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CHAPTER

Visualizing Our Future Together

When people visualize the future that they want and how transportation is a part of that, people tend to imagine the positive changes that they hope to see. That might be a safer walk to a corner store, an easier commute, or having more options to get around. People might imagine a healthy environment, better, more affordable options for where to live and better access to jobs. Employers and manufacturers, as well as individuals, might imagine more reliable travel times on a well-maintained system that functions efficiently. The TPB has documented the future it visualizes in its policy framework—a set of goals and priorities to work toward in our region.

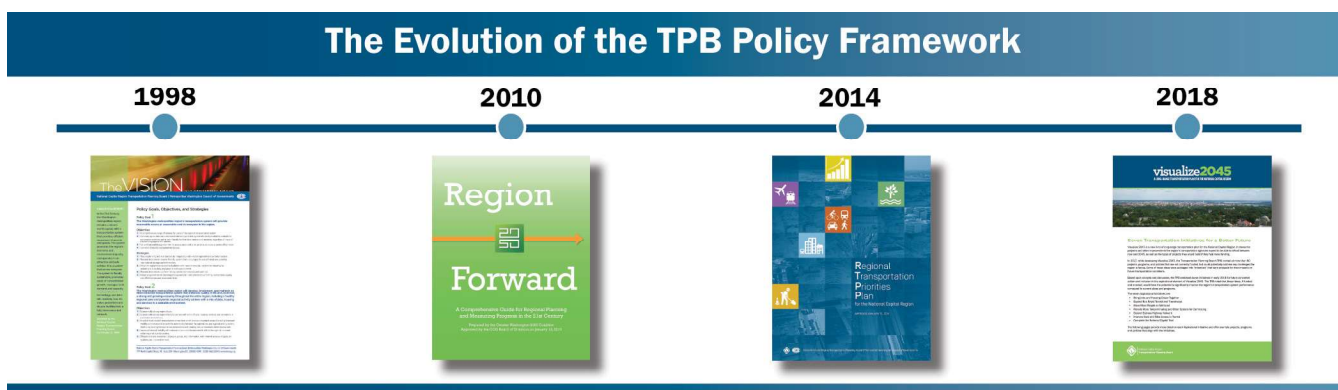
The TPB policy statements and documents that comprise the policy framework communicate the region's transportation goals, priorities, and needs that member agencies are to consider when developing and selecting projects to fund and implement. Through the projects, programs, and policies in Visualize 2045, the TPB and its members take strides to achieve the regional and local goals to make a real difference for the people and businesses that rely on the region's transportation system. In this chapter, learn more about the goals and challenges that we must address as we plan for the future of the transportation system.

THINK REGIONALLY, ACT LOCALLY

The region comes together through the TPB to establish shared regional policy goals. Local jurisdictions and agencies take action, making progress on local and regional goals by funding and implementing projects, programs and policies that move our region forward.

The TPB Policy Framework

The TPB policy framework is a culmination of a more than 20-year evolution that began with a visioning process in 1998. This framework includes comprehensive strategies that promote a strong regional economy and help improve quality of life for all residents. The policy framework consists of the TPB Vision, the Region Forward vision adopted by COG, the Regional Transportation Priorities Plan, and the seven Aspirational Initiatives endorsed by the TPB in 2018. The policy framework also includes the priorities of equity, climate resiliency, and safety as documented in TPB resolutions and in this plan.



TPB’s Renewed Dedication to Equity, Safety, Climate Resiliency

In 2020, the TPB approved three resolutions renewing commitments to safety, equity, and climate change. The TPB’s equity resolution affirms equity as a foundational principle that will be woven throughout TPB’s analyses, operations, procurement, programs, and priorities. The safety resolution established that safety for all modes of transportation is a regional priority. This will be monitored and analyzed through performance-based planning and programming with an emphasis on aspirational safety goals associated with Vision Zero and Towards Zero Deaths.

The TPB endorsed the region’s 2020 GHG reduction goals and new climate resiliency goals. These include a regional GHG emissions reduction goal of 50 percent below 2005 levels by 2030 and becoming a Climate Ready Region—making significant progress by 2030. The goals identified the need to incorporate equity principles and expand education on climate change into the TPB members’ actions to reach the climate mitigation and resiliency goals. In 2022, the TPB adopted these same regional and voluntary reduction goals for the on-road transportation sector.

These resolutions will help shape the TPB’s work to ensure a more prosperous, accessible, livable, sustainable, and equitable future for all residents.

