

REPORT

TPB Citizens Advisory Committee November 10, 2010

Maureen Budetti, CAC Chair

The November 10 CAC meeting included presentations and discussion on the following: (1) WMATA's Regional Transit System Plan, (2) the first meeting of the TPB Priorities Plan Scoping Task Force, and (3) COG/Board of Trade Task Force on WMATA Governance.

Presentation on WMATA's Regional Transit System Plan

Mark Kellogg, from Metro's Office of Long Range Planning, provided a briefing on the development of a new Regional Transit System Plan (RTSP) that will address future growth and options for improving and expanding transit service. The presentation included a variety of alternatives for future Metrorail development that are based in COG forecasts for population, household, and employment growth, and the resulting implications for regional transportation patterns. Mr. Kellogg's presentation focused on developing an integrated, multimodal transit system that includes local bus and circulators, express bus, bus rapid transit, light rail and streetcar, Metrorail, and commuter rail.

CAC member questions and comments included the following:

- **Is there a formal process for public involvement?**
Mr. Kellogg said Metro is working on developing a public involvement process, and that workshops would likely be offered in the winter and early spring. He said that Metro also hopes to build off of public involvement efforts of local governments and other organizations, like the CAC.
- **Has Metro considered creating a "bypass" for some trains in order to run express service on some lines?**
Mr. Kellogg noted the expense of creating bypass tracks in underground stations, saying that this could be as expensive as adding an additional line. He also said that there has not been significant interest in running express service, but noted the possibility of infill stations along existing transit lines.
- **Has there been any emergency push for light rail when considering the rising price of gasoline?**
Mr. Kellogg discussed connectivity of light rail to the current system, and pointed to the Purple Line plans as an example. In response to this, a comment was made by a CAC member about the importance of reviewing current plans – such as the purple line connection to the Metrorail system – before making a solid decision about the expansion and changes that are involved in the Regional Transit System Plan.

- **Is the rise in telecommuting and flexible work schedules having any impact on ridership during peak hours of service?**

Mr. Kellogg noted that, although rates of telecommuting in the region are generally higher than in other regions, there has not been a significant impact on ridership or peak hour service.

- **Has Metro reviewed funding for this RTSP?**

Mr. Kellogg said that the alternatives presented as part of the RTSP do not include funding analysis, but that reviewing funding will be an eventual part of the process.

Discussion on the First Meeting of the TP Priorities Plan Scoping Task Force

The CAC discussed the first Scoping Task Force meeting, which was held in October.

General themes of the discussion were:

- **Participation.** There was a lot of participation from everyone present at the Task Force meeting, which saw a spirited discussion about the possibilities and benefits of developing an unconstrained transportation priorities plan.
- **MPO Overview.** TPB staff conducted research on other MPO activities, and presented this research at the Task Force meeting. The general conclusion of this research was that there are many different ways of conducting an unconstrained plan, and all MPO's reviewed found utility in creating an unconstrained plan, which could be used to help with visioning purposes, or to make the case for additional funding.
- **CLRP Updates.** Since the federal government only requires that the CLRP be updated every four years, some CAC members questioned the value of updating the CLRP annually. The annual CLRP update takes up staff time which, according to one CAC member, could be otherwise used to help figure out how to prioritize projects.
- **Setting Regional Criteria for Projects.** A CAC member who attended the Task Force Meeting mentioned that an area of discussion included options for more closely tying projects selection to regional goals. The CAC member advocated that one such way to accomplish this is to create a series of regional criteria by which to measure projects.

Discussion Regarding the COG/Board of Trade Task Force on WMATA Governance

The CAC discussed recent developments of the COG/Board of Trade Task Force on WMATA Governance, including the recommendations on WMATA Governance that were developed by Metro's Riders' Advisory Council (RAC). Previous to this meeting, the CAC had considered hosting a public meeting on December 9 to focus on WMATA Governance.

Mr. Kirby said that the final report on WMATA Governance would be released the week of November 15. Accordingly, the CAC decided to wait until the release of the report to decide

whether or not to conduct a public meeting in December. The CAC decided to convene via email to make the final decision. If the CAC does not hold a public meeting, the COG/Board of Trade Task Force report will be an information item on the CAC December agenda. The CAC also discussed inviting members of the RAC to present their report.

Other Business

- Mr. Swanson provided several updates on public involvement:
 - *Staffing.* Mr. Swanson introduced Elena Constantine, a new member of the TPB staff, to the CAC. He also said that Darren Smith, of TPB staff, would be departing COG to take a position with the National Association of Realtors.
 - *Community Leadership Institute.* The Community Leadership Institute in November was a great success, and included over 20 participants, including one current CAC member, Bill Easter. Mr. Easter commented that as someone who is new to the regional transportation planning process, he found the program to be educational and fun.
 - *CAC Elections.* Applications to be considered for membership to the CAC are available and online at <http://www.mwcog.org/transportation/>. Mr. Swanson summarized that the CAC would elect six CAC members (2 each from VA, MD, and DC), and that the TPB would nominate the remaining nine members (three each from VA, MD, and DC) for a total of 15 members. All individuals who would like to be considered for membership must submit an application, which is due to TPB staff by November 30. The CAC voted to conduct internal elections by email.

- Mr. Kirby provided an overview of the upcoming TPB agenda, emphasizing several items: the appointment of the nominating committee for the 2011 TPB Officers, Approving the CLRP and FY2011-2016 TIP, TPB Certification of the urban transportation planning process as required by the federal government, approval of the call for projects for the CLRP and FY2012-2017 TIP, and revising the budget of the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) to add funding.

- The CAC briefly discussed the response to the Capital Bikeshare Program, noting its broad success. Also mentioned was the pedestrian-friendly work that is occurring on Connecticut Avenue between K and L streets, NW, as part of the citywide great streets program.

Members in Attendance

Maureen Budetti (2010Chair), VA
Emmet Tydings, MD
Bill Easter, MD
Allen Muchnick, VA
Kelby Funn, MD
Tina Slater, MD
Gail Parker, VA
Harold Foster, DC

Alternate Members Present

Kim Kaplan, VA
Kevin Posey, VA
Frederick Walker, VA

Members Not In Attendance

Zach Dobelbower, DC
Farrell Keough, MD
Jim Larsen, VA
Lawrence Martin, DC
Stephen McCoy, DC
Madeline McDuffy, VA
Faith Wheeler, DC

Staff/Others in Attendance

Ron Kirby, TPB staff
John Swanson, TPB staff
Deborah Kerson Bilek, TPB staff
Darren Smith, TPB Staff
Elena Constantine, TPB staff
Mark Kellogg, WMATA