

# MPO Service Role: An Intergovernmental Plus

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The provision of services, such as needed data and assistance, to those responsible for plan implementation has been described as one of the major objectives of the urban transportation planning process. The role, nature, and value of service activities in transportation planning for the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area are discussed. The evolution of the service component is documented, and the range and type of service projects that have been undertaken over the past several years are described and illustrated. The relation of service work to the total transportation planning process is then described, and, finally, the intergovernmental benefits of providing services to the participants in the transportation planning process are discussed.

In "Guidelines Supplementing IM 50-4-68, dated April 1968" (1), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) identified "service" as an essential element of a continuing planning process. The guidelines stated the following:

One of the main objectives of the urban transportation planning process is the development of the ability to provide needed planning data assistance to those responsible for plan implementation. The output derived from the planning forecasts and analyses has limited value until applied to the decision-making process. The true effectiveness of the planning process will ultimately be measured by the extent of its contribution to proper project selection and design.

The urban transportation planning process has evolved through some 13 years of additional federal guidelines and regulations as well as significant changes in transportation policies, issues, and organization. Nevertheless, these original guidelines on service have withstood the test of time very well, and the service role of a metropolitan planning organization (MPO) can contribute significantly to the improvement of intergovernmental relations among participants in the urban transportation planning process.

This paper describes the role, nature, and value of service activities in transportation planning for the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area. After a brief description of the MPO process for the National Capital region and how the service component has evolved, the paper discusses and illustrates the range and type of service projects that have been undertaken over the past several years. The paper then describes the relation of service work to the total transportation planning process and concludes with a discussion of the intergovernmental benefits of providing services to the participants in the transportation planning process.

## BACKGROUND

The Washington metropolitan area includes the District of Columbia, two large counties and several cities in Maryland, and four counties and three cities in Northern Virginia. It covers some 2400 miles<sup>2</sup> and has a population of slightly more than 3 million.

From an intergovernmental perspective, although the Washington metropolitan area contains more than 100 units of government, most of the governmental authority is exercised by six counties and four independent cities. The existence of strong county governments in the region has produced a far simpler set of governmental units than in most other areas of comparable size. The most complex governmental

factor in the Washington metropolitan area is the interstate situation. The area is divided into three separate parts, subject to three separate legislatures. The Virginia state government in Richmond, the Maryland state government in Annapolis, and the federal government on behalf of the District of Columbia have strong voices in the governing of the Washington metropolitan area.

Within this metropolitan framework, the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB) is the organization responsible for conducting the continuing, comprehensive, and cooperative transportation planning process for the metropolitan area in accordance with the requirements of the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1962 and the Urban Mass Transportation Act of 1964, as amended. The TPB policy body is made up of local government officials and representatives of the state transportation agencies, the regional transit authority, and appropriate federal agencies. The Governors of Maryland and Virginia and the Mayor of the District of Columbia have designated the TPB as the MPO for the Washington metropolitan area. The TPB also serves as the transportation planning arm of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) to ensure that transportation planning is integrated with comprehensive metropolitan planning and development and is responsive to the local political decision-making process.

The annual basic work program of the TPB includes the following major activity categories: (a) long range, (b) short range, (c) surveillance, (d) technical methods and procedures, and (e) services.

Prior to 1978, approximately 10 percent of the budget for the annual basic work program was earmarked for services on a request basis. However, beginning in 1978, the TPB established a policy of reducing the level of effort to meet federal "paper work" requirements to the extent feasible and improving and expanding services to state and local agencies. This policy reflected the desire of state and local officials to make the transportation planning process more responsive to their immediate needs and concerns and to minimize the resources devoted to meeting federal regulations consistent, of course, with achieving and maintaining certification of the process.

As a result, beginning in 1978, approximately one-third (about \$500 000) of the budget for the annual basic work program was earmarked for services, and staff actively promoted service work for state and local agencies. This has led to an increased variety and range of service activities over the past three years. Some 50 service projects have been undertaken during this period.

The range and type of service activities that have been conducted can be generally illustrated as follows:

1. Development of trip generation rates,
2. Estimates of weekend transit,
3. Analysis of changes in street classification,
4. Analysis of impact of interstate transfer proposals,
5. Monitoring of travel corridors,
6. Analysis of truck-trip travel patterns,
7. Analysis of commuter rail potential,
8. Fringe-parking-lot studies,

- 9. High-occupancy-vehicle (HOV) feasibility studies,
- 10. Development of handbook of travel characteristics,
- 11. Rural area transportation study,
- 12. Provision of data to update traffic model capability,
- 13. Traffic forecasts for corridor and subarea studies,
- 14. Travel data for Metrorail station access studies,
- 15. Study of public transportation options for a county, and
- 16. Assistance in preparing grant applications.

