



UPCOMING MEETINGS
AND ITEMS OF
INTEREST:

TPB Meeting,
October 21:

- Approval of a Value Pricing Grant Proposal to the Federal Highway Administration

October 15: Public Meeting on Outreach Related to the 2010 CLRP

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

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TPB news

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WASHINGTON REGION PARTICIPATES IN CAR FREE DAY

Over 6,200 residents of Metropolitan Washington participated in Car Free Day on September 22, a 13 percent increase over last year and collectively reducing over 575,000 vehicle miles traveled. Car Free Day is an international event celebrated every year on September 22 in 1,000 cities in 40 countries. People are encouraged to get around without their car - highlighting transit, bicycling, walking and other alternative modes of transportation.

By challenging commuters, students and all residents to leave their cars behind, the event engages people in thinking about how their daily travel choice impacts their lives, their wallets and the environment. "Car Free Day is a great annual reminder that there are many ways to get to work

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Source: Eric Gilliland

The District of Columbia started the SmartBike Program in 2008. This program provides members with access to bicycles across the city.

TPB SUPPORTS CSX NATIONAL GATEWAY INITIATIVE, WITH CAVEATS

The TPB expressed qualified support for CSX Transportation's proposed National Gateway Initiative in a letter approved at the September 16 TPB meeting.

There was little argument about the need for improvements to freight rail infrastructure in the National Capital Region. The CSX National Gateway Initiative spans six states from the Mid-Atlantic to the Midwest and includes 61 rail clearance projects

with 13 clearance projects in the National Capital Region. A double-stack-cleared rail network would improve freight flow and has the potential to improve passenger train services in the National Capital Region. The governors of both Maryland and Virginia have expressed support for the Initiative, as have numerous public officials and agencies, including other Metropolitan Planning Organizations, throughout the

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CAR-FREE DAY 2009

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that don't involve driving by yourself every day,' said Nicholas Ramfos, director of Commuter Connections, a regional transportation network coordinated by the TPB.

Doing without a car for an entire day is not an option for many residents of the region. For this reason, sponsors of the event also encouraged residents to go "car-lite" by sharing a ride to work or incorporating transit into some aspect of their commute.

Several jurisdictions around the region hosted events in celebration of Car Free Day. One transportation alternative showcased at the event near the Verizon Center in downtown Washington, DC, was SmartBikeDC, is the District Department of Transportation's self-service public bike rental program. SmartBikeDC has bicycles located at key locations in the central business district to provide a new way of discovering and moving around the city. SmartBikeDC is the first

self-service, public bike rental program in North America.

Organizers of Car Free Day also provided a number of facts about the region's commutation patterns in the interest of sparking alternative methods of commuting. After housing, transportation-related expenditures are the second largest for the average American household, exceeding food, education, recreation, and healthcare.

Washington celebrated Car Free Day for the first time in 2007 with about 1,000 District residents committing to car free travel for the day. With the help of COG/TPB staff, in 2008 the event was expanded to the entire Washington Metropolitan Region, and participation topped 5,000.

When using an alternative commute mode in the Washington area, commuters may qualify for the free Guaranteed Ride Home program in an emergency or for unscheduled overtime. Learn more about this and other Commuter Connections programs at www.commuterconnections.org. ♦

Transportation accounts for more than 28% of our country's energy consumption and more than 25% of our air pollution. (USDOT National Household Travel Survey)

UPCOMING OCTOBER AGENDA ITEMS

The TPB's October 21 agenda is expected to include the following items:

- Approval of an Amendment to the 2009 CLRP and FY 2010-2015 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to Include the Purple Line Light Rail Project and the Transportation Components Associated with the "Return to L'Enfant" Development over I-395.
- Approval of Submission of a Value Pricing Grant Proposal to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to Study Public Acceptability of Pricing Major Roadways in the Washington Metropolitan Area.
- Status Report on the Extension of the SAFETEA-LU Transportation Authoriza-

tion, Rescission of FY 2009 Transportation Contract Authority, and Development of a New Six-Year Transportation Authorization.

