

**PUBLIC COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS
RELATED TO DVRPC BOARD ACTION ITEMS**

July 25, 2013

**BOARD
AGENDA ITEM:**

2. Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Action

e. NJ12-76: Rail Rolling Stock Procurement (DB #T112), NJ TRANSIT

From: Avri Dub

County: Montgomery

Zip Code: 19096

Date Received: July 15, 2013

Comment/Question: I'm confused as to why more rolling stock is required. I may have misunderstood, but on Train Day I spoke to an NJT employee about the Hurricane Sandy flooding and its effects on rolling stock. He indicated that there was no equipment shortage problem as there was extra rolling stock on hand due to purchases that were made in advance of the expected new tunnel under the Hudson; he indicated that because the tunnel has been put on hold, there was plenty of extra equipment on hand that the flooding disaster on equipment did not put a crimp on equipment requirements. Maybe he meant shortage only on locomotives or...

Response: Thank you for your comment. Multilevel coaches are being purchased to meet existing ridership demand on the NJ TRANSIT rail system. They will replace the aging "Comet" fleet of rail coaches. The Multilevel coaches are equipped with 2/2 fixed seating, indirect lighting, wide aisles and larger vestibules to provide ease of boarding. They can offer as much as 20% more seating than is available on the vehicles they replace. And, their ability to increase passenger capacity does not require a commensurate increase in infrastructure, such as longer platforms.

4. Adoption of the DVRPC FY2014-2017 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for New Jersey

From: John Boyle

County: Philadelphia

Zip Code: 19102

Date Received: July 22, 2013

Comment/Question: Comments from the Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia. The compilation of TIP comments weigh heavily towards inadequate bicycle and pedestrian accommodations. NJDOT which has what the complete streets coalition calls the best statewide complete streets policy in the nation still has a long way to go in fully implementing that policy. We would love to partner with DVRPC to develop a complete streets policy for the MPO which can lead by example and work to educate their partners on the benefits of complete streets.

Response: Thank you for your comment. A common transportation planning adage is that every trip is a pedestrian trip, since even trips by car will begin and end on foot. As a result, pedestrian planning and the consideration of pedestrian needs are integral elements of nearly all of DVRPC's planning activities. DVRPC's role is to encourage context-sensitive pedestrian and bicycle accommodations throughout the region as part of a complete streets policy framework. We support local pedestrian and bicycle planning efforts through data collection, specific planning projects, and the identification of emerging national and international best practices that may be appropriate for our region. As a concept, Complete Streets are also identified in the draft *Connections 2040* Long-Range Plan for the Greater Philadelphia Region as a highlighted strategy under the "Foster a Multimodal Transportation System" goal. DVRPC appreciates the Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia as advocates for Complete Streets and hopes they will continue to partner with individual municipalities, counties, and MPOs (including DVRPC) for the adoption of Complete Streets policy language where appropriate.

5. Adoption of the Connections 2040 Plan for Greater Philadelphia

From: Thomas McHugh

County: Montgomery

Zip Code: 19095

Date Received: July 11, 2013

Comment/Question: While the previous "Connections" plan mentioned the need to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions many times, "Connections 2040" seems to be absent of any significant reference of the importance of reducing GHG emissions. Instead, "Connections 2040" concentrates only on ozone and fine particle pollution. The steadily increasing ppm level of CO₂ in our atmosphere caused by human activity, including in large measure, residential and industrial energy use and Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) is directly related to global warming and climate change. The role and responsibilities of the DVRPC have a significant impact on the vision and the reality of our region in the coming decades. Reduction of GHG emissions needs to be an important part of that vision, future reality, and "Connections 2040." Prior to approval of "Connections 2040" please revise "Connections 2040" to include the importance of and the need to reduce GHG emissions.

Response: The *Connections 2040 Plan for Greater Philadelphia* continues the emphasis of the preceding Long-Range Plan (*Connections – The Regional Plan for a Sustainable Future*) on reducing GHG emissions. The *Connections 2040* vision calls for a more sustainable future that offers a superior quality of life by increasing mobility choices, preserving more open space, reinvigorating our existing communities, and reducing demand for energy. In this future, more compact, mixed-use development will shorten distances between destinations and encourage alternative forms of transportation. Less energy use will help to reduce CO₂ emissions, making the region more sustainable and economically competitive. By spending less on building new infrastructure ever farther out, more money can be invested in improving our existing core infrastructure. These benefits, like the four core principles outlined by the Plan, are inextricably linked.

Reducing GHG emissions continues to be a goal of the Plan (see below), and an additional goal to prepare communities for the impacts of climate change has been added to the *Connections 2040* Plan. Reducing GHG emissions is prominently asserted under two of the Plan's four core principles. It continues to be a focus of improving our region's economy through reduction of energy demands, and has also been included as a goal under Managing Growth and Protecting the Environment in the *Connections 2040* Plan.

Goal: Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions

The severe weather events and changes to our climate due to global warming pose threats to both the environment and the economy. Global warming is largely due to rising levels of GHGs in the atmosphere. DVRPC's *Regional Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Energy Use Inventory* estimates that in 2010, the region produced 81.6 million metric tons CO₂ equivalent of GHGs. This was roughly 1.2 percent of the U.S. total GHG emissions, about the same as the countries of Portugal and Austria, both of which have populations about two times that of the DVRPC region.