A service coordinator and three service managers (one for each of the three major jurisdictions) are responsible for the development, conduct, and coordination of service projects. These senior staff professionals are also responsible for portions of the TPB basic work program, and they meet regularly to establish priorities and allocate manpower resources to ensure that both basic work program and service activities are conducted in an efficient and coordinated manner.

Tables 1-3 give brief summary descriptions of the specific service projects completed or under way in the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia for the FY 1978-1981 period.

RELATION OF SERVICES TO LOCAL AND REGIONAL PLANNING

Service activities can provide a valuable feedback mechanism for updating and maintaining a regional transportation planning process. To illustrate this point, in the following discussion the service projects completed or under way have been categorized to provide a better understanding of the nature of the work involved and the need for inter-governmental cooperation and coordination. In addition, an example from each group is described in

more detail to illustrate the changing nature of the regional planning process as well as the relations between local and regional transportation planning.

Almost all of the projects undertaken to date fit into one of five categories:

- 1. Subarea planning studies,
- 2. Corridor planning studies,
- 3. TSM studies,
- 4. Innovative studies, and
- 5. Data or process-related activities.

Subarea Planning Studies

Subarea planning studies have been undertaken for the Georgetown area in the District of Columbia and for Fairfax City and Eastern Loudoun County in Northern Virginia. The Georgetown study was largely the responsibility of a consultant to the District of Columbia, whereas the Eastern Loudoun County and Fairfax City studies were done entirely by staff. These areas were and are experiencing rapid increases in travel as rapid development generates new traffic.

At the request of Loudoun County, TPB staff examined major highway and transit options (including a "no-build" alternative) as part of the comprehensive plan development process for the County. For each of the alternatives tested, simulated present and future traffic volumes were estimated and future levels of service determined. Speed and delay, gasoline consumption, and automobile emissions were forecast by applying a new evaluation technique specifically developed for the project. An important plus was that the Loudoun County staff actively participated throughout the project. Land use data and suggested alternatives were obtained from the County staff and reviewed by citizen groups and the Loudoun County Planning Commission. The study was monitored by state transportation planners as well. The Loudoun County Board of Supervisors

Table 1. Summary description of service projects for FY 1978-1981: District of Columbia.

Project No.	Project	Summary Description
1	Data on developing trip generation rates	Includes examination of trip generation rates and additional data necessary to develop new rates for residential and commercial land uses; generation rates are used in impact analysis of proposed new developments in District of Columbia and should reflect peak daily levels and modal split; rates must be sensitive to quantifiable levels of transit service
2	Analysis of truck-trip travel patterns	Staff assistance in completing analysis of truck-trip patterns within and through District of Columbia in conjunction with establishment of a truck route network
3	Consultant support on Bolling-Anacostia Corridor study	Staff review and evaluation assistance regarding ride-sharing model being prepared by consultant; one criterion for this model is applicability to other parts of city and region
4	13th Street Corridor analysis	Impact of change from minor arterial to collector, tied in to opening of Metrorail to Silver Spring station, using screenline analysis and results of phase 3 of bus system study to determine whether alternative transit and street capacity is sufficient
5	New York Avenue Corridor	Analysis of transportation impacts of I-395 withdrawal; includes determination of extent of needed TSM measures
6	Trip generation rates, phase 2	See project 1
7	Interstate cost estimate (revision) analysis	Preparation of travel forecasts as basis for District of Columbia Department of Transportation preparation of cost estimates
8	Weekend use of transit	Estimates of likely weekend transit use are important to revenue projection, subsidy requirements, economic-social benefit, and transportation demand analysis; existing weekend transit use data in Washington area and other cities were compiled; factors affecting transit use on weekends were identified; preliminary estimates of rider potential were established
9	Assistance for study of Georgetown area access alternatives	Involves assistance in preparing the request for proposals, providing travel data, and performing selected computer analyses
10	Assistance for neighborhood bus study	Assistance in refinement of work program and budget and preparation of documentation for application for proposed District of Columbia neighborhood bus study
11	"South Leg" Interstate freeway analysis	Analysis of transportation impacts of South Leg withdrawal from Interstate system
12	Monitoring of 13th Street Corridor, including surveys	Monitoring of travel in 13th Street Corridor to assess travel characteristics by mode after use of Metrorail service to Silver Spring has matured; assistance in consideration of changing 13th Street from four to two lanes in peak hours
13	Truck origin-destination survey	Completion of survey of truck traffic on 4th and 6th Streets, N.E., in Capitol Hill area, and tabulation of data for use in consideration of restricting such traffic
14	Continuation of trip generation study	Continuation of data collection and analysis to develop trip generation rates for proposed development; completion of work on phase dealing with residential trip generation resulting from high-rise development

