

Joint Transportation Management District
Advisory Committee
Friendship Heights/Silver Spring/Greater Shady Grove/Bethesda/North Bethesda
March 20, 2024

Item 1 – Introductions: Jim Carlson called meeting to order, and introductions were tabled to allow presentation time.

Item 2 – Visualize 2050: Christina Finch, Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG) Transportation Planning Manager for the Visualize 2050 project (Viz2050), briefed the Committee on her experience in transportation before returning to her beginnings in the metropolitan area. She explained that the Viz2050 project is a collection of transportation projects that will accommodate future smart growth and environmental goals, such as air quality. This forecast has been mandated by the R19-2021 to be updated by the Transportation Planning Board (TPB) every four years. The TPB staff were instructed to reconsider all transportation projects, including those that were already in the plan, with a zero-based budgeting concept, exempting those that were well underway and fully funded in their States 6-year Capital Improvements Program (CIP). Information for public comment was developed from listening sessions conducted by TPB with the area’s jurisdictions, with a plan approved June 2025 after the public comment process. **Ms. Finch** discussed where they are in the planning process and next steps.

- Projects were approved and considered regionally significant based on air quality - completed at the end of 2023
- The TPB considered why people travel and how to make the current system better 25 years from now
- The relationship of transportation & air quality is considered by land use, road capacity and fossil fuel impacts by conducting air quality conformity analyses and using modeling to determine if Viz2050 plan is consistent with EPA emissions reduction targets.
- Public comment consist of engagement opportunities, such as an ambassador program, providing comments on website, news, email & social media notices
- A meeting of the TPB will be tomorrow

Ms. Finch provided an overview of the Viz2050 website (<https://visualize2050.org>) - the 2050 Metro Quest form on the site provides opportunity for comment and has received 1,000 responses so far. Also included on the website:

- Air Quality Conformity Table (AQC)- Blue highlight projects not continuing & Yellow, continuing or updated
- 600+ segments that make up the transportation projects are under evaluation
- AQC Scope of Work uses land activity, future population, & employment from Cooperative Forecasts to discover how projects will conform to future 2050 air quality control regulations – 80 percent of what is currently on the ground will be in 2050
- The project summary table contains state responses to the 1,000 comments submitted
- HOV & HOT lane policy future assumptions – whether 3+ or 2+
- The AQC diagram shows the information that goes into conformity analysis, such as demographics & travel statistics to determine if they are below EPA emissions levels

Also reported:

- The Metro Quest form consists of five parts
- Not included in the plan are bike, transit and light roadway projects, as they are not capacity impacting so not included in the model analysis, as vehicle adding or removing projects are only included for this comment period-pieces of the plan will be available for public comment as COG moves further in the Viz2050 process
- A look at projects that are available for the Air Quality analysis
- A Project Summary table shows a clearer way to understand projects and provides updates, such as American Legion Bridge-only projects with a 2026 or later for public comment relevancy
- The financial considerations for projects included those with reasonable funding – smaller local projects not regionally significant will be included at a later time; however, not currently.
- Of the 14 TPB Priority Strategies, two of significance are expanding: Express Lanes in Maryland & Virginia and Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) & transitways in all jurisdictions, including finishing the Purple Line & Benning Road Street Car
- An overview of how projects align with federal planning factors and the 10 TPB goals – 75 percent of the projects support goals also reaching livable & prosperous community goals
- Maryland did not add any new projects that were in 2045 to the 2050 plan.
- There will be a TPB hybrid in person/virtual work session followed by a meeting containing today's presentation tomorrow at COG offices regarding Viz2050 - live streaming on COG website

Ms. Finch gave an overview of all those from the many agencies and jurisdictions who assisted with the plan. The next steps include public comment until the end of March and air quality approvals. Q&A included the following:

- How to evaluate if the actions in the plan will make meet greenhouse gas reduction goals, considering Virginia's car-centric philosophy vs. Maryland's reduction of road projects and reallocation of funding to BRT to reduce emissions.
- Why is TDM not considered significant in the Viz2050 plan? TDM considered significant; however, it is not able to be submitted in the model to be analyzed.
- How are electric vehicles considered? All vehicle VIN #s are inserted into the model analysis with land use accounting for percentage of EV use.
- Is there an interactive video available for community outreach? Obtaining public comments on such a detailed plan is a long process, so the TPB is focusing on the main points, such as toll lanes & American Legion Bridge.
- COG works with the surrounding jurisdictions to determine if project funding source is viable
- What will happen if we don't obtain air quality goals? We will find out why, as EPA admissions models emerge; however, we can't afford to let time lapse on projects so as to not lose funding.
- Comments on the plan can be submitted until the end of the month, and members can submit as an individual – can reference the TMD advisory committee affiliation.
- Metro will announce its FY25 budget and funding from Virginia's Governor Youngkin, which plays a major role in determining how much Metro will have in funding.
- Telework modeling poses a challenge to the Viz2050 plan due to uncertainty of where future employment will be; however, surveys will provide updates.

Item 3 – Montgomery County Updates:

- The County Executive released his proposed Operating Budget for FY25

- Bike To Work Day (BTWD) registration is now open and a new pit stop in Germantown has been added

Item 4 – Around the Room Announcements:

- **Michael Price** (Warner Bros. Discovery /Silver Spring TMD) reported that Warner Brothers won a Corporate Sustainability award – Discovery merged with Warner Bros.
- **Peggy Swartz** of North Bethesda and **Kristen Blackmon** of Bethesda announced BTWD & Earth Day preparations, Commuter Information Days and bike classes
- **Rachel Davis** reported that the Friendship Heights Alliance is also preparing for BTWD and has posted on the web site area events & promotions
- **Jennifer Bolick** (Silver Spring & Shady Grove TMD outreach) requested information on the Great Seneca plan and is doing outreach regarding the Red Line shut down, also handling Purple Line complaints
- **Shelly Mann** (Friendship Hts & White Oak TMD) asked where contractors can pick up materials for BTWD
- **Sande Brecher** reported that she is working on BTWD flyers. She also announced that this year is the last year to see the amount of Cherry Blossom trees, as some will be removed to accommodate adjustments to the tidal basin due to rising waters from climate change
- **Juliana Stein** asked if there were any organizations that had condensed comments and information on the Viz2050 plan. **Jeff Burton** at Bethesda Urban Partnership and League of Women Voters was suggested

The Ride On Reimagined project may be presented at the next joint meeting.

Item 5 – Adjourn