- Briefing on the Draft Call for Projects and Schedule for the Air Quality Conformity Assessment for the 2010 Update of the CLRP and FY 2011-2016 TIP.
- Briefing on the Regional "Street Smart" Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Education Campaign.

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 APPROVES ADDITIONAL TLC PROJECTS

On September 16, the TPB approved three additional projects for inclusion in the FY 2010 round of the Transportation/Land-Use Connections (TLC) technical assistance program. Funding for the additional projects came from the Maryland Department of Transportation's technical assistance account in the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). In July, the TPB approved seven projects as part of this year's program. The target date for completion of all FY 2010 TLC technical assistance projects is April 30, 2010.

For more information on the technical assistance projects, please visit the TLC website at www.mwcog.org/tlc. ♦



PUBLIC MEETING: 2010 CLRP UPDATE

New Context, New Plan: Updating the Region's Long-Range Transportation Plan

The TPB will host a public meeting on October 15 to discuss the development of the region's financially constrained long-range transportation plan (CLRP). The TPB is starting the process for the 2010 update to the CLRP.

This meeting will focus on the changing context for transportation planning, including the growing public awareness of climate change, the need for affordable housing near transit stations, and the transportation funding shortfall.

TPB staff will discuss with citizens and stakeholders the TPB's strategy for outreach in the coming year, and seek input on how the TPB should be planning for the future.

The meeting will be held on Thursday, October 15, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments building at 777 North Capital Street, NE in the main floor Training Center.

For more information, please contact John Swanson at (202) 962-3295 or jswanson@mwcog.org or visit www.mwcog.org/tipforum. ♦

Additional FY 2010 TLC Projects

On September 16, the TPB approved three additional Maryland projects to be included in the second round of the FY 2010 TLC Technical Assistance Program. These projects will be funded with money provided through the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) technical assistance account in the UPWP:

Montgomery County: Analyzing Transportation Impact of Neighborhood-Scale Retail (\$40,000).

Prince George's County: Interim Pedestrian Safety Improvements around the New Carrollton Metrorail Station (\$30,000).

Prince George's County: Pedestrian to Transit Accessibility Prioritization Project (\$30,000).

OTHER SEPTEMBER AGENDA ITEMS

In addition to the items covered in this newsletter, the TPB's September 16 agenda included the following item:

- Briefing on the TPB Regional Priority Bus Project Grant Application Submitted under the Transportation Investments Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) Program of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).

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. ♦

Bids and Solicitations

For current COG solicitations available for bid/proposals, please visit "Doing Business with COG:" www.mwcog.org/doingbusiness/cogbid/



The existing single-track, low-clearance Virginia Avenue Tunnel (looking east toward Maryland), constructed in 1904, is a choke-point for rail freight movement through the Washington region.

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six-state area that would be served by the enhanced corridor network.

Under CSX Transportation's proposal, the \$842 million National Gateway Initiative would get a little more than half its funding from public sources including federal and state dollars. More than \$187 million of the project's budget would be spent on 13 projects in the National Capital Region. CSX estimates that the cost of raising the height of the century-old Virginia Avenue tunnel in the District of Columbia to accommodate double-stacked cargo on a double-tracked corridor would be \$160 million., making this by far the largest project in the Washington region.

Spurring debate at the September 16 TPB meeting were the ways in which CSX proposes to fund the Initiative, and the potential impacts of the individual construction projects involved. Of particular concern to TPB members was the fact that

as part of its effort to obtain public funding for the Initiative, CSX is seeking federal stimulus funds for projects in the Washington Region under the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant program, putting it in direct competition with the TPB's own TIGER application to fund a regional priority bus network.

