
**COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MONTHLY REPORT TO THE TPB**

September 18, 2024
Ra Amin, CAC Chair

The September meeting of the CAC was held virtually on Thursday, September 12. The meeting featured a discussion of DMVMoves, a presentation and discussion on TPB's Climate Change Mitigation Planning program, an "Act Locally" round-robin, and an update on the status of the Access for All Advisory Committee.

DMVMoves UPDATES

Ra Amin, Chair, facilitated a discussion among members about potential recommendations to be made to the task force. CAC members made the following comments:

Regional Fare Policy Framework: Develop a unified fare policy across the region by December 2024.

CAC members strongly support this idea. They understand this to mean that all the different agencies providing transit would have the same fare policies. For example, if school children ride free in Frederick, they would also ride free everywhere else in the DMV. Uniform fare policies would go a long way to integrating transportation throughout the region.

More than one CAC member are interested in making income a factor in setting the fares—like WMATA's reduced fare program for families receiving SNAP.

Regional Fleet and Stop Design Guidelines: Develop design guidelines for transit stops and fleets by May 2025.

CAC members support this idea. Stops should provide uniform design and information so that one can feel safe traveling from one jurisdiction to the other. It will eliminate confusion. Even if the task force doesn't agree on anything else, at least that could be accomplished.

Regional Transit Funding: Review current transit expenditures, forecast unmet funding needs, and explore potential sources for dedicated transit funding.

CAC members discussed other sources of funding beyond fares. They support land value capture around transit hubs. When land value goes up because of public investment, there should be a way for the public to get more of that value back. Land value created by transit should go back to transit.

They also stressed that any sources of funding should be examined to ensure they are sustainable over time and support transit region wide. There should be a region-wide study on how funding can be made sustainable. Chair Amin provided these comments in more detail at the Community Partners Advisory Committee meeting September 13.

TPB'S CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION PLANNING

Erin Morrow, TPB Transportation Engineer, provided an overview of the TPB adopted goals and strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the on-road transportation sector.

Questions and comments included the following:

Is there any conflict when choosing between Electric Vehicles and using public transit when it comes to reducing Greenhouse Gas? What about HOT lanes?

TPB staff replied that a good public transit system is imperative to supporting transportation in our region. Also, there are a lot of people for whom transit is never going to be an option. Travel will still be dominated by auto in the near term, so working to make the fleet cleaner is also necessary. Regarding HOT lanes, or the express tolling options, it was one of the aspirational initiatives the TPB included. The projects also include buses, so that not just autos can use the lanes.

Has anyone started looking into using Artificial Intelligence (AI) in transportation planning to help make better decisions?

TPB is using AI mainly on the technical side in our travel models. AI is a fast-changing area and our use of it is still evolving. COG is developing a policy for its use to provide some guardrails.

Improving people's behavior should also be part of the solution. Is there anything we can do to influence individual's choices?

Pricing mechanisms have been proven to help influence people's choices. When more is charged for gas or parking (carbon pricing), it is measurably effective, but not very unpopular. A lot of environmental problems are really rooted in older land use decisions. Currently the costs of using an automobile are external. People don't necessarily pay for what it really costs society. If some of those costs are internalized, that could change behavior. We could harmonize community needs and personal needs through a pricing structure.

ACT LOCALLY ROUND-ROBIN

Chair Amin opened discussion on the activities that members are doing in their local communities. Members share their work on a local planning advisory board, design charettes, spreading the word about Montgomery County's Ride On bus improvements, active transportation in Prince George's County, and raising the issue of construction during rush hours to District of Columbia elected officials.

REFRESHING THE ACCESS FOR ALL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Laura Bachle, Transportation Planner, briefed the committee on the history and current status of this committee. The committee expressed interest in opening a dialogue to hear the concerns of the AFA members about regional transportation.

ATTENDANCE

Members

Ra Amin, Chair
Christina Farver
Daniel Papiernik
Heather Ganoa
Lorena Rios
Maribel Wong
Rick Rybeck
Larkin Turman
Nancy Abeles

Timothy Davis
Jeff Parnes
Gail Sullivan
Ashley Hutson
Zach Israel

Staff

Leonardo Pineda

Rachel Beyerle
Laura Bachle
Erin Morrow
Dusan Vuksan
Cristina Finch
Mark Moran
Lyn Erikson