adopted the final report recommendations as the transportation element of the County plan and forwarded it to the TPB for incorporation into the region's long-range plan and program.

A valuable lesson learned from this study was the need for detailed land use forecasts at the subdivision level as well as the need to deal with minor arterial routes not normally found in a regional-scale network.

Another subarea study now getting under way for

Prince William County in Northern Virginia will use the same approach and methods developed for Loudoun County. The results of subarea studies can, in fact, "sum up" to a regional plan and program. Local involvement in such studies greatly reduces the fear of having unacceptable plans superimposed on local governments from the "top down".

#### Corridor Planning Studies

Corridor planning is a more familiar area for MPOs.

Table 2. Summary description of service projects for FY 1978-1981: Maryland.

Project No.	Project	Summary Description
1	Commuter rail planning study	Analysis of potential increase in ridership on B&O and Conrail commuter rail lines with increased service in Baltimore-Washington and Brunswick-Washington corridors
2	Metrail alternatives analysis, Prince George's Plaza	Evaluation of potential patronage for three locations of Prince George's Plaza Metrorail station; locations based on an I-95 alignment, the ARS alignment, and a modified ARS alignment
3	I-495 traffic analysis, Rock Creek segment	Automobile demand forecasts for alternative roadway configurations on I-495 between Georgia Avenue and I-270
4	US-50/301 traffic analysis study	Evaluation of automobile travel demand that would occur in 1995 if US-50 in Maryland were widened from four to six lanes between Prince George's/Anne Arundel county line and Capital Beltway
5	Greenbelt Metrorail station access study	Estimate of vehicle demand using highway facilities in vicinity of proposed Greenbelt Metrorail station; estimated demand included background traffic, park-and-ride, kiss-and-ride, and bus trips on roads
6	Applications for Section 16b2 funds (elderly and handicapped) <sup>a</sup>	Evaluation of applications made by nonprofit service organizations in Prince George's and Montgomery Counties for Section 16b2 funds; attempt to rationalize the applications for capital assistance to purchase vans and similar equipment
7	Maryland DOT commuter rail sensitivity analysis	Evaluation of potential patronage of commuter rail service if Metrorail E Route were cut back to either Takoma Park or Columbia Heights; analysis evaluated impact of changing commuter rail headways for B&O service to Baltimore from 15 min to 10 and 20 min
8	MNCPPC sensitivity analysis	Evaluation of change in future Metro patronage if modified version of Round 1 Cooperative Forecast land use projections were to occur
9	Traffic analysis of MD-115	Estimate of 1990 highway demand on MD-115, to be used as part of project planning study
10	Fringe parking study	Study conducted to assemble a compendium of information on sites of fringe parking facilities and proposals for Maryland suburban counties in Washington metropolitan area, establish functional classifications for existing and proposed facilities, and analyze highest-priority proposals to select the most appropriate for early implementation
11	Maryland DOT Travel Fact Book	Service job that developed a handbook of travel characteristics for Maryland portion of Washington metropolitan area; data included socioeconomic characteristics, trip tables, and highway facility miles
12	Greyhound bus service analysis	See project 24
13	MNCPPC market share modeling process	Provision of nonwork trip generation rates for use in nonwork model
14	Central Avenue Corridor study	Estimated existing highway travel characteristics in central portion of Prince George's County
