either adding more buses, which WMATA has not received, or expanding midday service, which WMATA will do starting in July. Mendelson asked if Metro has developed a strategic expansion of service that would have a larger effect. Requa said Metro is addressing the priority corridor networks, which carry over 50 percent of the ridership.

Metrobus carries between 10 and 12 million passengers a month, or about 435,000 to 450,000 per average weekday. Metrobus saw an increase in ridership of 6 percent from 2011 to 2012 and a 7.5 percent increase on routes where improvements were made. More information about Metrobus, including NextBus, may be found at www.wmata.com. ♦

BIKE TO WORK DAY

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and other regional decision-makers to support increased bicycle commuting through bicycle friendly policies and initiatives. Participants receive free T-shirts and refreshments at the pit stops and sponsors donate giveaways and raffle prizes, such as bicycles and gear.

In order to attract novice bicyclists to participate in Bike to Work Day, convoys are coordinated through WABA and are led by experienced bicyclists to help encourage commuters to try bicycling. Commuter Connections provides free Bike to Work guides and WABA offers free Confident City Cycling classes. Bicycling is covered by Commuter Connections' Guaranteed Ride Home Program.

The event encourages the business community to support a bicycle-friendly office culture, such as offering bike racks, showers and lockers to employees. Bicycling to work benefits employers through reduced parking demands and better employee health and fitness. The participating bicyclists collectively work for over 1,000 different employers throughout the region.

Every three years, Commuter Connections

conducts a survey to measure the impacts of event participation and assess use of bicycles for commute travel before and after participation in Bike to Work Day. The last survey, conducted in 2010, indicated that 32 percent of respondents participated in their first Bike to Work Day that year. Seventeen percent had never commuted by bicycle prior to participating in Bike to Work Day. Ten percent of the participants started riding to work after the event and 22 percent started riding to work more often.

TPB Vice-Chair Patrick Wojahn, of College Park, said "this is going to be my eleventh year participating in Bike to Work Day. I'll be biking in from College Park down to my day job office here, near Union Station. It is always a great time and a great event. It's a great way to learn about biking safely in groups and new ways that you can take to get to your job."

Shyam Kannan, of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), said Metro will encourage bicycling to transit on May 17. He said Metro will provide out-of-service buses at the West Hyattsville and the Cheverly stations "so we can teach individuals how to take their bikes and put them on to the fronts of buses. A lot of folks are afraid to do that and don't want to be that guy or that gal in rush hour creating a logjam. We're excited about our role in helping to promote bike to transit."

Bike to Work Day is free and open to all commuters in the National Capital Region. Participants may register at www.biketoworkmetrodc.org. ♦



OTHER APRIL AGENDA ITEMS

The TPB's April 17 meeting also included the following items:

- Update on TPB Bus on Shoulder Task Force Meeting.
- Notice of Proposed Amendment to Update Projects and Funding in the

District of Columbia Section of the FY 2013-2018 TIP. ♦

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Bike to Work Day is "a great way to learn about biking safely in groups and new ways that you can take to get to your job."

- Patrick Wojahn, Councilmember, City of College Park

UPDATE OF “CLRP ASPIRATIONS” SCENARIO

(Continued from page 1)

in Virginia, and the Intercounty Connector in Maryland. Tolls on the lanes would be higher during peak traffic periods and lower at other times in order to maintain free flowing conditions throughout the day.

Earlier versions of the scenario had a much larger network of express toll lanes, but the total number of lane-miles was scaled back in an effort to reduce costs and in response to new federal rules prohibiting reductions in the number of non-tolled lanes. The analysis of the latest scenario uses a finer-grained travel model, which better predicts transit trips and trips on foot and by bicycle, and updated forecasts of future population and job growth through 2040.

