

INTERSECT!

A TWICE-MONTHLY NEWS BULLETIN

August 9, 2000

FROM THE

Volume 4 Number 10

WASHINGTON REGIONAL NETWORK FOR LIVABLE COMMUNITIES

REGION'S LONG-RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN - MORE LIST THAN PLAN

BY STEWART SCHWARTZ, COALITION FOR SMARTER GROWTH

The region's 25-year transportation plan, also known as the Constrained Long-Range Plan (CLRP), is being updated. This plan will dramatically shape the future of the region and is a legally binding document. Unfortunately, the plan as currently drafted is more of a list of transportation projects forwarded by Maryland, Virginia, and the District than a real blueprint for solving the region's transportation and land use problems. Most important, the CLRP fails to meet the goal of reducing growth in vehicle miles travelled and of using better land use to reduce pressure on our roadways. The plan fails to emphasize transit-oriented development, which would not only increase ridership and funds for Metro but would also promote access to jobs and greater choice in housing. Despite consensus that improving rail transit service is key to relieving traffic congestion and meeting clean air requirements, the CLRP provides inadequate funding for Metro expansion, rehabilitation, and operation.

Without strong pressure from citizens, the plan will be forwarded for federal approval without needed changes. In June, a diverse group of citizens testified about the plan's shortcomings before the regional Transportation Planning Board (TPB). Citizens need to urge the TPB to revise the CLRP to promote mixed-use communities, transit-oriented development, and revitalization of the region's core; to fix existing road bottlenecks and properly maintain our excellent transit systems; to drop plans for an outer beltway in favor of circumferential rail linking inner beltway

communities; and to address the region's air quality problems now rather than later.

Concerned citizens can write directly to the Honorable Kathy Porter, TPB Chair, Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, 777 North Capitol Street, NE, Suite 300, Washington DC 20002-4239, urging her to adopt the changes outlined above. Another way to get involved is to testify at the September 20th and October 18th TPB meetings; see the Intersect calendar for details.

MAKING THE MOST OF METRO BROCHURE ONLINE

WRN's Making the Most of Metro brochure is now available in a downloadable .pdf file from http://www.cbf.org/rpp/lands_urp.htm.

METRO'S LAND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTED AT WRN'S JUNE FORUM

BY MARY GUTE

On June 28th, WRN held a forum to discuss the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority's (WMATA) Joint Development Program, through which the agency develops land it owns at Metrorail stations and elsewhere. WMATA realized in the 1970s that the presence of Metrorail stations in neighborhoods increased land values and influenced development. In response, the agency created the Joint Development Program to generate income through long-term leases or sales of land around Metrorail stations. Through the program WMATA seeks public/private partnerships for office, retail, and

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INTERSECT! is a publication of the

WASHINGTON REGIONAL NETWORK

FOR LIVABLE COMMUNITIES

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WRN advocates transportation investments, land use policies, and community designs that enhance existing communities and the environment of the National Capital Region.

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Comments and articles welcome.
Views expressed are not necessarily those of WRN.

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residential development at Metrorail stations. In the 1990s, WMATA identified between 1,000 and 1,200 acres of property around Metrorail stations determined to have development potential. WMATA has approved forty projects; twenty-seven have been built. Several additional projects are in various phases of development. Between 300 and 400 acres remain available for development.

The forum featured two speakers from WMATA - Alvin McNeal, Manager of Property Planning and Development and Ray Feldmann, Director of Media Relations. Major themes of the forum included the way in which WMATA incorporates public participation in joint development and transit-oriented development (TOD) around Metrorail stations.

Public Involvement - The opportunity for public input regarding joint development projects comes after WMATA has chosen a proposal and developer. Public input occurs through public hearings or meetings held at the local government level. Prior to developer selection, local jurisdictions may review design proposals; however, jurisdictions rarely take advantage of this opportunity.

Audience members expressed concern that the public did not have a voice until after a proposal has been selected. One person asked if it would be possible to perform charrettes similar to the one carried out in planning the Columbia Heights station prior to developer selection. The response was that this is outside WMATA's jurisdiction. However, the speakers noted that the agency encourages developers to work with local governments and the public. McNeal conceded WMATA should work more closely with local planning offices and receive comments about land WMATA is making available for development.