15	Intercounty Connector/Rockville facility	See project 21
16	Long-distance commuter transportation	Inventory of characteristics of long-distance commuter bus and rail lines serving the Washington area
17	Bowie fringe lot "before" survey	Survey of users of fringe parking lot at interchange of US-50 and MD-197 to determine characteristics of users before opening of New Carrollton Metrorail line; to be followed by an "after" survey after opening of New Carrollton station
18	Southern Prince George's County corridor study	Evaluation of 1990 travel conditions in southern portion of Prince George's County; alternatives included provision for HOV facilities on MD-5 and MD-210
19	Study of Montgomery County cross-county transit/HOV potential	Evaluation (more qualitative than quantitative) of potential of transit and HOV facilities to meet needs of cross-county travel
20	I-495/I-95 Interchange fringe lot study	Evaluation of potential use of proposed fringe parking facility at I-495/I-95 Interchange; estimate of potential use by carpools and transit users if lot were served by transit
21	I-370 planning project	Study of travel demand characteristics for number of potential facilities designed to provide cross-county circumferential service to Montgomery County and western Prince George's County; first phase to be followed by evaluation of limited number of final alternatives at later date
22	Year 2000 highway needs study	Demand forecasts to be used by Maryland DOT in its 20-year highway needs study; estimates made of traffic in Montgomery and Prince George's Counties for year 2000, assuming construction of planned facilities
23	MD-97 fringe parking lot study, Olney	Estimate of potential use of fringe parking lot at intersection of MD-97 and MD-108; estimates of park-and-ride carpools and transit users made for current conditions and for 1990 after opening of Glenmont Metrorail station
24	Annapolis-Washington Greyhound study	Study of characteristics of commuter bus travelers who use Greyhound service between Laurel and Washington and Annapolis and Washington, study included on-board survey and financial analysis of survey
25	Updating traffic modeling capability, Montgomery County MNCPPC	Project to provide up-to-date data for land use and external travel, to be used by Montgomery County MNCPPC in their TRIMS models
26	Prince George's County rural area transportation study	Ongoing study designed to evaluate existing special bus service provided in southern Prince George's County and recommend improvements to make service more useful to area residents
27	Traffic forecasts for I-370/Shady Grove Metro study	Project provided traffic assignments for I-370 project planning study that were used by Maryland State Highway Administration to do detailed traffic analysis in area of Shady Grove Metrorail station
28	I-97 HOV feasibility study	Study provided data for use by Maryland DOT consultant in evaluating potential current and future use of HOV facility on I-97 (MD-50); in addition to providing needed data, staff assisted consultant in applying an FHWA model and evaluating results
29	Study of Intercounty Connector extension to US-301	Evaluation of automobile travel demand that would occur on Intercounty Connector in Prince George's County if it were extended from Baltimore-Washington Parkway to US-301
30	Rockville TSM study	Joint study with planning and traffic engineering staff of City of Rockville for purpose of evaluating existing transportation problems of the city and recommending near-term TSM projects to alleviate identified problems
31	Bethesda parking study	Project to assist MNCPPC to evaluate potential of TSM parking management and transit measures to reduce need for additional parking facilities in Bethesda CBD; study includes employee survey evaluation of measures to reduce automobile commuting and application of parking accumulation model