Like versions before it, the updated scenario also includes a 500-mile network of bus rapid transit, which would operate on the tolled lanes and connect 70 of the region’s housing and job centers with a type of transit service approaching the speed, frequency, and reliability of rail transit. The BRT network would provide much-needed transit service in the region’s outer suburbs, where rail transit isn’t likely to be financially-viable anytime soon.

In order to increase the number of people for whom such transit and driving alternatives would be a convenient option, the scenario calls for concentrating more than half of new housing and job growth expected between 2015 and 2040 in mixed-use activity centers near existing and planned rail and BRT stations.

According to the briefing, travel patterns under the scenario would change in important ways. One of the most significant changes is in the number of vehicle-hours of delay for area drivers, compared to current forecasts for 2040. Under the scenario, delay drops by almost 27 percent, in large part due to the availability of congestion-free travel options for drivers willing to pay a toll.

Travel by transit and non-motorized modes—walking and biking—would go up under the scenario. The total number of transit trips would increase by about 7 percent relative to current forecasts, while non-motorized trips would increase by around 8 percent. The number of commute trips by walking and biking would go up almost 20 percent.

One other interesting finding of the preliminary analysis was a decline of almost 37 percent in commute trips made by commuter rail, again, relative to current forecasts for the future. The decline would result from more commuters choosing to use bus rapid transit to reach a greater variety of destinations than those served by the existing commuter rail routes.

In addition to analyzing the full CLRP Aspirations scenario, the TPB also studied the effects of implementing just one or two of the three main components without the others.

The analysis found that implementing the network of toll lanes and BRT, absent shifts in land-use, would provide relief from growing delay for drivers and lead to higher rates of carpool-use, but would result in higher total amounts of driving and no change in the number of trips on foot or by bicycle.

Simply shifting more housing and job growth into areas around transit stations, absent the network of toll lanes or BRT, would boost the number of walk and bike trips by as much as the full scenario and lead to drops in overall driving, but would also lead to declines in carpool use and provide little relief from growing delay for drivers.

Staff will continue to refine the scenario and will present additional information to the TPB in coming months. ♦

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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 2013

- 3 Technical Committee (9 am)
- 3 Steering Committee (noon)
- 8 Car Free Day Meeting (11:30 am)
- 8 Bike to Work Day Steering Committee (10 am)
- 9 Citizens Advisory Committee (6 pm)
- 14 Management, Operations, and Intelligent Transportation Systems (MOITS) Technical Subcommittee (12:30 pm)
- 15 Transportation Planning Board (noon)**
- 17 Travel Forecasting Subcommittee (9:30 am)
- 21 Commuter Connections Subcommittee (noon)
- 21 Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee (1 pm)
- 23 Aviation Technical Subcommittee (10:30 am)
- 29 TPB Annual Transit Forum (11 am)

June 2013

- 7 Technical Committee (9 am)
- 7 Steering Committee (noon)
- 13 Freight Subcommittee (1 pm)
- 13 Citizens Advisory Committee (6 pm)
- 18 Commuter Connections Ridematching Committee (10 am)
- 18 Regional TDM Marketing Group (noon)
- 18 TDM Evaluation Group (2 pm)
- 19 Transportation Planning Board (noon)**
- 25 Regional Bus Subcommittee (noon)
- 26 Regional Taxicab Regulators (RTR) Task Force (1 pm)
- 28 July Technical Committee (9 am)
- 28 July Steering Committee (noon)

July 2013

- 10 Car Free Day Meeting (11:30 am)
- 11 Citizens Advisory Committee (6 pm)
- 16 Employer Outreach Committee (10 am)
- 16 Commuter Connections Subcommittee (noon)
- 16 Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee (1 pm)
- 17 Transportation Planning Board (noon)**
- 19 Travel Forecasting Subcommittee (9:30 am)
- 23 Regional Bus Subcommittee (noon)
- 25 Aviation Technical Subcommittee (10:30 am)
- 25 Access for All Advisory Committee (noon)

Dates and times subject to change.
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