[View the TPB policy framework and resolutions at visualize2045.org.](https://visualize2045.org)

“The region’s residents look to elected officials to consider and take action on the impacts of climate change when planning for the future. The TPB agrees and that this matter urgently needs our attention. Climate considerations, like other goals, need to be integrated into the plan and the planning process. We all want the transportation system to work seamlessly and reliably, that also means planning for a resilient region.”

— Pamela Sebesky, TPB Chair (2022)

The TPB Vision (1998)

The TPB Vision, adopted in 1998, provides a comprehensive set of policy goals, objectives, and strategies that guide transportation planning and investment decisions in the metropolitan Washington region. The Vision was developed by TPB members and technical staff from throughout the region through a collaborative effort that involved consideration and inclusion of the transportation, land-use, environmental, and economic sectors.

TPB Vision Statement

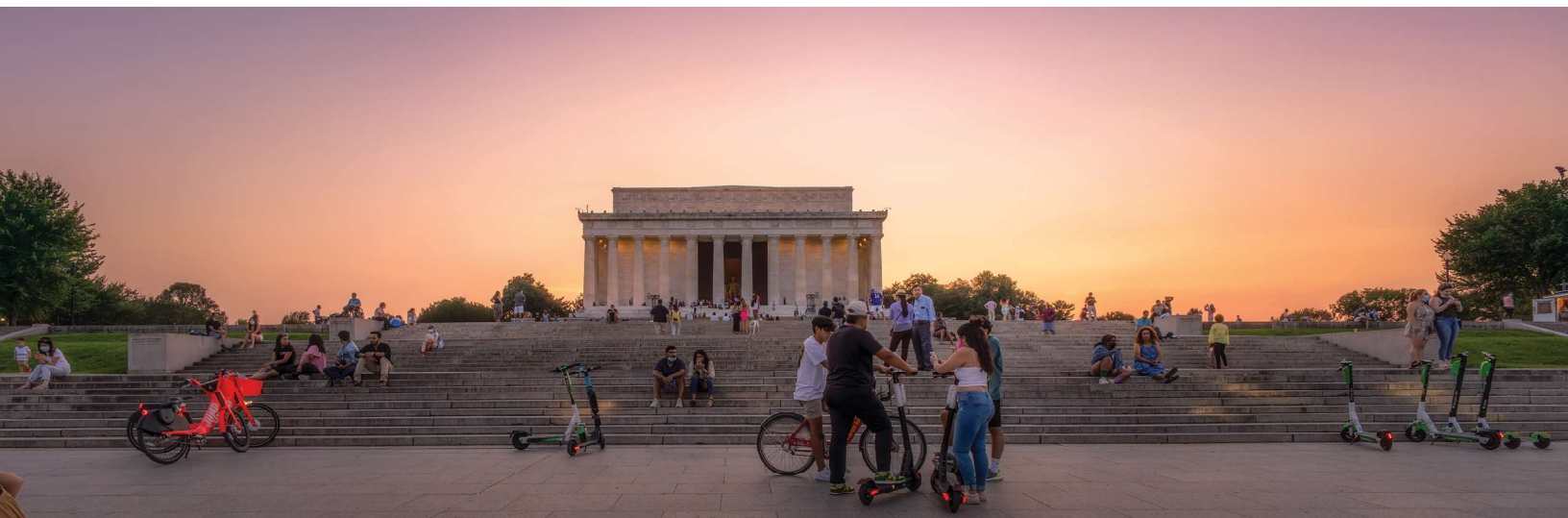
“In the 21st Century, the Washington metropolitan region remains a vibrant world capital, with a transportation system that provides efficient movement of people and goods. This system promotes the region’s economy and environmental quality, and operates in an attractive and safe setting—it is a system that serves everyone. The system is fiscally sustainable, promotes areas of concentrated growth, manages both demand and capacity, employs the best technology, and joins rail, roadway, bus, air, water, pedestrian and bicycle facilities into a fully interconnected network.”

The Vision Goals

1. The Washington metropolitan region’s transportation system will provide reasonable access at reasonable cost to everyone in the region.
2. The Washington metropolitan region will develop, implement, and maintain an interconnected transportation system that enhances quality of

life and promotes a strong and growing economy throughout the entire region, including a healthy regional core and dynamic regional Activity Centers with a mix of jobs, housing and services in a walkable environment.

3. The Washington metropolitan region’s transportation system will give priority to management, performance, maintenance, and safety of all modes and facilities.
4. The Washington metropolitan region will use the best available technology to maximize system effectiveness.
5. The Washington metropolitan region will plan and develop a transportation system that enhances and protects the region’s natural environmental quality, cultural and historic resources, and communities.
6. The Washington metropolitan region will achieve better interjurisdictional coordination of transportation and land-use planning.
7. The Washington metropolitan region will achieve an enhanced funding mechanism(s) for regional and local transportation system priorities that cannot be implemented with current and forecasted federal, state, and local funding.
8. The Washington metropolitan region will support options for international and inter-regional travel and commerce.



