Comprehensive Plan
for the National Capital

Transportation *element*

contents

Introduction

Transportation

It is the goal of the federal government to:

Develop and maintain a multi-modal regional transportation system that meets the travel needs of residents, workers, and visitors, while improving regional mobility and air quality through expanded transportation alternatives and transit-oriented development.

The federal government's ability to get its employees to and from the workplace in an efficient and stress-free manner impacts the general productivity of its workforce and its ability to attract and retain quality personnel.

According to the Texas Transportation Institute, the National Capital Region is the second most congested region in the nation, following Los Angeles. Over the next 25 years, the number of vehicle miles traveled—a common measure of driving distances—is expected to increase by 46 percent. Metrorail trains are operating well above design limits, handling crush loads during rush hour; and Maryland Rail Commuter Service and Virginia Railway Express commuter railroads are standing room only. Around the region, transportation infrastructure is struggling to keep pace with a growing demand. As greater numbers of people move to the region each year, their settlement patterns and transportation choices impact the available capacities of existing transportation systems, as well as the decision-making process for investments in new transportation systems. Transportation system investments and regional growth patterns are interconnected, and the decisions we make in each of these policy areas affect others, as well as the quality of life for residents in the region. Transportation systems have a direct impact on regional land use decisions, which in turn impact transportation demand.

The federal government provided over $72 million in transit commuter rail and vanpool subsidies for federal employees in 2001, through WMATA's Metrocheck program.

As the region's largest employer, the federal government's efforts to encourage alternative commuting modes for its employees will make a significant contribution to regional solutions. Federal policies supporting transit use, ridesharing, telecommuting, and other alternative commute modes provide a range of options that compare favorably against the region's congested roadways. These options are increasingly seen as a benefit of working for the federal government. The Comprehensive Plan focuses on working with regional entities in developing solutions that offer greater transportation system efficiencies and a wider range of transportation choices that will result in improved access and mobility for federal and non-federal employees alike.

The Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan is built upon the principles of Transit First and Smart Growth. In conjunction with the location and design policies of the Federal Workplace: Location, Impact, and the Community Element, the Transportation Element focuses on maximizing federal employees' and facilities' access to the region's extensive transit system. By limiting parking at federal facilities within easy reach of the Metrorail system and supporting transit incentive programs, the Transportation Element provides both an incentive and a rational approach to shifting drivers to transit. Policies within the element also support bicycle commuting, reward ridesharing, and bolster transit use by encouraging new transit services and enhanced pedestrian environments on federal campuses. These policies are designed to work with regional Transit-Oriented Development strategies to provide an expanded range of housing, shopping, and recreation opportunities near transit.

The federal government employs approximately 370,000 people in the National Capital Region. As the region's largest employer, the federal government has a strong interest in improving the quality of transportation services and infrastructure. As such, the federal government is in a unique position to provide leadership in transportation decisions that can accommodate the travel needs of its workforce while simultaneously setting the standard for the region as a whole. This dual role will foster the development of the transportation infrastructure required by the federal government while contributing to overall infrastructure solutions and beneficial development patterns in the region.

APPROXIMATELY 175,000 FEDERAL EMPLOYEES RECEIVED METRO CHECKS IN 2002.

The federal government continues to take an active leadership role in the transportation arena. Through its mandatory regional transit subsidy program, the federal government provided nearly $75 million in transit subsidies for federal employees in 2001. This program has been a huge success. The Metro system carried a record number of rail and bus passengers in 2001—more than a million every day—and 42 percent of rush hour commuters on Metrorail were federal government employees, according to Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) surveys. Given that federal employees make up just 14 percent of the regional workforce, this is an impressive success story.

The federal government's alternative work schedules have long contributed to commuter flexibility, and new federal policies prescribe the maximum number of parking spaces that federal agencies may provide. These policies are unique in the region and recognize that the provision of parking spaces at the workplace is perhaps the most important factor in the employee's selection of travel mode.

The federal government is already a recognized leader in addressing the region's transportation challenges, but these challenges are great and require a more coordinated approach to raise the overall level of success. Achieving a balanced set of regional solutions requires an approach that recognizes the reciprocal relationship between providing incentives and options and minimizing disincentives; rewards choices that benefit the region; and prioritizes investments in transportation infrastructure. The policies contained herein are designed to achieve such a coordinated approach.