The proposed development around the Takoma Metro station was a topic of great interest to many audience members. Feldmann admitted WMATA's handling of Takoma was not the agency's "finest moment" in involving the public and giving people a stake in a project. McNeal stated that WMATA is looking to perform more public outreach, including at Takoma.

Design Principles - A WMATA publication states

"The Joint Development Program... is nationally acclaimed for the quality of its projects and advancement of what is now known as Transit-Oriented Development." Transit-oriented development (TOD) is a mix of jobs, housing, services, recreation, and amenities in a walkable environment near transit. The Metro system has some good examples of TOD (for example, metro station areas around Dupont Circle, Bethesda, and the Rosslyn-Ballston corridor); however, there appears to be little consistency in the inclusion of TOD design principles in joint development projects. The forum pointed up that WMATA typically positions itself as a passive player in joint development and does not officially advocate TOD designs. The reasons for this include the large number of jurisdictions with which it must coordinate and the interests of its Board of Directors.

Feldmann noted joint development is market-driven and TOD would be built if developers believed such a project would succeed. McNeal noted WMATA would benefit by advocating TOD design principles to local planning offices and developers. However, it was clear that many in the audience would like to see WMATA take a more pro-active approach to supporting TOD around Metro stations. This might be done through WMATA's official support and promotion of TOD, inclusion of TOD design principles in joint development requests for proposals, and adding TOD requirements to the criteria against which proposals are evaluated. While the Metro system does contain some high-quality examples of TOD, many more are needed for WMATA and the region to reap the financial, environmental, and social benefits of their \$13 billion investment in the rail system.

PRINCE GEORGE'S GROWTH COMMISSION MAKES RECOMMENDATIONS

Commission 2000, composed of government officials, planners, developers, citizens, and others appointed by the Prince George's County Council and County Executive, has issued its recommendations for managing growth in the County. The Commission recommends dividing the county into tiers, corridors, and centers and offers specific recommendations to

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guide future land use within these policy areas. Incentives, public investment priorities, traffic service standards, and type of development would shift development away from the developing and rural tiers to the developed tier.

In the Rural Tier, the Commission recommends providing a reduced tax rate for all protected land, permitting cluster development, basing zoning on maximum density rather than minimum lot size, creating a county purchase of development rights program, establishing a voluntary transfer of development rights program, adopting rural design guidelines (for roads, setbacks, etc.), and investigating some reduction in density when environmental constraints make development at currently permitted densities difficult or impossible.

In the Developed Tier, the Commission recommends requiring pedestrian-oriented development, encouraging mixed-use and redevelopment, and permitting school design standards to vary in recognition of the limited number of suitable school sites (for example, it may be necessary to build multi-story schools).

In the Developing Tier, the Commission recommends discouraging noncontiguous development by placing the responsibility for the costs of on- and off-site facilities with developers of noncontiguous parcels.

In addition, the Commission found that new developments and major redevelopment/revitalization projects should contribute to reducing average vehicle miles travelled per person and increasing the proportion of transit-based trips by 25% by 2020 (in 1998, the proportion of transit trips was 5.47%).

The report also calls for protecting an average of 1,500 acres of agricultural, forest, and sensitive lands per year. The Commission recommends changes to the way the county addresses development in the "pipeline" -- approved, unbuilt development -- and a comprehensive review of the development review and approval process.

The Commission's recommendations have been forwarded to the County Council, which will now set about updating the county's master plan, last updated in 1982. For more info contact Commission staffer,

Tom Tyson, (301) 952-4712 or Kristin Forsyth, 1,000 Friends of Maryland, at (410) 385-2910 or kforsyth@friendsofmd.org.

RESTORE THE CORE CITIZEN'S GUIDE

"People will only care for our streams, forests, and fields if they also have homes, jobs, and neighborhoods worth preserving." So states the introduction to a new report from the Sierra Club's Restore the Core campaign in the District of Columbia. The campaign seeks to bring jobs and investment to the District in a way that enhances DC's many neighborhoods while ensuring that current residents benefit from the changes.