TPB members also expressed concerns about the local impacts of the individual construction projects, along with the prospect of increased freight rail traffic through the monumental core of the District of Columbia. Several members sought firmer commitments from the CSX representatives present to maintain consistent communica-

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tion with affected localities and to work with the area passenger rail providers to prevent any adverse impacts to those services. “Having been engaged in a number of negotiations with CSX in the past to enable passenger movement along their corridor, frankly CSX has not been the most hospitable partner,” said TPB Vice Chair David Snyder. “These negotiations have frequently been unnecessarily difficult and put a very low priority on passenger service.”

The Board approved an amendment to the draft support letter strengthening the language calling on CSX to accommodate increased passenger rail service. CSX representative Stephen Flippin stated that the railroad had been more cooperative in accommodating passenger rail in the last two years, and would continue to meet with relevant stakeholders, a commitment that did not appear to satisfy several TPB members. TPB Member Chris Zimmerman of Arlington County acknowledged some improvement in the relationship between CSX and the region’s governments, saying “they don’t treat us with arrogance and disdain quite the way they were for so many years.”

Zimmerman went on to add, “[CSX] is asking for our support on the basis that [the Initiative] will help move passengers,” said Zimmerman. “And they are promising exactly nothing to help move passengers.”

TPB member Harriet Tregoning from the D.C. Office of Planning proposed and obtained support for additional

changes to the draft letter to clarify the TPB’s position as not explicitly supporting CSX’s request for competing TIGER grant funding, but instead focusing TPB support for the National Gateway Initiative in the upcoming transportation authorization legislation.

Some board members expressed reluctance to support what is essentially a private company’s undertaking, though VDOT’s representative on the TPB Jo Anne Sorenson noted that much public funding has already been committed to the Initiative by the participating state governments.

Despite some reservations, TPB members noted the potential benefits of the project, including shifting truck cargo to the rail system. CSX estimates that full implementation of the Initiative would shift 2.3 billion truck miles off of highways, and that the Initiative will result in more than \$1.5 billion in economic benefits to the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia, including benefits from reductions in highway congestion and vehicle emissions.

The railroad company hopes to have the improvements in place before completion of expansion plans for the Panama Canal in 2014, which is expected to increase freight movements on the Eastern Seaboard. Millions of dollars in public funds have already been committed to the Initiative by state governments, and several included projects are already underway. ♦

Projects Proposed for the National Capital Region in the CSX National Gateway Initiative

Virginia Avenue Tunnel, District of Columbia—Raise roof to accommodate double stack cars. *Cost: \$160 million*

New Jersey Avenue, District of Columbia—Lower Track. *Cost: \$5 million*

12th Street, SW, 10th Street, and I-395 Ramp, District of Columbia—Lower Tracks. *Cost: \$6.4 million*

Potomac River Swing Bridge Modification, District of Columbia—*Cost: \$415,000*

Catoctin Tunnel, Frederick, MD—Total Arch Liner Removal. *Cost: \$2.8 million*

Point of Rocks Tunnel, Point of Rocks, MD—Total Arch Liner Removal. *Cost: \$4.5 million*

Germantown Road North, Germantown, MD—Total Arch Liner Removal. *Cost: \$1.4 million*

Deer Park Drive, Washington Grove, MD—Replace Bridge. *Cost: \$3.7 million*

Baltimore-Washington Parkway and Kenilworth Avenue, Hyattsville, MD—Lower Tracks. *Cost: \$254,000*

Railroad Avenue, Woodbridge, VA—Replace Bridge. *Cost: \$2.8 million*

TPB RECEIVES BRIEFING ON MATOC PROGRAM

“I want to thank the transportation agencies that have been supportive of this. [MATOC] is all about the region functioning as a region and not broken up in separate jurisdictions, and that way we better serve the traveling public.”

*– David Snyder,
TPB Member,
City of Falls Church*

The Washington Metropolitan Area Transportation Operations Coordination (MATOC) Program continues to facilitate management strategies in response to transportation incidents and emergencies in the National Capital Region.