The Plan set a target of reducing 2005 GHG emissions by 50 percent by the year 2035. A 60 percent reduction from 2005 GHG emissions levels by 2040 would keep the region on track to reach an 80 percent reduction by 2050. Achieving this goal will require significant coordinated action at the household, firm, community, regional, state, national, and global level.

Reduced burning of fossil fuels means cleaner air and lower amounts of the greenhouse gas emissions that lead to global warming. Maintaining and enhancing forests and soils that sequester (store) carbon is also important. For example, the trees located in the Hopewell Big Woods, a 73,000-acre mostly intact forestland on the border of Chester and Berks counties, store carbon valued at approximately \$18 million. (*Return on Environment*, 2010).

Future land and housing development patterns in the region over the coming decades will also have a significant role in shaping future energy use and GHG emissions. As the GHG emissions map illustrates, those municipalities with walkable, mixed-use neighborhoods; near transit infrastructure; and with smaller houses, use less energy and produce lower GHG emissions per person. DVRPC's transportation and land use planning policies, priorities, and projects are all aligned to advance these goals.

Strategies to Reduce GHG Emissions

- Promote energy efficiency.
- Produce energy with less CO₂ by promoting a move to low- and no-carbon fuels.
- Maintain healthy forest lands and promote the planting of additional trees.
- Reduce the demand for transportation energy by locating jobs, housing, and services closer together and encouraging denser development.
- Municipalities should adopt alternative energy ordinances to insure that alternative energy production is compatible with existing land uses in a community.

From: John Boyle

County: Philadelphia

Zip Code: 19102

Date Received: July 24, 2013

Comment/Question: Comments from the Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia: Thank You for accepting our comments. We disagree with the response that the Philadelphia Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan is not a major regional transportation project. On a geographic scale only the Circuit covers a larger project area (in square miles). Furthermore the plan is currently a stand alone document and is not referenced at all in the current TIP. We estimate that it will cost \$60M to complete the bike lanes, sidewalks and trails in the plan and at current spending levels the

full implementation horizon is well beyond the 2020 target date of the bike/ped plan. The Bicycle Coalition concurs with NJDOT's Commuter and Mobility Strategies Manager Sheree Davis comments on the lack of emphasis on complete streets and bicycle and pedestrian safety. Currently 24% of all traffic fatalities in the region are bicyclists and pedestrians. While complete streets is included as a strategy in the LRP, there is no goal associated with implementing complete streets.

Response: This comment has been forwarded to the project team.

From: Bridget Chadwick

County: Montgomery

Zip Code: 19095

Date Received: July 24, 2013

Comment/Question: In the executive summary and/or front pages of DVRPC's Long Range plans (2040 Connections Plan for Greater Philadelphia) and current Transportation Improvement Programs for either PA or NJ (e.g. NJ 2014-17 TIP), I would like to see a short explanation of how GHG emissions are calculated with details on CO₂ emissions from fuel (gasoline, diesel) consumed in light-duty vehicles. The simple equation shows that as VMT decreases, CO₂ emissions will decrease. This would help the public understand the importance of building a transportation system that allows VMT reduction *not* VMT growth.

$$\text{CO}_2 \text{ emissions/vehicle} = \text{EF fuel} * [\text{VMT}/\text{fe}]$$

where

EF is the emissions factor for each fuel (eg. gasoline, diesel)

VMT is the total vehicle-miles-traveled for the region

fe is the average fuel efficiency for vehicles in each fuel category calculated

A short summary of greenhouse gas/CO₂ reduction goals, VMT targets for the years of the TIP or LRP and a table showing VMT data for light-duty vehicles over the past 25 years would be appropriate in the front pages too.

A summary of TIP projects, by program category, (e.g. transit expansion, construction of sidewalks) should explain how collectively, they will accomplish the vehicle-miles-traveled (VMT) reduction goals for the region.

Response: This comment has been forwarded to the project team.

Dear Mr. Seymour,

Please would you ensure that my comments is restored to the format as originally submitted by email on July 24th 2013, and attach my comment in its entirety for the official meeting minutes.

Point # 1 My comment was written as 2 paragraphs with the CO₂ emissions equation, separated, between the paragraphs.

A1 In the executive summary...
... that allows VMT reduction not VMT growth.

[S — P — a — c — e]

$$\text{EQUATION: } \text{CO}_2 \text{ emissions}_{\text{ldvehicle}} = \text{EF}_{\text{fuel}} * \left[\frac{\text{VMT}}{\text{fe}} \right]$$

where:

3



EF is the emission factor for each fuel (eg. gasoline, diesel)
VMT is the total vehicle-miles-traveled for the region
fe is the average fuel efficiency for vehicles in each fuel category calculated.

[S — P — a — c — e]

A2 A short summary of greenhouse gas/CO₂ reduction goals ...

2

Please restore the subscripts where needed:

CO₂ → CO₂

emissions_{ldvehicle} → emissions_{ldvehicle}

EF_{fuel} → EF_{fuel}

Thank you, Bridget Chadwick