Region Forward (2010)

A Comprehensive Guide for Regional Planning and Measuring Progress in the 21st Century

COG developed Region Forward in 2010 to help guide local and regional decision-making and make the region more Prosperous, Accessible, Livable, and Sustainable. It identifies shared goal areas, one of which is transportation, and numerous objectives and targets for assessing progress toward achieving each of the goals.

- We seek a broad range of public and private transportation choices for our region which maximizes accessibility and affordability to everyone and minimizes reliance upon single occupancy use of the automobile.
- We seek a transportation system that maximizes community connectivity and walkability and minimizes ecological harm to the region and world beyond.
- We seek transit-oriented and mixed-use communities emerging in regional Activity Centers that will capture new employment and household growth.
- We seek a significant decrease in greenhouse gas emissions, with substantial reductions from the built environment and transportation sector.
- We seek a diversified, stable, and competitive economy, with a wide range of employment opportunities and a focus on sustainable economic development.
- We seek to minimize economic disparities and enhance the prosperity of each jurisdiction and the region as a whole through balanced growth and access to high-quality jobs for everyone.

Voices of the Region ON CHALLENGES

“I think the transportation thing, you have to have more of a region-wide approach, and it has to be not just in transportation departments that can impact this change...So if you can provide more housing, shorten the distance between Point A and Point B, you can decrease the amount of transportation needed. And, the most efficient and best transportation in the environment is just walking. So if you can provide people with places for people to walk, it's like a cascading effect, where you can decrease the needs all across the board.”

— Resident of the District of Columbia

“Our transportation policy and planning decisions can have significant impacts in our region. With the right focus, we can positively affect the allocation of public resources, economic opportunities, and people's quality of life. As regional leaders, we need to reconsider how we evaluate transportation performance. Rather than travel speed and cost alone, we should be valuing inclusiveness, accessibility, livability, and economic opportunity,”

— Reuben B. Collins, II, Esq., TPB Vice Chair (2022)

The Regional Transportation Priorities Plan (RTPP) (2014)

The TPB adopted the RTPP in January 2014. It focuses on a handful of transportation priorities and feasible strategies with the greatest potential to advance regional goals rooted in the TPB Vision. The goals in the RTPP are frequently referenced in TPB planning activities, including the work of the Long-Range Plan Task Force which shaped what are now the TPB’s Aspirational Initiatives. The RTPP goals are also used for the submission forms for projects in the financially constrained element of the plan. Pursuing the priorities outlined in this plan will lead to greater economic vitality and a higher quality of life for those that live in the metropolitan Washington region.

Priorities Identified in the RTPP:

1. **Meet Our Existing Obligations:** Funding for maintenance and state-of-good-repair needs should continue to be prioritized over system expansion.
2. **Strengthen Public Confidence and Ensure Fairness:** Efforts to increase accountability and address the needs of historically transportation-disadvantaged populations should be considered in all stages of project planning, design, and implementation.
3. **Move More People and Goods More Efficiently:** Improvements to the transportation system should seek to do more with less—to make more efficient use of existing infrastructure and promote greater use of more efficient travel modes for both people and goods.

“Safety is a top regional priority. As communities install high-visibility crosswalk markings, improve intersection infrastructure, and support changes that result in safer speeds, we make it possible for more people to walk, cycle, or take the bus to get to school, transit, jobs, and neighborhood destinations safely. The TPB is deeply committed to supporting safe, equitable transportation options across the region..”

— Christina Henderson, TPB Vice Chair (2022)

RTPP Goals:



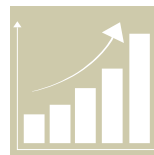
1. Provide a comprehensive range of transportation options.



2. Promote a strong regional economy, including a healthy regional core and dynamic Activity Centers.



3. Ensure adequate system maintenance, preservation, and safety.



4. Maximize operational effectiveness and safety of the transportation system.



5. Enhance environmental quality, and protect natural and cultural resources.



6. Support inter-regional and international travel and commerce.







The TPB’s Aspirational Initiatives

In 2018 the TPB endorsed seven initiatives that have potential to improve the performance of the region’s transportation system compared to previously adopted long-range transportation plans. The projects, policies, and programs that make up these initiatives were identified based on their ability to make more progress toward achieving the goals laid out in previously adopted TPB and COG governing policy documents. Learn more about these initiatives in Chapter 6, Strategies for a Brighter Future.