Note: B&O = Baltimore and Ohio, Conrail = Consolidated Rail Corporation, ARS = Adopted Regional System, DOT = Department of Transportation, MNCPPC = Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, HOV = high-occupancy vehicle, and CBD = central business district.

<sup>a</sup>Urban Mass Transportation Act of 1964, as amended.

Table 3. Summary description of service projects for FY 1978-1981: Virginia.

Project No.	Project	Summary Description
1	I-595 traffic analysis, phases 1 and 2	Study provided travel estimates for number of alternative highway improvements in I-595 Corridor; study required very detailed assignments (block level) for area bounded by National Airport, Shirley Highway, and 14th Street Bridge; alternatives included converting existing road system into one-way pair
2	Springfield Bypass study	Future vehicle travel demand estimates made for number of alternative highway alignments in Springfield Bypass Corridor as specified by VDHT consultant, TAMS; study area encompassed a corridor in Fairfax County a few miles west of I-595 from US-1 to VA-7
3	Metro-rail access study, Rosslyn-Ballston Corridor	Trip volumes by mode developed from each zone to each Metro-rail station in Rosslyn-Ballston Corridor, from mode-of-access model used in Metro-rail alternatives analysis study; trip tables were then hand assigned to street system by Arlington County staff
4	Manassas Western Bypass traffic study	Study produced future vehicle travel demand for "null" and three alternative highway plans in Manassas Western Bypass Corridor; corridor extended along Western Bypass (VA-234, Prince William County) from Independent Hill to Catharpin, bypassing Manassas to the west; future traffic volumes used as input to environmental impact statement study
5	Alexandria transportation and carpool study	Joint carpooling and transportation survey was conducted in June-July 1978 among commuters to downtown Alexandria; about 5000 questionnaires distributed by city staff to all municipal employees and by Chamber of Commerce to selected employers; TPB staff processed survey forms for analysis by city staff; study area encompassed downtown area between Potomac River and railroad and from Franklin Street north to 2nd Street
6	Springfield circulation study	Study determined traffic impact of proposal by VDHT to grade-separate Old Keane Mill Road and Backlick Road along with minor traffic circulation plans; end product was detailed estimate of forecast link volumes as result of these operational improvements; in addition to TRIMZONE computer assignment to develop estimated volumes, license-plate survey was used to estimate existing through trips in area; report was prepared
7	Alexandria transit access study	Peak and off-peak use of various transit feeder systems to King Street and Braddock Road Metro-rail stations estimated
8	VA-7/Falls Church study	Future vehicle demand on VA-7 estimated, including impact of Metro-rail automobile and bus access demand at West Falls Church station
9	Prince William/Fairfax County traffic study	Three alternative alignments of Ridgefield Road tested and evaluated
10	Eastern Loudoun County transportation study	TPB staff provided technical assistance in development of land-use-related transportation plan, including traffic forecasts for various alternatives proposed by Loudoun County staff
11	Prince William County transit study	All possible public transportation options for commuters from Prince William County to Washington area core explored; final report presented to Prince William County Board of Supervisors
12	Prince William County CARTS study	TPB staff assisted Prince William County staff in establishing Dale City Auto-Transit Club; club created as pilot study to see whether commuters from Dale City who work in District of Columbia core area would use pay-as-you-use-it carpool system
13	Fairfax County/Springfield Bypass "null" test assignment	Two traffic assignments were made to 1990 network using only those highway improvements expected to be completed by 1990 according to Fairfax County staff, based on existing programs and anticipated funding levels; first assignment did not include Springfield Bypass and extension of Lockheed Boulevard/South Van Dorn Street Connector; second assignment incorporated most needed portions of these projects
14	Fairfax City traffic analysis	At request of City of Fairfax, two highway traffic assignments for 1990 based on specific network assumptions in Fairfax City were developed and hand adjusted as necessary; final report prepared and presented to Fairfax City Board of Supervisors

Note: VDHT = Virginia Department of Highways and Transportation, TAMS = Tippetts-Abbett-McCarthy-Stratton, and CARTS = Commuter Auto Rapid Transit System.

Corridor planning studies, which are usually undertaken after a major facility need has been identified as part of the regional planning process, evaluate detailed alternatives and develop an environmental impact statement.

It is quite common for the MPO to supply travel forecasts for corridor route alternatives to a consultant. Frequently, public hearings are held as the various phases of the corridor study are completed. These studies are almost always characterized by a high degree of political and citizen involvement and controversy. The relative impartiality of the MPO and its ability to provide credible unbiased forecasts become a valuable plus in such efforts.

Service projects in the corridor study category include the Intercounty Connector in Montgomery and Prince George's Counties, the Springfield Bypass in Fairfax County, and the widening of US-50 in Prince George's County. The technical justification for withdrawing the south leg of the District of Columbia's Interstate system, so that the funds could be transferred to Metro-rail construction, also resulted from a corridor study service request.

Experience gained from one corridor study can be transferred to the next, and over time a valuable "kit bag" of new and improved technical methods and procedures for differing corridor study problems can be developed.

#### TSM Studies

Several fringe-parking-lot studies have been under-

taken as well as a study to determine the potential for HOV facilities.

The major TSM-type service project currently under way is a traffic study for Rockville, Maryland, a city of 40 000 people. This study is being conducted in cooperation with the City traffic engineering and planning staffs and includes (a) speed and delay studies to determine problem streets and intersections, (b) traffic volume counts and classification and occupancy studies, (c) intersection capacity analysis, (d) parking inventories, and (e) a hand-out/mail-back roadside origin-destination survey on major routes entering the city.

The study has the strong support of the Mayor and City Council and will be used to determine how to accommodate additional travel demands until major planned circumferential arterials are completed. This type of study can be conducted throughout the metropolitan area in locations where traffic problems cannot be solved by facility construction or widenings. Such studies hold great potential for enabling the MPO to contribute to traffic management activities at the proper scale.