Policies

Commuter Rail, Rail Transit, and Bus Transit

Context

Capacity and connectivity. Congestion management and improved air quality. Balanced land use and smart growth. Transport options beyond the private automobile. These regional goals are best served by providing and funding a variety of transit options, with an emphasis on a finely grained network of overlapping and complementary transport services. Federal workers and visitors in the region should be able to meet many of their travel needs by some form of transit. From long distance travel to commuting to meeting daily shopping needs, transit should play a viable role. Only by providing a full range of transit services can the region hope to balance the use of transit with that of the private automobile. Given the significant number of households and employees in the region that are associated with the federal government, federal policies can and should play a direct and effective role in the development of such an extensive transit network. The existing transit system is struggling to meet a growing demand. Metrobus service should be more frequent and routes need to be updated. Portions of the Metrorail system are operating beyond capacity. New investment in buses and rail cars, operation

and maintenance facilities, and personnel are needed to accommodate the region's growing number of transit riders. While transit will not solve all of the region's transportation problems, and cars and roadways will continue to play an important role, a stronger focus on transit will be necessary to address the transportation demands of our growing region. The number of transit riders continues to grow as regional planners work to shift additional drivers to transit modes in order to address escalating regional traffic congestion and declining regional air quality. WMATA plans to purchase additional rail cars to assemble eight-car train sets. It also plans to build new lines and construct underground pedestrian connections between stations to address the need for greater system capacity. WMATA will also purchase new alternative fuel buses to provide additional transit service while reducing adverse impacts on air quality. All of this new equipment and infrastructure will require greater levels of investment. The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG) estimates that the region currently faces a $532 million annual shortfall, more than 50 percent of anticipated transit funding levels, to meet regional transit system maintenance, rehabilitation, and expansion needs. Federal and local governments must continue to focus more resources to transit modes in order to keep pace with the growing demand.

THE METRORAIL SYSTEM CARRIED A RECORD NUMBER OF RIDERS IN 2001, OVER A MILLION EVERY DAY.

Commuter Rail, Rail Transit, and Bus Transit

Policies

In order to create an integrated network of complementary transit services, the federal government should support:

1. Capacity and service expansion of the regional Metrorail and Metrobus systems, and other local and regional transit services.
2. Expanded levels of service for commuter rail between the District of Columbia and the States of Maryland and Virginia.
3. Increased utilization of passenger rail service, including conventional and magnetic levitation high-speed trains, in the northeast corridor of the United States to serve Union Station in the District of Columbia.
4. Exclusive transit rights-of-way to all regional airports with an emphasis on establishing opportunities for transit-oriented development near stations along these routes.
5. The design and implementation of new, expanded, and innovative transit services that supplement existing transit and fill unmet transit needs (e.g., Downtown Circulator, Busway, Bus Rapid Transit projects, light rail, trolley).
6. The efforts of local jurisdictions to plan, design, and construct light rail systems to supplement Metrorail.
7. The development of intermodal transit centers that provide greater transit access and improved interconnectivity for federal commuters.

Parking

Context

Historically, federal parking policies and parking ratios have been based on a system of concentric rings emanating from the District of Columbia's Central Employment Area (CEA). The closer a federal facility was to the CEA, the lower the allowed ratio of parking spaces to employees. For instance, in the CEA, a federal agency was allowed one space for every 5 employees; while in the very outer suburbs, a federal agency was allowed a ratio as high as 1 space for every 1.5 employees. The basic rationale was sound; the further a federal agency was from the region's center, the less likely that federal employees would have a range of choices in travel mode for the commute. The region's outer suburbs tended to be, and still tend to be, more spread out with poorer transit access than downtown Washington, D.C. These parking policies, however, did not directly reflect a federal facility's proximity to a particular Metrorail station.

FEDERAL PARKING POLICIES ARE DESIGNATED IN RESPONSE TO REGIONAL CONGESTION AND AIR QUALITY LEVELS.

In this update to the Federal Elements of the Comprehensive Plan, federal parking policies and associated parking ratios have herein been adjusted to reflect the relationship between the location of federal workplaces relative to the Metrorail system, the backbone of the region's transit network. Furthermore, the Comprehensive Plan update takes into account the completion and expansion of the Metrorail system, as several new stations have opened in recent years. Additionally, regional air quality does not meet federally-mandated levels and the number of congested lane-miles in the region has doubled since the Comprehensive Plan was last published. All of these factors have been considered in updating federal parking policies, and the results are reflected herein.

The development of the parking policies that follow was also highly influenced by the overall quality of available transit services; the proximity and cost of commercial parking facilities; guidelines established by local zoning ordinances; and walking distances and conditions in the region's various cities and counties. Reasonable walking distance has been defined herein as 2,000 feet, or somewhere between 1/4 and 1/2 mile—about a 10-minute walk.[1,2] Parking ratios have been developed around this standard, which is in accord with standard industry planning practices.

The point of all this is to address the very real regional issues of traffic congestion and poor air quality by maximizing the use of alternative modes to the private automobile. The federal government needs to conduct its business and to get its employees to work, and the significant regional challenges of traffic congestion and poor air quality pose a very real threat to accomplishing these goals. The federal government should actively manage its parking supply to provide parking spaces only to those employees who have no alternatives to driving alone—giving priority to carpools and vanpools—while accommodating visitors and the physically disabled. Providing incentives for employees to leave their cars at home is central to managing the parking supply.