National Goals

Through the Performance Based Planning and Programming (PBPP) legislation of Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21), the federal government established national goals for transportation that MPOs must consider in their planning process. (Learn more about PBPP in Chapter 8, Planning for Performance). The matrix below shows how the national and TPB’s RTPP goals align—they significantly overlap, as do the TPB’s Vision goals. The TPB’s Visualize 2045 plan responds to both national and regional goals, as well as the local goals of TPB’s jurisdictions, through the projects, programs, and policies planned and delivered in the region.

Table 3.1: National and RTPP Goals Alignment

RTPP Goals	National Goals
 <p>Promote a strong regional economy, including a healthy regional core and dynamic Activity Centers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Freight Movement and Economic Vitality:</i> To improve the national freight network, strengthen the ability of rural communities to access national and international trade markets, and support regional economic development.
 <p>Support inter-regional and international travel and commerce.</p>	
 <p>Ensure adequate system maintenance, preservation, and safety.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Infrastructure Condition:</i> To maintain the highway infrastructure asset system in a state of good repair. • <i>Safety:</i> To achieve a significant reduction in traffic fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads.
 <p>Maximize operational effectiveness and safety of the transportation system.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>System Reliability:</i> To improve the efficiency of the surface transportation system. • <i>Congestion Reduction:</i> To achieve a significant reduction in congestion on the National Highway System.
 <p>Provide a comprehensive range of transportation options.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Environmental Sustainability:</i> To enhance the performance of the transportation system while protecting and enhancing the natural environment.
 <p>Enhance environmental quality, and protect natural and cultural resources.</p>	<p><i>Reduced Project Delivery Delays:</i> To reduce project costs, promote jobs and the economy, and expedite the movement of people and goods by accelerating project completion through eliminating delays in the project development and delivery process, including reducing regulatory burdens and improving agencies’ work practices.</p>
<p>TPB’s overarching vision framework focuses on making the most effective use of every dollar, maintaining the system and delivering high quality projects to enhance the system efficiently and through a fair practices.</p>	

How Do the TPB's Goals and the Federal Requirements Influence Projects, Programs, and Policies in the Region?

The TPB members came to an agreement about priorities for our shared future in the adoption of the TPB's vision and goals. By setting these shared goals, the TPB has looked to the region's transportation agencies to consider both regional and local goals, priorities, and needs when developing and selecting projects, programs and policies to fund and implement.

When submitting projects for inclusion in this plan update, sponsor agencies reviewed and updated existing projects, programs, and policies in the prior adopted plan's constrained element (project list). For all new and existing projects submitted for inclusion in the Visualize 2045 update, the TPB asked sponsor agencies to document how they support regional goals, including equity and climate considerations. The TPB also asked agencies how projects implement the Aspirational Initiatives and respond to federal requirements, such as the federal planning factors. To see a summary of these responses by the sponsoring agencies, please see Chapter 7, Funding the Transportation System. **[For complete responses, please visit visualize2045.org/plan-update](https://visualize2045.org/plan-update)**. To learn more about where and how the TPB and the public influence projects, programs and policies, see Chapter 1, Figure 1.3.

Anticipating and Responding to Transportation Challenges

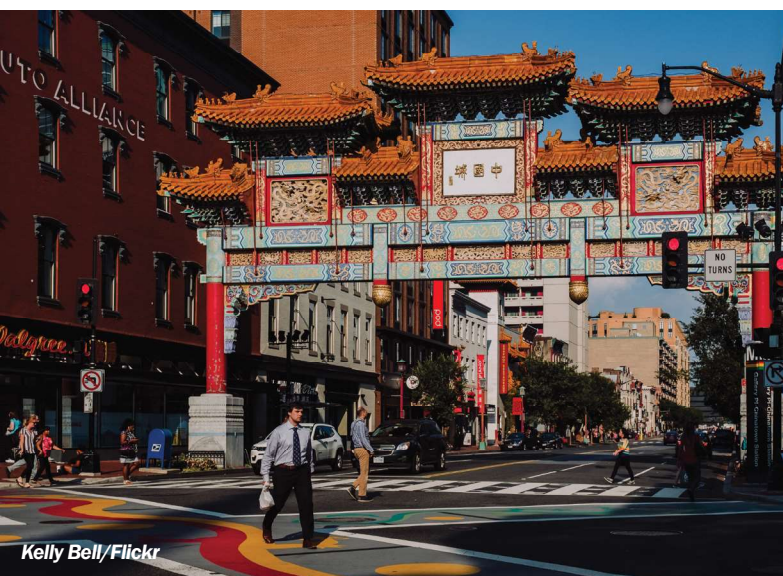
The TPB Vision includes a set of broad transportation-planning goals that provide policy guidance to shape the region's transportation projects, programs and policies. But, achieving the goals for the future transportation system and how it serves our communities is not without significant challenges. This plan discusses those challenges and the TPB's response to address them.

