

REPORT

TPB Citizens Advisory Committee June 17, 2009 Farrell Keough, CAC Chairman

The CAC's June 11 meeting focused mainly on the TIP Forum.

Forum on the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Andrew Austin gave an overview of the TIP. He said that the TIP cycle lasts a full year and is now nearing completion. He explained that the draft TIP was being released for public comment at the CAC meeting. It will be scheduled for TPB approval on July 15. In his presentation, Mr. Austin said that there were no new projects submitted for the TIP in this cycle, but there were a number of cases in which projects were being delayed. Mr. Austin's presentation included information regarding levels of funding for the next six years. He used pie charts to show funding categories broken down by mode.

Mr. Austin introduced representatives from the implementing agencies who were present to answer questions: Lyn Erickson from MDOT, Kanti Srikanth from VDOT, Eric Stults and Rick Rybeck from DDOT and Tom Harrington from WMATA. He also introduced Sandra Jackson from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

Comments from CAC members and other participants included the following:

The TIP and public involvement

- *Concerns that the TIP document is not citizen-friendly.* Participants pointed out a number of ways in which the TIP document is difficult to understand. Staff and DOT representatives acknowledged that the TIP is not designed to be a document for citizen participation, but rather, it is a document to meet federal requirements. Staff called attention to the TIP brochure, which has been developed to provide citizens with an overview of six-year priorities as reflected in the TIP. It might be more helpful to concentrate on ways in which the TIP brochure can be improved instead of trying to improve the actual TIP document.
- *How should the TIP be used to generate public comment?* Some participants emphasized that the information from this TIP should be used to decide how to influence next year's TIP. They also noted the importance of using information from the TIP to get involved at the state and local levels.
- *Comments about project selection.* Several participants noted that by the time a project gets in the TIP, it's often too late to change it. They said that if people want to affect

project selection, they need to work at the state and local levels during the early stages of project development.

Comments about broad issues identified in the TIP:

- *Some general comments were made that the TIP reflects a continuing road-building orientation, which exacerbates auto-dependency.*
- *Mr. Srikanth from VDOT emphasized the growing funding shortfalls that are reflected in the TIP.*

Comments about the TIP document:

- *Why does the TIP appear to include so few bicycle/pedestrian improvements? Mr. Srikanth VDOT explained that many projects in Virginia (and in other jurisdictions, as well) include bicycle and pedestrian components but are not identified as such in the TIP. A discussion ensued about whether and how bicycle/pedestrian projects should be reflected in the TIP. DOT representatives emphasized how difficult it would be to create a separate list/database of bike/ped projects. CAC members countered that the lack of information seems to be evidence that bike/ped projects are not taken seriously. They further maintained that if the region truly is committed to pursuing a “complete streets” approach to transportation planning, then there should be a way to track implementation.*
- *It is disturbing that some projects appear in the TIP year after year, but never get built.*
- *Federal “Transportation Enhancements” funds are not properly identified in the document.*
- *The portion of the TIP titled “Withdrawn/ Completed” is confusing.*
- *More information on transportation safety is needed.*

Project-specific comments

- *The cost of the Corridor Cities Transitway appears quite high. Ms. Erickson from MDOT explained that the cost reflects a light-rail alternative for the project. If bus rapid transit is pursued, the cost will be much lower.*
- *What kind of public comment would it take to stop the HOT lanes projects and build rail instead? Mr. Srikanth noted extensive public comment had already gone into the HOT lanes projects, which resulted in the addition of extensive new bus services. He also noted that recent budget cuts in Virginia have targeted road improvement projects more than rail or other transit projects.*
- *The low level of funding for the Purple Line, as reflected in the draft TIP, do not seem to match MDOT’s supposed commitment to the project. Ms. Erickson said that Maryland is*

currently in the process of applying for federal New Starts funding for the Purple Line, but MDOT does not know how much will be received. Once the levels of funding are known, the higher levels will be reflected in next year's TIP.

- *Is Maryland pursuing stimulus funding for high-speed rail?* Ms. Erickson said yes, although issues could arise in the legislature.

CAC Business

- Paul DeMaio said he would like the CAC to organize a panel discussion on a congestion pricing based on a cordon charge similar to London's. The committee agreed to pursue this agenda item.
- Farrell Keough said that he would like the committee in July to fully discuss a draft paper that he circulated, which promotes the development of a TPB regional priorities plan.
- Gail Parker has offered to help organize an outreach meeting in Virginia in the fall.
- Ron Kirby described key items on the TPB agenda.

ATTENDANCE CAC Meeting, May 14, 2009

Members in Attendance

1. Farrell Keough, MD, Chair
2. Gail Parker, VA
3. Emmet Tydings, MD
4. Larry Martin, DC
5. Jim Larsen, VA
6. Paul DeMaio, DC
7. Harold Foster, DC
8. Allen Muchnick, VA

Members Not in Attendance

1. Bill Klenke, MD
2. Lynn Shanton, MD
3. Shirley Williams, DC
4. Trudy Reeves, DC
5. Maureen Budetti, VA
6. Roland Gunn, VA

Staff/Others

Eric Stults, DDOT
Rick Rybeck, DDOT
Tom Harrington, WMATA
Kanti Srikanth, VDOT
Lyn Erickson, MDOT
Sandra Jackson, FHWA
Erica Interrante, FHWA
Ron Kirby
John Swanson
Andrew Austin
Rex Hodgson
Harry Sanders, Purple Line Now
Howard Jennings, Arlington County Commuter Services