In the development of federal parking ratios based on proximity to the Metrorail system, special consideration should be given to federal facilities near "end-of-line" stations, such as the Suitland Federal Center. These "end-of-line" stations and near "end-of-line" stations provide a somewhat lesser quality of transit service than those at the center of the system, given current commuting patterns. Many employees "commute in" to such federal facilities from areas that lie beyond the Metrorail system. As residential and employment patterns shift over time, federal employees may choose to live closer to the transit lines that serve their work places. In the mean time, every federal facility should be considered relative to its own unique situation, and parking ratios should be applied and enforced with thoughtful consideration.

Note: 1. For federal facilities deemed to be within walking distance of Metrorail, the Commission will consider the position of the given Metrorail station within the context of the overall Metrorail system and utilize flexibility in enforcing compliance with prescribed parking ratios.

2. Reasonable walking distance from Metro is herein defined as 2000 feet, which falls between ¼ mile and ½ mile, or approximately a 10-minute walk. This definition is based on commonly accepted planning principles and is supported by the zoning ordinances of Washington, D.C. regional jurisdictions. Distance is measured between the closest entrance to a Metrorail station and the closer of either the entrance to a federal building or the closest portion of the perimeter of a federal campus.

Parking
Policies

The federal government should:

8. Provide parking only for those federal employees who are unable to use other travel modes.
9. Give priority to carpool and vanpool parking over that for single-occupant vehicles.
10. Provide parking for disabled persons in accordance with federal law.
11. Provide parking for official vehicles and visitors in accordance with Federal Property Management Regulations.
12. Place parking in structures, preferably below ground, in the interest of efficient land use and good urban design.
13. Position parking facilities so as not to obstruct pedestrian and bicycle access to buildings.
14. Consider nearby commercial parking space availability in calculating parking requirements, assuming that employees who choose to drive can purchase parking in nearby private facilities at market rates.

Parking Ratios
Context

The parking ratios that follow are intended to be used as goals for federal agencies. Federal agency Transportation Management Plans (TMPs) should be developed around attaining these goals, although each federal facility's parking ratio will be evaluated independently and final determination will be based upon the circumstances specific to that facility's operational characteristics and location, including local area impacts. Detailed TMPs will be required to justify all proposed parking ratios. TMPs are required to include an analysis of impacts to surrounding local transportation facilities as a result of the anticipated vehicle or transit trips generated by employees.

An available parking space at the work site is perhaps the most important factor in an employee's decision of commuting mode. It is in the best interest of the federal government to encourage employees to use transit, as well as carpools and vanpools in order to reduce demand on the region's limited transportation infrastructure capacity. Money to increase transportation system capacity is scarce, and the current levels of traffic congestion and poor air quality—caused in large part by single-occupant commuter vehicles—degrade our employees' quality of life and impact the federal government's ability to conduct business in the region.

Parking ratios, the number of parking spaces available per employee population, have been divided into four categories depending on the urban character of each area as well as the availability of infrastructure that supports alternative commuting modes. Many factors have been taken into account in developing these ratios, which are outlined below. Note that these policies are designed around federal agencies with office functions, and that special consideration should be given to federal facilities with non-office functions such as laboratories and warehouses, and to those employing multiple shifts.

Previously-approved parking ratios at federal facilities will be honored by the Commission until an updated master plan or major project is submitted for approval. Such master plans or projects will be evaluated against the new ratios and must be supported by revised Transportation Management Plans (TMPs).

Distances between federal facilities and Metrorail stations will be measured as follows:

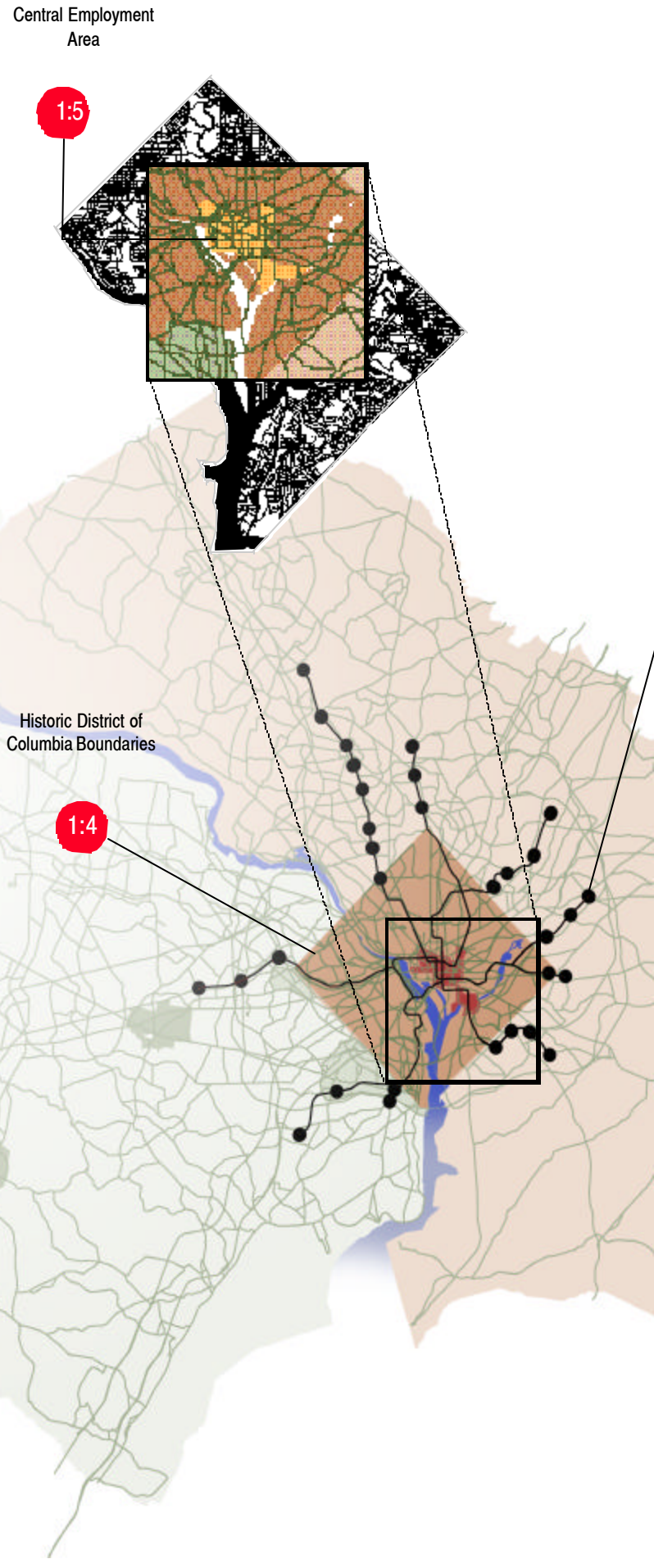
- For an individual federal building: from the entrance of the Metro station to the entrance of the building.
- If a federal building is located within a federal campus or enclave: from the entrance of the Metro station to the closest portion of the perimeter of the federal campus or enclave.

Central Employment Area (CEA)
One parking space for every five employees (1:5)

The CEA is characterized by a high concentration of transit services, a walkable and lively street network, and a relative abundance of commercial parking. Within the CEA, the majority of federal facilities lie within ¼ mile (1320 feet) of a Metrorail station, and are connected to the station by a network of comfortably walkable streets. Additionally, numerous Metrobus routes, express buses, commuter rail services, and private shuttles serve the CEA; and commercial parking facilities are more abundant in the CEA than in other parts of the region. Since the time that NCPC developed parking ratios for the previous edition of the Comprehensive Plan, WMATA has completed construction of the original Metrorail system, adding stations along all of its lines. For all of these reasons, the CEA can better support federal commuters using alternate transport modes, reducing the need for the federal government to provide parking spaces. Congestion levels in the CEA and poor air quality due to mobile emissions sources further support maintaining federal parking ratios in the CEA at 1:5.

Historic District of Columbia Boundaries
One parking space for every four employees (1:4)

The Historic District of Columbia Boundary includes the entire District of Columbia outside of the CEA, all of Arlington County, and that portion of the city of Alexandria that lies within the original borders of the District of Columbia. This area is well served by transit, but federal facilities in these areas tend to be somewhat further from Metrorail stations than in the CEA (between ¼ and ½ mile) due to increases in station spacing. Streets surrounding federal facilities are very walkable. The completion of the original Metrorail system and the significant amount of transit-oriented development in these areas both support higher transit use than in the past. Commercial parking is generally available. Some federal facilities, such as the Pentagon, have direct Metro access while others, such as the new location for the Patent and Trademark Office, are a 10-minute walk.



Suburban Areas within 2000 feet of Metrorail

1:3

Suburban Areas beyond 2000 feet of Metrorail

1:1.5-1:2

Suburban Areas within 2000 feet of Metrorail
One parking space for every three employees (1:3)

Because suburban areas in the region tend to be less well served by transit at the home side of trips, commuters must often park and ride to utilize Metrorail. Bus transit services in general are fewer and far between. Offices may be located near Metrorail, but ridership to these offices is expected to be lower than in more urban parts of the region. Walking conditions typically degrade with distance from Metrorail stations, and there are fewer commercial parking facilities than in the more urban parts of the region. Suburban areas within 2,000 feet of Metrorail are defined as those areas beyond the Historic District of Columbia boundaries, but within 2,000 feet of a Metrorail station. Federal facilities that fall into this category include the Suitland Federal Center and the National Institutes of Health. Special consideration will be given to federal facilities near Metrorail stations at or near the end of the line.

