



UPCOMING MEETINGS
AND ITEMS OF
INTEREST:

**TPB Meeting,
September 17:**

- **Policy Principles for the 2009 Authorization of Federal Surface Transportation Programs**
- **Briefing and Comment on the COG Climate Change Report**

Public Forum on the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), September 11

Washington Region Car-Free Day, September 22

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

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TPB news

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SEPTEMBER 2008

NEW FEDERAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORIZATION NEEDED IN 2009

It's that time again.

The six-year federal transportation authorization known as SAFETEA-LU (Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act – A Legacy for Users) expires September 30, 2009, and debate in Congress about what should be included in the next authorization is already underway. At its July 16, 2008 meeting, the TPB heard a presentation about the challenges Congress will face in crafting a bill that will satisfy growing needs in the transportation sector, and discussed how the TPB should get involved with the policy discourse.

Tom Skancke, a member of the National Surface Transportation Policy and Revenue Study Commission, briefed the TPB on the Commission's activities and



the report it submitted to Congress in January 2008. The 12-member commission was appointed by the President and Congressional leaders, and was made up of members representing federal, state and local governments; metropolitan planning organizations; transportation-related

(Continued on page 2)

TPB'S SCENARIO PLANNING: PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

Part III: The Potential Impact of Scenario Planning on Future Decision-making

The final installment of the TPB's three-part series on the past, present, and future of regional scenario planning will focus on how the scenarios might shape future decision-making in the Washington region. The intent of the scenarios is to develop a menu of possibilities to draw upon as

regional leaders look to incorporate new strategies into the region's long-range transportation plan. The next comprehensive update of the plan is scheduled for adoption by the TPB in the summer of 2010.

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REAUTHORIZATION

(Continued from page 1)

industries; and public interest organizations. It focused in particular on short- and long-term alternatives to replace or supplement the fuel tax as the principal revenue source to support the Highway Trust Fund over the next 30 years.

In his presentation to the TPB, Skancke emphasized the urgency of the need for improvements in the way transportation projects are funded and implemented. He said that the global competitiveness of the United States economy is threatened by increased congestion and the deterioration of transportation infrastructure. The Study Commission estimates that it will take \$225 billion per year for the next 50 years to meet transportation needs in all modes, yet the Highway Trust Fund is projected to be in deficit as soon as next year. “The financing mechanisms have not kept up with the demand for capacity,” said Skancke. “We have a transportation crisis in this country. It’s not coming – it’s here.”

The Study Commission’s report, titled “Transportation for Tomorrow,” proposes a revamped federal system that would reduce the number of federal surface transportation programs from 108 to 10. Skancke said that the report advocates a reduction in project delivery time through streamlined regulatory processes, a shift to a more “performance-based” system, and an increased focus on safety and the movement of freight. The report also calls for a significant increase in the fuel tax over the next several years.

Skancke was invited to speak to the TPB to inform Board members about the policy alternatives being discussed on Capitol Hill, and he encouraged the TPB to participate in a dialogue with area Congressional representatives. “We need to hold our elected officials accountable to changing the program. Our commission made a recommendation of reform. If we

do not revolutionize our transportation infrastructure program, this is going to be a very short [TPB] meeting next year. The meeting will look something like this, ‘It’s great to be here today, everybody, but you know what, we have no money. Thanks for coming in.’”

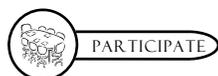
TPB members expressed appreciation for the work of the Study Committee. Said Board Member Victor Weissberg, “I’d like to commend the commission for what I think is a really stellar effort in getting your hands around what are really some of the most difficult issues of our time. I really appreciate the thoughtful approach the Commission has taken.”

Board members also discussed the possibility of providing input to the federal authorization process. “I think we need to take a stand as we’re going through the process for the authorization for those things that we can commonly agree on, and to make those issues that we bring forward to our members of Congress,” said TPB member Todd Turner.

SAFETEA-LU was not signed into law until almost two years after the previous federal authorization, known as TEA-21, expired in 2003. This time around, the challenge of reaching consensus on federal transportation policy may be even more daunting, as many believe that the federal system for planning and funding transportation infrastructure is in need of a complete overhaul. Many issues raised by various reform proposals remain to be resolved, however.

Differences of opinion were apparent on the Study Commission itself – Skancke noted that Transportation Secretary Mary Peters along with two other commissioners declined to sign the final report and instead submitted a minority report that recommended against an increase in the fuel tax. ▲

**The full report
of the National
Surface
Transportation
Policy and Revenue
Study Commission,
along with the
minority report,
is available at
[www.transportation
fortomorrow.org](http://www.transportationfortomorrow.org)**



PUBLIC FORUM ON THE TIP

The TPB will host a Public Forum on the Transportation Improvement Program(TIP) and Project Selection Process from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. on September 11, 2008

Representatives from the District Department of Transportation (DDOT), Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT), the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority have been invited to present information about new transportation projects and the fall project selection process for each of their jurisdictions.