In a briefing to the Transportation Planning Board on September 16, 2009, MATOC Facilitator Buddy Ey reported that MATOC had tracked and made notifications on 20 incidents since July 15, 2009. Three of these incidents were significant, involving a lane closure, a lengthy traffic delay and/or a direct impact to more than one jurisdiction. The remaining incidents were situational awareness pertaining to public transit and commuters.

“I’m helping them formulate [a] regional approach,” explained Mr. Ey. The MATOC Program facilitates communication by supporting cross-jurisdictional staff notifications, helping agencies make full-use of highway message signs, and providing early notification to the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), local transit, bus, commuter railroads, and other agencies of traffic incidents throughout the region. To support these activities, MATOC provides tools and processes for implementing successful, coordinated responses to traffic incidents. The end result provides reliable information to the public, enabling them to make timely and effective travel decisions.

In addition to providing real-time coordination, MATOC also helps to develop strategies for dealing with potential future incidents. Mr. Ey recently participated in a tabletop exercise involving closing the Woodrow Wilson Bridge for four or more hours. Such exercises bring together public safety and transportation operations

personnel, and provide lessons learned for future incidents.

Created following the experiences of the September 11, 2001 attacks, MATOC fosters partnerships among the region’s major transportation agencies to reduce incident-related travel delays through improved coordination and information-sharing. MATOC was established with the support of a \$1.6 million grant, initiated by U.S. Congressman Jim Moran, and provided in the 2005 SAFETEA-LU surface transportation authorizing legislation. The current federal grant funding will sustain the program only through June 30, 2010. After that date, MATOC will require \$1.2 million per year in order to maintain needed operations. “The MATOC Steering Committee is actively working to identify stable sources of funding” in order to continue operations beyond July 1, 2010, noted Mr. Ey.

In the meantime, the MATOC Program is moving full speed ahead. A permanent coordination center taking advantage of pre-existing communications and Internet technology infrastructure has been established in the Capital Wireless Information Net (CapWIN) system facilities in Greenbelt, Maryland. Additionally, MATOC will hire a new staff member to work with Mr. Ey to help serve as a hub for regional communication and coordination.

Mr. Ey noted that MATOC has served a key role in coordinating responses in the past, and this success has generated region-wide awareness. “I think that’s part of what this program has brought - the awareness. Everybody working together. Forgetting the boundaries of the states or the District; that the National Capital Region is just one big location and whatever we would do in [one jurisdiction], let’s do for the whole area.” ♦

ASSESSMENT PAVES WAY FOR PURPLE LINE

The TPB received a briefing on September 16 regarding the draft Air Quality Conformity Assessment for an amendment to the 2009 CLRP to include the Purple Line Light Rail Project in Maryland and the transportation components associated with the “Return to L’Enfant” Development over I-395 in the District of Columbia. Data included in this report are the results of a complete regional analysis and reflect updated land activity forecasts as well as transportation network changes for the District’s Return to L’Enfant project and the Purple Line Light Rail project. The draft documents were released for a 30-day public comment period on September 10, 2009.

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) requested an amendment to the 2009 CLRP to include construction of the Purple Line Light Rail from New Carrollton to Bethesda. The Purple Line is a 16-mile long light rail facility featuring 21 stations, with connections to Metrorail at Bethesda, Silver Spring, College Park, and New Carrollton, as well as to MARC

and Amtrak rail stations. It is scheduled to open in 2018.

The transportation components of the “Return to L’Enfant” development include the reconfiguration of two ramps and the closure of the south-bound exit ramp to the 200 block of 3rd Street on the portion of I-395 between E. St. and Massachusetts Ave, NW. Also included are the reconnection of F St. between 2nd and 3rd streets for vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian traffic; and the reconnection of G St. between 2nd and 3rd streets for bicycle and pedestrian use. The development is scheduled to be completed in 2014

At the June 17 meeting, the TPB approved the project submissions for analysis as amendments to the 2009 CLRP and FY 2010-2015 TIP.