Suburban Areas beyond 2000 feet of Metrorail
Phased approach linked to planned improvements over Time. (1:1.5-1:2)

Some federal facilities in the National Capital Region lie beyond the reach of the regional transit system. For such federal facilities, particularly those not served by High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes, ridesharing and other forms of commuting by means other than single occupant vehicle are problematic. The current goal of 1 parking space for every 1.5 employees (1:1.5) has been challenging for some of these facilities to obtain; however, this goal has led to the implementation of innovative and effective strategies that help reduce congestion. For this reason, the base parking ratio of 1:1.5 that was established for these locations in the 1983 Federal Elements of the Comprehensive Plan will be maintained in this 2003 update. Because the intent of the Comprehensive Plan is to address the region's worsening problems of traffic congestion and air pollution, more stringent parking ratios for these facilities should be phased-in over time as new transit infrastructure, transit services, and HOV lanes are provided to serve these outlying areas. Federal facilities that are served by HOV lanes today and in the future will be expected to achieve a parking ratio of 1 space for every 2 employees (1:2).

The Commission will consider parking ratios for federal facilities in these outlying areas within the context of the Constrained Long Range Plan (CLRP), a regional planning tool that ties air quality and transportation improvements to available funding sources. As new transportation infrastructure near a federal facility comes on line, the facility will be required to meet the more stringent parking ratios associated with the availability of the new infrastructure. Federal agencies should include CLRP projects within the vicinity of their facilities in their TMPs for planning purposes, and such TMPs should be updated regularly to reflect changes in CLRP projects over time.

Comprehensive Plan policies discourage locating new federal facilities in these outlying areas because they are poorly served by transportation infrastructure, limiting the commuting options available to federal employees. Additionally, it is inefficient from a regional perspective to fund infrastructure extensions to new areas when adequate infrastructure already exists in more highly developed areas.

- Parking ratios for federal facilities located outside of the District of Columbia, Arlington County and Old Town Alexandria, and beyond 2000 feet of a Metrorail station:
  1 parking space for every 1.5 employees (1:1.5)

- If HOV lanes exist along or are included in the CLRP for the major highway corridor in proximity to a federal facility in this category, and the completion of the HOV lanes coincides with the federal facility's build-out schedule:
  1 parking space for every 2 employees (1:2)

- If a new Metrorail station is planned to open within 2000 feet of a federal facility in this zone, and the opening of a new Metrorail station coincides with the federal facility's build-out schedule:
  1 parking space for every 3 employees (1:3)

Parking Ratios

Policies

15. Within the Central Employment Area, the parking ratio should not exceed one space for every five employees.

16. Outside of the Central Employment Area, but within the Historic District of Columbia boundaries, the parking ratio should not exceed one space for every four employees.

17. For suburban federal facilities within 2,000 feet of a Metrorail station, the parking ratio should not exceed one space for every three employees.

18. For suburban federal facilities beyond 2,000 feet of a Metrorail station, the parking ratio will reflect a phased approach linked to planned improvements over time.

Transportation Management Plans (TMPs)

Context

A Transportation Management Plan documents an employer's active program to foster more efficient employee commuting patterns. The plan includes specific strategies to encourage change in employee travel modes, trip timing, frequency and length, and travel routes so as to reduce traffic congestion and improve air quality. TMPs outline the strategies that a federal agency intends to employ to meet federal parking goals or ratios within a specified period of time. They provide a vehicle for communicating a federal agency's commitment to reduce the demand for parking spaces and encourage employees to select alternative commuting modes.

TMPs OUTLINE STEPS THAT FEDERAL AGENCIES CAN TAKE TO REDUCE SINGLE-OCCUPANT VEHICLE COMMUTING BY THEIR EMPLOYEES.

Additionally, TMPs highlight the transportation coordination requirements that stem from a federal agency's location relative to surrounding local jurisdictions. They are impact-based, requiring customized solutions for unique circumstances, and focus on the effects to surrounding communities.

The Commission uses TMPs to evaluate a federal facility's ability to comply with prescribed employee parking ratios. Factors such as the relative proximity of carpool lanes, the position of the facility's nearest Metrorail station within the overall Metrorail system, work hours and shifts at the facility, and employee residence locations are considered. The Commission will consider all of the factors presented in the TMP in weighing compliance with prescribed parking ratios; and encourages federal agencies to develop innovative solutions that contribute to reductions in traffic congestion and improvements in air quality.

Transportation Management Plans (TMPs)

Policies

Federal agencies should:

19. Prepare Transportation Management Plans (TMP) to encourage employee commuting by modes other than the single-occupant vehicle.

20. Develop TMPs that explore methods and strategies to meet prescribed parking ratios, and include a thorough rationale and technical analysis in support of all TMP findings.

21. Analyze scenarios that incorporate data on employee home zip codes, nearby bus routes, Metrorail, MARC, and VRE lines and their schedules, and that identify existing and planned HOV lanes.

22. Include, within TMPs, implementation plans with timetables outlining each agency's commitment to reaching TMP goals.

23. Reflect, within TMPs, planned regional transportation infrastructure or service improvements within five miles of the federal facilities.

24. Submit their most recent TMP with all master plans and with all projects that increase employment on site by 100 or more.