Attendees will be invited to submit comments on regional project priorities. A regional list of public involvement opportunities on state project planning initiatives will be made available.

This forum will feature the introduction of a new TPB publication: a brochure describing the TIP process and projects included in the recent update of the TIP.

As required by federal law, the TIP includes all the regionally significant projects that are anticipated to be funded over the next six years. Along with the Constrained Long-Range Plan (CLRP), the TIP is one of the TPB's fundamental planning documents. The 2005 federal transportation reauthorization legislation (SAFETEA-LU) requires metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) like the TPB to conduct a public meeting during the TIP development process.

On October 11, 2007, the TPB hosted its first annual public forum on the region's six-year TIP. The meeting was designed to give citizens a preview of the draft FY

2008-2013 TIP and provide background information on the annual process for developing the program.

The TPB hosted the second TIP forum on May 15, 2008. Citizens were provided an overview of projects in the draft FY 2009-2014 TIP.

The forum will be held from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. on September 11 during the regular TPB Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) meeting. ▲



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In addition to the newsletter, readers can subscribe to other publications and TPB meeting materials. ▲

UPCOMING SEPTEMBER AGENDA ITEMS

The TPB's September 17 agenda is expected to include the following items:

- Update on the Schedule for the Air Quality Conformity Assessment of the 2008 CLRP and FY 2009-2014 TIP.
- Briefing on the Draft Call for Projects and Schedule for the Air Quality Conformity Assessment for the 2009 CLRP and FY 2010-2015 TIP.
- Briefing and Approval of Comments on the Draft COG Climate Change Report.

- Briefing on the Washington Region Car-Free Day.
- Briefing and Approval of Policy Principles for the 2009 Authorization of the Federal Surface Transportation Programs.
- Update on the Development of the "CLRP Aspirations" and "What Would It Take" Scenarios.

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 SCENARIO PLANNING

(Continued from page 1)

Rising fuel prices and concerns about global warming have created an environment where citizens are increasingly concerned about the well-being of their families. The scenario project will provide a range of future possibilities for land-use patterns and transportation facilities, building on the results of the previous scenarios analyzed under the TPB's Regional Mobility and Accessibility Scenario (RMAS) Study.

The two new scenarios under development will provide a vision for different types of transportation investments that would be necessary to provide for a more efficient and environmentally friendly transportation system. These two scenarios push regional transportation scenario planning farther than before and will provide a full menu of options for local, regional, and state decision-making.

CLRP Aspirations

The intent of the CLRP Aspirations scenario is to provide an expanded regional vision and a list of projects to inform the next update of the Constrained Long-Range Transportation Plan (CLRP), a process that will begin in 2009 and conclude in 2010. The primary goal of the transportation component of the CLRP Aspirations Scenario is to support more compact land-use patterns through a variety of transportation options and pricing strategies. TPB staff will work this fall with the Scenario Study Task Force and other COG and TPB committees to build consensus around the inputs to this scenario.

“What Would It Take?”

The “What Would It Take?” Scenario is the first of its kind for the TPB. This scenario will begin with ambitious performance targets and determine the combination of interventions needed to achieve those targets. The Scenario Study

Task Force chose the performance objective of reducing mobile carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions as the reduction goal for the scenario because of the heightened attention and growing urgency of global warming as a social, economic, and environmental problem.

Through the scenario, TPB staff will analyze improvements to the transportation system, including greater fuel efficiency, reduced fuel carbon intensity, and increased travel efficiency. The outcome of the scenario will be a series of “sliders”: different combinations of interventions that can be assessed for cost-effectiveness and feasibility. The sliders will demonstrate the maximum change needed in each variable to meet the goals for CO₂ reduction relative to the baseline.

Greater Washington 2050

The TPB is not the only entity focusing on the long-term future of the Washington region; the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOC) is addressing future growth and development issues as part of the Greater Washington 2050 Initiative. The goal of the Greater Washington 2050 effort is to broaden thinking about the future of the region, and more specifically to develop a regional compact to address growth-related issues in a 2050 timeframe. The TPB will continue to monitor and participate in these efforts.

Future Public Outreach

Following this round of scenario analysis, the TPB will once again bring the results of the scenarios out to the citizens of the region. This outreach effort will gather feedback on the new set of scenarios: “CLRP Aspirations” and “What Would It Take?” The goal of the outreach will be to generate a regional discussion on the results of two scenarios, including policy choices surrounding land development, alternative fuels, transit options and congestion relief. This outreach effort will begin after the

(Continued on the next page)

results of the scenarios have been presented to the TPB, currently scheduled for the summer of 2009.