The TPB is scheduled at its October 21 meeting to review the comments received on the two projects during the public comment period, approve the air quality conformity determination and approve the amendments to the 2009 CLRP and FY 2010-2015 TIP. ♦

TPB Alphabet Soup

AFA	Access for All Committee
ARRA	American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009
CAC	Citizen’s Advisory Committee
CLRP	Constrained Long-Range Transportation Plan
COG	Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
DDOT	District Department of Transportation
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
MDOT	Maryland Department of Transportation
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization
NVTA	Northern Virginia Transportation Authority
RMAS	Regional Mobility and Accessibility Scenario Study
TIP	Transportation Improvement Program
TLC	Transportation/Land-Use Connections Program
TPB	Transportation Planning Board
VDOT	Virginia Department of Transportation

TPB ADDS VIRGINIA STIMULUS PROJECTS TO TIP

On September 16, the TPB amended the FY 2010-2015 TIP at the request of the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) to include additional projects under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). This amendment will obligate \$51.5 million in ARRA funds for twenty road, transit and bicycle/pedestrian improvement projects in Northern Virginia.

Notable among these projects is the grade-separated interchange at the Fairfax County Parkway and Fair Lakes Parkway. The action taken by the TPB adds \$25 million to the project for FY 2010. Almost \$10 million was added to the widening of Prince William Parkway from Hoadly Road to Old Bridge Road. Funding was also allocated to the City of Alexandria and Arlington County for the purchase of trolley vehicles and CNG buses, respectively. ♦



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.).

October 2009

- 2 TPB Technical Committee (9 am)
- 2 TPB Steering Committee (noon)
- 8 Human Service Transportation Coordination Task Force (noon)
- 13 Management, Operations and Intelligent Transportation Systems (MOITS) Policy Task Force and Technical Subcommittee Joint Meeting (12:30 pm)
- 13 Motor Vehicle Emission Stimulator (MOVES) Task Force (12:30 pm)
- 14 Car Free Day Steering Committee (noon)
- 15 Public Meeting on the 2010 CLRP (6 pm)
- 20 Employer Outreach Committee (10 am)
- 21 Transportation Planning Board (noon)**
- 27 Regional Bus Subcommittee (noon)

November 2009

- 4 Bike to Work Day Steering Committee (10 am)
- 5 Freight Subcommittee—Tour (9 am)
- 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)
- 12 Human Service Transportation Coordination Task Force (noon)
- 12 TPB Citizens Advisory Committee (6 pm)
- 17 MOVES Task Force (10 am)
- 17 Commuter Connections Subcommittee (noon)
- 17 Bicycle & Pedestrian Subcommittee (1 pm)
- 18 TPB Scenario Study Task Force (10:30 am)
- 18 Transportation Planning Board (noon)**
- 19 Aviation Technical Subcommittee (10:30 am)
- 19 Access for All Advisory Committee (2 pm)
- 20 Travel Forecasting Subcommittee (9:30 am)
- 24 Regional Bus Subcommittee (noon)
- 25 Regional Taxicab Regulators Task Force (noon)

December 2009

- 4 TPB Technical Committee (9 am)
- 4 TPB Steering Committee (noon)
- 8 MOVES Task Force (10 am)
- 8 Management, Operations and Intelligent Transportation Systems (MOITS) Policy Task Force and Technical Subcommittee Joint Meeting (12:30 pm)
- 10 Human Service Transportation Coordination Task Force (12:30 pm)
- 10 TPB Citizens Advisory Committee (6 pm)
- 15 Employer Outreach Committee (10 am)
- 15 Regional TDM Marketing Group (noon)
- 16 TPB Scenario Study Task Force (10:30 am)
- 16 Transportation Planning Board (noon)**
- 22 Travel Management Subcommittee (9:30 am)
- 22 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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