25. Update TMPs at least every two years to reflect the most current employee information.

Transportation Demand Management

Context

The federal government has at its disposal various methods to address transportation needs without providing new infrastructure. These methods address the demand side of the transportation equation rather than the supply side. Managing the demand for transportation services before it results in the need to build new infrastructure can be a cost effective way to address growing transportation needs. Such "transportation demand management" techniques include spreading out the peak travel period to reduce peak loading; reducing the total number of trips that need to be made; encouraging higher occupancies of vehicles using the system; and shifting trips to modes with excess capacity. The federal government already employs some of these methods.

MANAGING TRANSPORTATION DEMAND IS COST EFFECTIVE

Transportation demand management strategies will help the region make more efficient use of limited transportation system capacities.

Transportation Demand Management

Policies

The federal government should:

26. Encourage ridesharing, biking, walking, and other non-single-occupant vehicle modes of transportation for federal commuters.
27. Maximize telecommuting strategies for employees in accordance with federal law.
28. Employ compressed and variable work schedules for employees, consistent with agency missions.
29. Support pedestrian and transit commuting through Live-Near-Work programs.
30. Steadily increase transit subsidy rates, and consider applying subsidies and incentives to other modes, such as biking, walking, carpooling, and vanpooling.

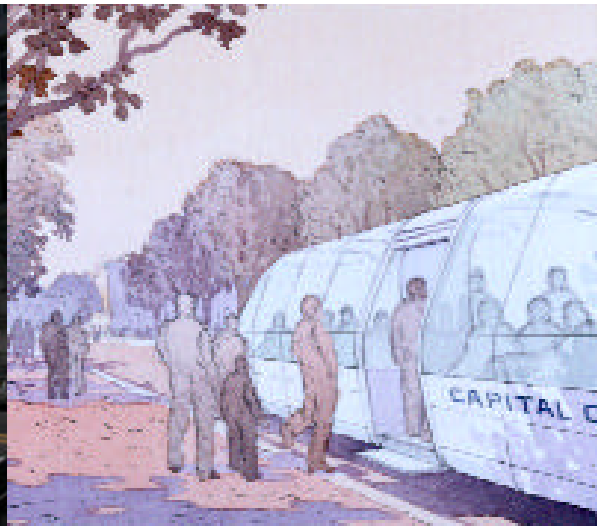
Shuttles and Circulators

Context

Shuttles and circulators are transit services that fill gaps in existing transit networks in order to serve unmet travel needs. While shuttles provide point-to-point service, circulators run loop service connecting multiple points in a network. Whether completing a commute trip or providing service during the work day, shuttles and circulators play an important role in increasing overall transit system accessibility and use.

While many federal agencies in the region operate limited shuttle and circulator services today, federal law prohibits more extensive service that would benefit federal employees. 31 USC Section 1344 limits the use of federal funds in transporting employees between their residence and workplace, and by extension prohibits the funding of shuttles from transit stations to federal facilities. Shuttles used to extend transit service between Metrorail stations and outlying employment sites would complement and strengthen the regional transit system and contribute to transit ridership by increasing the transit system's competitiveness measured against private auto use. Current service in operation is limited to shuttles between federal buildings in the Central Employment Area, and on-campus circulators such as those in use at the National Institutes of Health and at the Suitland Federal Center. New shuttle service to places like the Food and Drug Administration complex at White Oak and the NASA Goddard Space Flight Center would benefit federal employees by extending transit service to these outlying employment sites.

Many federal agencies run shuttles in downtown D.C. to transport employees for official business during the workday.



The planned Downtown Circulator may eliminate the need for some federal agency shuttles downtown.

Shuttles and Circulators

Policies

31. Federal agencies should operate on-campus circulators on federal campuses with multiple federal buildings. Such circulators should have the following operating characteristics and associated infrastructure:

    - Maximum of 15-minute headways or on-call service
    - Service to areas of federal campuses adjacent to or near Metrorail stations
    - Waiting facilities (shelters, benches)
    - Signage to identify shuttle stops and maps of service area

32. The federal government should implement legislation allowing employee shuttle services to connect federal work sites to the Metrorail system for home-to-work trips where service is not adequately provided by public transit. Currently, 31 USC, Section 1344 prohibits the operation of such services by the federal government.

33. If such legislation is implemented, federal agencies should fund Metrorail station to workplace shuttles if inadequate transit connections are present.

34. Transit station-to-workplace shuttles should be combined with on-campus circulators where on-campus circulators are employed.

35. Federal agencies should operate cross-town shuttles in urban areas where inadequate transit service exists to provide transportation between federal agencies doing business with one another or among several locations of one agency. Shuttle services should be coordinated among federal agencies with overlapping route requirements. Where local transit services exist to serve these travel needs, federal agencies should utilize these services in lieu of providing their own shuttles.

WASHINGTON AREA COMMUTERS MAKE 20,000 BIKE TRIPS EACH DAY

Metrobuses operating in the District of Columbia have been equipped with bicycle racks.