The Citizen's Guide describes the elements of a livable community -- such things as viable green spaces and an easy-to-use transportation system -- and how citizens can get involved. Stories on WAMU and in the Current newspapers highlighted the message that in order to provide viable alternatives to sprawl, the District must not be just developed but developed in a way that makes the city more livable, particularly for the residents who are living here today. The report is available as a .pdf file at <http://www.sierraclub.org/chapters/dc/rtc.pdf>, or send an email to deron.lovaas@sierraclub.org. A \$5 donation is appreciated. To get involved with the campaign, contact Danilo Pelletiere at (703) 993-3564 (work) or dpelleti@gmu.edu.

MARYLAND TRANSPORTATION PERFORMANCE GOALS ACT

The purpose of this ground-breaking law is to establish transportation accountability through measurable transportation performance goals by which the public, the legislature and state government can determine if transportation investments are yielding expected results in reducing traffic congestion and increasing transportation choices. This legislation provides for the Maryland Department of Transportation to set measurable short-term and long-term goals for reducing traffic congestion and increasing the share of trips made by auto alternatives: mass transit, bicycle, pedestrian and high occupancy vehicle. Only a diversified approach to transportation coupled with

UPCOMING

Sun, August 20 - National Bicycle Greenway Bike Rally. Cyclists from around the Nation converge on downtown DC to celebrate new federal support for cycling as a form of transportation and to call for a nationwide network of onnected local and interstate byways. 10 am ride, 2 pm street fair in the city of Mount Rainier., MD For more info see www.bikeroute.com/CycleAmerica2000.

Sat, August 26, 8:30 – 5 – Wetlands Conservation and Sustainability Workshop. Geared toward individuals with limited background in wetland ecology. Wetland functions and values, regulations, and how to start a wetland stewardship project. Hedgesville, WV (Berkeley County, eastern panhandle). Sponsored by Izaak Walton League and Blue Heron Environmental Network. \$25 fee. Sherry Evasic: (304) 754-8717 or bheni@blue-heron.org.

Sun, Sept. 10 - BikeDC 2000, a 35-mile bike tour of the Nation’s capital, including a car-free ride along Roosevelt Bridge, GW Pkwy, Whitehurst Freeway and Canal Rd. Last year’s ride was voted Best City Tour by Bicycling Magazine. Washington Area Bicyclist Assn, www.waba.org or (202) 628-2500.

Meetings of the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB), 777 N. Capitol St, NE (Union Station metro). Contact: Donna Duncan (202) 962-3311.

Aug 10, TPB Citizens Advisory Cmte Working Meeting (6 pm)

Sept 1, TPB Tech Cmte (9 am)

Sept 14, TPB Citizens Advisory Cmte (6 pm) - Public discussion of the region’s proposed 25-year transportation plan and general transportation issues. Anacostia Professional Bldg, 2041 Martin Luther King, Jr. Ave.

Sept 19, Bicycle & Pedestrian Technical Subcmte (1 pm)

Sept 20, TPB (noon)

Oct 12, Citizens Advisory Cmte to the TPB (6 pm)

Oct 18, TPB (noon)

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transportation demand management and smart growth will reduce congestion. For more information visit the Surface Transportation Policy Project’s Tool of the Month website, <http://www.transact.org/Toolmonth/tools.htm>, and click on the July tool.

WRN Contribution Form

*** Add \$20/person for Intersect to be faxed long-distance or mailed (to cover costs).

Individual Contribution Categories:

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___ Basic Individual \$35*

___ Supporter \$80* (includes WRN mug, \$7 value)

___ Sustainer \$120 (includes WRN mug & a copy of WRN’s vision *A New Approach*, \$12 value)

Organizational Contribution Categories:

___ Small \$60*

___ Basic \$200 (Intersect sent to up to 3 individuals* & recognition in Intersect 2x/year)

___ Sustaining \$500

___ - Intersect sent to up to 15 individuals by email or local fax*

___ - Recognition in Intersect 4x/year

___ - Constant recognition on WRN’s website with link (starting 2/99; email 200 word description & your web address to debkatz@megsnet.net)

Please attach separate sheet for additional persons:

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___ Interested in volunteering. Please contact me.

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Please return this form with a check payable to WRN, 1777 Church St, NW, Washington DC, 20036. WRN is a 501c(3) non-profit organization and contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. Thank you!