In Summary

The TPB launched the Regional Mobility and Accessibility Scenario Study in 2001 to examine the impacts of alternative transportation and land use scenarios. The first five scenarios were designed to promote concentrated land use patterns by shifting a large portion of future growth into regional activity clusters and supporting these shifts with greatly enhanced transit investment. In October of 2006, the TPB was awarded a grant from the Federal Highway

Administration to study a regional network of variably priced lanes. Following an outreach effort designed to solicit feedback on these initial scenarios, the TPB is developing two new scenarios to study the potential effects of alternative land-use and transportation policies in our region. TPB News will follow the two new scenarios through the development, analysis, and public outreach phases over the coming year. ▲

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TPB APPROVES CONTINGENCY TIP

On July 16, the Transportation Planning Board (TPB) approved the FY 2009-2014 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), a six-year regional transportation program for metropolitan Washington. This TIP does not include a number of highway and transit projects previously planned for traffic-congested Northern Virginia.

The projects dropped from the region's six-year program depended on the plan to levy taxes through the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA), which was declared unconstitutional by the Virginia Supreme Court in February 2008. The conclusion of the July Special Session of the Virginia General Assembly failed to produce a transportation funding agreement, which forced the TPB to delay some of the transportation initiatives put forth by Virginia members. Projects that were affected included the purchase of additional locomotives for the Virginia Railway Express (VRE)

and road-widening construction in Prince William County.

Virginia House of Delegates Member Margaret Vanderhye said it was a tragedy that Virginia could not come up with funding to match federal monies for desperately needed projects, adding that the transportation issue "is about the commerce, the basic economic vitality of the entire Commonwealth, in which this region plays a huge part."

Arlington Board Member Chris Zimmerman said area officials would try using local funding sources to get some of the projects back on track, but that those efforts would only make up for a fraction of the amount needed.

The TPB distributed a revised approval schedule which will include conducting a new air quality analysis on the 2008 CLRP and FY 2009-2014 TIP without the NVTA projects. The revised analysis will be brought to the TPB for review in October and approval in November. ▲

OTHER JULY AGENDA ITEMS

The TPB's July 16 agenda included the following items in addition to topics covered elsewhere in this newsletter:

- Review of Comments Received and Acceptance of Recommended Responses for Inclusion in the Air Quality Conformity Assessment, the 2008 CLRP, and the FY 2008-2013 TIP with Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA) Funded Projects.

- Review of Current Study and Legislative Proposals for the Reauthorization of the Federal Surface Transportation Act.
- Update on the Development of the "CLRP Aspirations" and "What Would It Take" Scenarios.

Information and materials for the July 16 TPB meeting are posted on the TPB website: www.mwcog.org/transportation/tpb. ▲



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.).

September 2008

- 5 TPB Technical Committee (9 am)
- 5 TPB Steering Committee (noon)
- 9 Management, Operations and Intelligent Transportation Systems (MOITS) Policy Task Force and Technical Subcommittee Joint Meeting (12:30 pm)
- 10 Bike to Work Day Steering Committee (10 am)
- 10 Car-Free Day Steering Committee (noon)
- 11 Human Service Transportation Coordination (HSTC) Task Force (noon)
- 11 Public Forum on the TIP (6 pm)
- 16 Regional TDM Marketing Group (10 am)
- 16 Commuter Connections Subcommittee (noon)
- 16 Bicycle & Pedestrian Subcommittee (1 pm)
- 16 Commuter Connections Ridematching Committee (2 pm)
- 17 TPB Scenario Study Task Force (10 am)
- 17 Transportation Planning Board (noon)**
- 18 Joint HSTC and AFA Meeting (2 pm)
- 19 Travel Forecasting Subcommittee (9:30 am)
- 23 Travel Management Subcommittee (9:30 am)
- 23 Regional Bus Subcommittee (noon)
- 25 Aviation Technical Subcommittee (10:30 am)
- 25 Regional Taxicab Regulators Task Force (noon)

October 2008

- 3 TPB Technical Committee (9 am)
- 3 TPB Steering Committee (noon)
- 9 HSTC Task Force (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 Travel Management Subcommittee (9:30 am)
- 21 Employer Outreach Committee (10 am)
- 21 TDM Evaluation Group (2 pm)
- 28 Regional Bus Subcommittee (noon)

November 2008

- 7 TPB Technical Committee (9 am)
- 7 TPB Steering Committee (noon)
- 11 Management, Operations and Intelligent Transportation Systems (MOITS) Policy Task Force and Technical Subcommittee Joint Meeting (12:30 pm)
- 12 Bike to Work Day Steering Committee (10 am)
- 13 HSTC Task Force (10 am)
- 13 Regional Taxicab Regulators Task Force (1 pm)
- 13 TPB Citizens Advisory Committee (6 pm)
- 18 Commuter Connections Subcommittee (noon)
- 19 TPB Scenario Study Task Force (10 am)
- 19 Transportation Planning Board (noon)**
- 20 Aviation Technical Subcommittee (10:30 am)
- 20 Bicycle & Pedestrian Subcommittee (1 pm)
- 20 TPB Access for All (AFA) Advisory Committee (2 pm)
- 21 Travel Forecasting Subcommittee (9:30 am)
- 25 Travel Management Subcommittee (9:30 am) (*tentative*)
- 25 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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