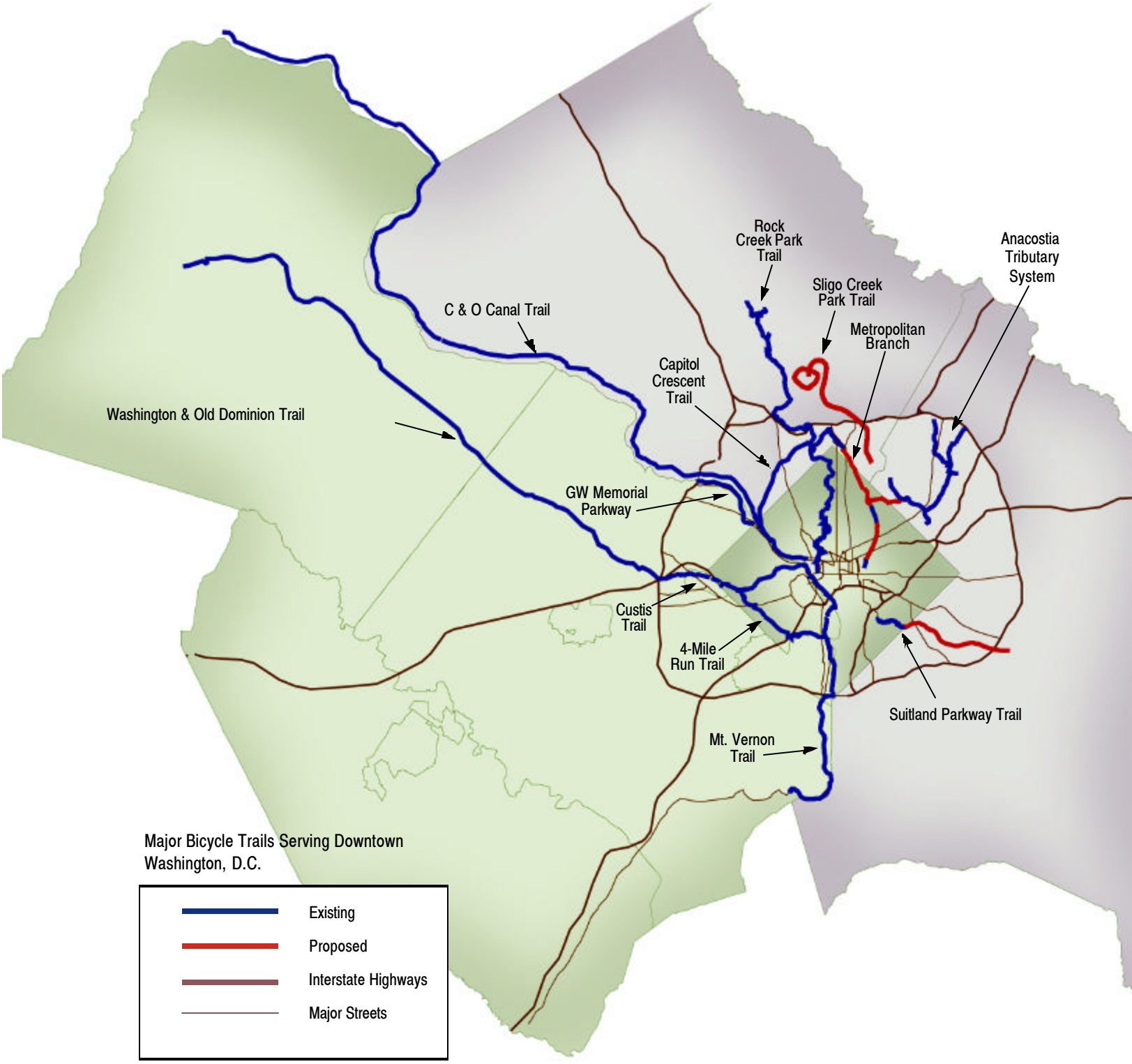
Bicycle Facilities

Context

In 1993, Congress passed the Federal Employees Clean Air Incentives Act, which encourages alternative commuting to federal worksites. According to the Act, Public Law 103-172, "the head of each agency may establish a program to encourage employees of such agency to use means other than single-occupancy vehicles to commute to or from work [including furnishing space, facilities or services to bicyclists]."

Many of the region's federal facilities lie along or within easy reach of the region's extensive bicycle trail system, yet little effort has been made to accommodate bicycle travel as a viable federal employee commute mode. The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG) estimates that Washington-area commuters make 20,000 bike trips each day, accounting for 30 percent of all bike trips in the region. MWCOG also estimates that half of all area commuters live eight miles or less from work—a distance that is easy to cover by bike given the proper facilities.

The provision of facilities to serve bicycle commuters holds the potential to vastly increase the number of employees choosing this transport mode. Despite an extensive regional bicycle trail system, only about ½ percent of all commuters choose this mode today. The Washington Area Bicyclist Association (WABA) cites a goal of a 5 percent bicycle mode share, and recommends that all office buildings be provided with space to accommodate that percentage. This goal is further supported by District of Columbia and Arlington County zoning ordinances. The District requires that 5 percent of all parking spaces be bike spaces; and Arlington guidelines require one bicycle space for every 7,500 square feet of office space. Space reserved now for bicycle parking can be outfitted later in accordance with demand. Facilities required to support bicycle commuting include secure parking facilities for bicycles, showers and locker rooms for bicycle commuters, as well as connections to the regional trail system. Bicycle routes on federal office campuses should connect to all campus buildings. Other benefits of switching large numbers of employees to this transport mode include improved employee fitness and morale, and improvements to regional air quality.