#### Innovative Studies

Innovative studies completed or under way include an analysis of Metro-rail station locations and mode of access to Metro-rail stations, an analysis of commuter bus and rail potential, and a study of transportation services for the elderly and the handicapped for nonprofit corporations.

One of the most interesting innovative service

efforts was an interjurisdictional study involving the District of Columbia and Montgomery County. The District of Columbia changed the function of a street carrying Maryland commuters from a one-way, peak-period, reversible four-lane arterial to a two-way street with parking restrictions in the peak flow direction in order to reduce speed and volume. The facility had imposed a heavy traffic burden on a residential area for many years.

Before the change, TPB staff mailed notices to Maryland residents who were observed using the street, informing them of the impending change and encouraging them to switch to other routes, use Metrorail, or carpool. Staff also monitored the speed and volume on the route both before and after the change. The results indicated a reduction of 2000 cars in the peak period on the street and 1000 in the corridor. Travel time increased only 2 min or less over the 5-mile section.

The traffic control change was accomplished smoothly and successfully. Other routes in the District of Columbia that adversely affect neighborhoods are being reviewed for possible similar changes in order to improve neighborhood environments.

#### Data- or Process-Related Activities

The MPO process, being highly technical in nature, is, of course, heavily data and process oriented. Frequently, however, data obtained or methods used successfully at the regional level are not applicable to specific problems in local areas.

Many service requests are for specific data-collection and analysis efforts. These can include questionnaire design and data collection, such as the service project just completed for the Bethesda area in Montgomery County. This service request was originated by the Montgomery County Council to shed light on a controversial proposal to construct a new parking-garage facility near Metrorail in the business district. Close coordination and a shared work effort with local staffs were required to obtain the

necessary information at employment sites in the area.

Another data-oriented service activity is an ongoing program of collecting trip-generation data for major residential and nonresidential sites in the District of Columbia. These data are more detailed as to time of day, purpose, and mode than the conventional home-interview type of data and can serve the regional process by improving and refining basic methodology. Similarly, studies of truck travel and weekend transit use have been undertaken that enhance the overall regional data base and process.

#### INTERGOVERNMENTAL ASPECTS

Viewed from an intergovernmental perspective, the TPB/COG expanded program of service activities has greatly improved the relationship between the MPO and its participating state and local organizations in the Washington metropolitan area. TPB/COG has been able to respond to the immediate needs and concerns of constituents in a timely and professional manner. This has enhanced its credibility and led to increasing requests for service and assistance, which, in turn, has strengthened intergovernmental ties and dependencies. In addition, by using the results of service projects to update and maintain the basic work program, efficiencies and economies have been achieved in the overall transportation planning process for the region.

It is clear from TPB/COG's experience to date that an expanded program of service activities can contribute significantly to broad acceptance of the role of MPOs in urban transportation planning and can, indeed, provide "an intergovernmental plus".

#### REFERENCE

1. Operations Plans for Continuing Urban Transportation Planning. FHWA, Internal Memorandum 50-4-68, April 1968.

#### *Abridgment*

## Consistency of Comprehensive and Transportation Planning: An Intergovernmental Relations Issue

ROBERT M. WINICK

In federally funded transportation project planning studies, the Maryland Department of Transportation has considered implementing alternatives that are contrary to local comprehensive land use plans. This is an example of a lack of consistency between the federal urban transportation planning process and local planning. Descriptions are given of both the local planning context and some of the unique state-local interactions in Maryland and how in particular this consistency dilemma comes about. This situation is an intergovernmental relations problem that needs to be understood and addressed. Several causes of this consistency dilemma are reviewed and analyzed. It is attributable to actual and perceived variations in local comprehensive planning, lack of explicit direction from the federal planning guidelines, basic differences between functional and comprehensive planning, and trends of increasing comprehensiveness. The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission has been trying for several years to seek ways to achieve and maintain consistency between these two planning processes. Several ways in which the various governmental levels can reach consistency are reviewed. These include administrative changes to action plans of state transportation departments, modifications to the proposed rules for urban transportation planning currently under review,

and potential changes in legislation. It is concluded that suggested modifications to the proposed rules could effectively enable the necessary consistency to be achieved.

It is almost 20 years since the federal government required that each urbanized area have a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive transportation planning process. That process was to result in plans and programs that were consistent with comprehensively planned development. However, the local jurisdiction of Montgomery County, Maryland, still is experiencing a lack of consistency between federally supported transportation project planning and local comprehensive planning. The local planning agency is very concerned with this intergovernmental relations issue.