The TPB has identified numerous challenges in its plans and studies. It has developed strategies to address them and has established performance measures to track progress. Challenges create barriers to achieving our shared regional goals and show us where we must focus and prioritize our efforts.

Some of the region's primary transportation challenges include, but are not limited to, concerns such as roadway congestion, including travel time and bottlenecks, transit crowding, insufficient bus service, and unsafe walking and biking. Other challenges include the need for more development where multimodal transportation options can be made available, such as in Activity Centers and near high-capacity transit stations. Ensuring safety for all users on the transportation system is another significant challenge that matters to all.

The TPB recognizes that protecting the environment, including wildlife habitat and water, is essential while developing our region and the transportation that serves it. Mitigating climate change and planning for resiliency is critical to ensure quality of life for all.

With about 81 percent of funding needed to maintain and operate the region's extensive transportation system, this leaves a small percentage of funding for enhancements. Our region's communities and transportation system are both built out to a large degree. With limited funding and space, tradeoffs must be made as to what transportation enhancements our region makes, where they are made, and how the region uses the existing space between our buildings. Our challenges must be matched by our



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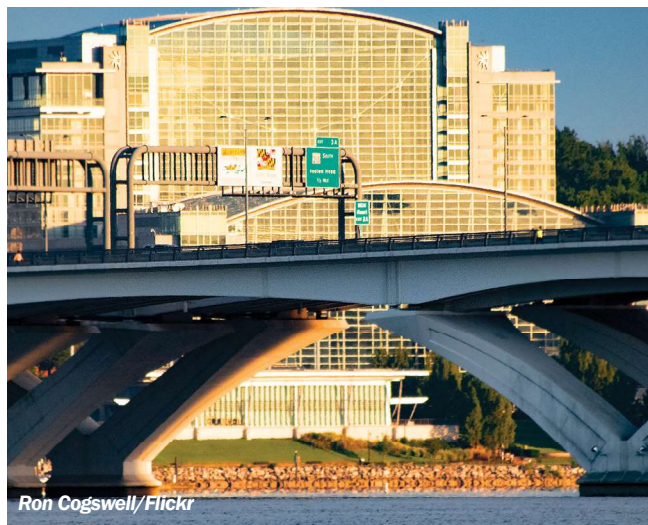
commitment to delivering a transportation system that provides equitable outcomes.

In 2018, the TPB responded to these challenges with the endorsement of the seven Aspirational Initiatives. As more of these concepts are enacted and funded, these strategies can more effectively work together to address our region’s challenges and make headway on the region’s goals. While the transportation and planning agencies in the region continue to make investments that address these challenges and make progress toward our goals, many challenges remain.

This plan responds to these challenges throughout its chapters. Chapter 2 acknowledges the challenge of planning given the impacts of, and the new questions raised, by the global pandemic. Through the TPB resolutions on equity, safety, and climate resiliency, the TPB has acknowledged the challenges associated with each of these topics. The TPB conducts analysis and lead policy discussions on the evolving challenges we face, including those identified through the federal planning factors and the factors highlighted in Chapter 4.

The TPB recognizes that these challenges impact people’s lives and their experience of the transportation system. In Chapter 5, learn more about the Voices of the Region public engagement that the TPB conducted for this plan update to learn more about the public’s perception of challenges as well as solutions.

Chapter 6 discusses the planning activities and strategies that the TPB and regional partners are taking to anticipate and respond to the region’s transportation challenges. Chapter 7 reviews the funding for the projects in the constrained element of the plan, each project designed to improve system performance. Chapter 8 reports on how the TPB documents its performance planning through the PBPP, the Congestion Management Process (CMP), air quality and system performance analysis. Chapter 9 examines the system performance and recent study findings. It considers the next steps necessary to bring our region together to plan for a brighter transportation future.



Voices of the Region ON CHALLENGES

“I like that these days you have different options like carpooling, Uber, taking the Metro. Even having biking or the electric scooters. So I would say if I didn’t have a car only then I’d be riding a bike or hopping on an electric scooter. Or maybe carpooling with a friend or someone on an Uber, Lyft, so I would definitely have those types of alternatives to really help reduce the carbon emissions and helping with the climate change.”

— Resident of the District of Columbia

“I think it’s important to look at the service levels to all communities, so everybody has an equal chance to either ride the bus or ride the Metro or whatever the transit capability is.”

— Resident of Arlington, VA