Major Bicycle Trails Serving Downtown Washington, D.C.

Bicycle Facilities

Policies

In order to encourage greater bike ridership, the federal government should:

36. Provide bicycle travel lanes, paths, or trails between campus entrance points and all buildings on the campus. Where bike lanes, paths, or trails exist outside of the campus, bicycle travel ways on campus should connect to those outside of the campus.

37. Provide secure and sheltered bicycle parking spaces or lockers in close proximity to building entrances at federal buildings and on federal campuses. The number of spaces provided should be in accordance with the requirements of the local jurisdiction in which the federal facility resides, if such requirements exist. In the absence of such requirements, federal facilities should provide an abundant supply of bicycle lockers or parking spaces to meet current employee needs and to promote bicycle commuting.

38. Provide employee clothes lockers and showers at federal buildings and on federal campuses to support bicycle commuters. Space should be reserved in new facilities to allow for the provision of showers and lockers to support the bicycle commuting population. Specific goals for bicycle parking should be outlined in the TMP, keeping in mind that visitors may also arrive by bicycle.

39. Provide a safe and convenient means of entry and egress to vehicle garages for bicycle commuters.

40. Work with local jurisdiction bike coordinators, Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, Commuter Connections, and bicycle proponents such as the Washington Area Bicyclist Association and others to promote bicycle commuting among federal employees.

41. Support the development of a continuous system of trails for hikers and bikers in the region, with an emphasis on bicycle commuting.

42. Allow bicycle trail access through federal properties where such access does not conflict with federal security requirements.

43. Support the efforts of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority to provide facilities that encourage bicycle commuting, such as bicycle lockers at transit stations and bike racks on board buses.

Other Infrastructure and Transportation Services

Context

In addition to affecting federal employee commuting patterns, the federal government has a role to play in providing and benefiting from a variety of other transportation infrastructure and service investments. These range from the removal of infrastructure barriers to the development of connections among various transportation modes to the movement of freight. The federal government should play a leadership role in partnering to address these issues.

The MWCOG estimates that it will cost approximately $62 billion over the next 25 years just to maintain and operate the existing regional transportation system and another $15 billion to expand it to meet future needs in that time frame. Identifying the resources necessary to fund such improvements will be a challenge, and prioritizing them to get the most from our investments will require regional cooperation and careful consideration.

The Southwest/Southeast Freeway interrupts the urban fabric of the District of Columbia.

Other Infrastructure and Transportation Services

Policies

As a regional leader in transportation infrastructure and service investments, the federal government should:

44. Support transit-oriented development at Metrorail stations.

45. Support the establishment of multimodal connections in the regional transportation system.

46. Support District of Columbia efforts to remove freeways and other transportation infrastructure that interrupt the city grid, and to restore the surface network.

47. Encourage the optimum use of all airports serving the region at capacities consistent with environmental constraints (particularly noise) and security concerns.

48. Provide sidewalks among buildings on federal campuses as well as between federal buildings and transit stations.

49. Support regional efforts to manage transportation infrastructure in response to states of emergency.

50. Participate in District of Columbia efforts to manage tour bus operations in the city, providing relief for District residents while accommodating tour industry needs.

51. Support the development of a water taxi system serving the District of Columbia and surrounding jurisdictions to provide an alternative commuting mode, to coincide with waterfront redevelopment opportunities, and to serve waterfront attractions.

Investment Priorities

Context

Different types of transportation investments have different impacts on regional land use and travel patterns, emission of pollutants, and total capacity of trips accommodated. Regional Smart Growth objectives are supported by transportation infrastructure investments that encourage the most efficient use of existing transportation facilities; result in more compact and mixed-use development patterns; and require less frequent use of the private automobile. Efficiency of the overall transportation network, balanced investment, and maximizing choice among transportation modes should be federal goals. Policies that put transit first—funding transit improvements before roadway expansion and construction—will better manage regional transportation infrastructure capacities and improve regional air quality by shifting new vehicle trips to transit.

Many travel modes are integrated at Reagan Washington National Airport.

Investment Priorities

Policies

The federal government should prioritize the following types of transportation infrastructure investment:

52. Fix it first: Support funding to maintain existing transportation facilities, with a further priority on transit facilities.
53. Support funding to increase capacity and security of the regional transit system.
54. Support projects that provide improved transit and roadway access in existing, highly developed areas.
55. Extend the transit system's reach into developed, but underserved areas of the region.
56. Encourage the deployment of new "intelligent transportation" technologies that make more efficient use of roadway capacities.
57. Integrate transit services wherever possible.