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## COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MONTHLY REPORT

May 19, 2021

*Nancy Abeles, CAC Vice-Chair*

The Community Advisory Committee (CAC) to the TPB met on Thursday, May 13, for an online-only meeting. Most of the meeting was devoted to an in-depth discussion about the long-range transportation plan and the process for its development. Also at the meeting, staff briefed the CAC on the upcoming TPB agenda.

### VISUALIZE 2045 DISCUSSION

In April, the CAC received a full briefing from Transportation Planner Stacy Cook on Visualize 2045. This month, committee members were given the opportunity to continue their discussion about the plan. At the beginning of the meeting, staff broke the committee into small groups (using Microsoft Teams) and gave them three questions to discuss. TPB staff did not participate in these breakout sessions. Once the full committee reconvened, Karen Armendariz, public engagement specialist, facilitated report-outs from each group and a full group discussion that gave the committee an opportunity to ask questions of staff and clarify their points.

The input from the breakout groups is summarized below:

**Why is Visualize 2045 is important?** Committee members provided the following responses:

- Visualize 2045 should serve as a master plan that pulls together elements of various transportation plans developed at the state and local levels. The plan should provide a common language to discuss transportation as multi-faceted, multi-modal system.
- The plan should provide a means for coordinating planning efforts across the region. Different states and jurisdictions may have different standards and approaches to planning. A common regional plan helps to coordinate those differences.
- The long-range transportation planning process should help the TPB identify and advocate for regionally focused projects and programs that will benefit the entire region.
- The plan provides an opportunity to educate the public about future challenges and solutions. The planning process should engage the public by showing them how the future might look.

**As we move past the constrained element of Visualize 2045, what are some ways we can weave equity into the plan?** Committee members provided the following responses:

- Equity can mean different things to different people. We should reach out to people in underserved communities to find out what they want and need from the transportation system. Is it access to jobs? Access to goods and services?
- Perhaps the TPB should consider setting standards and measurements for equity, and a way to measure progress.
- The TPB might consider setting aside a budget for work and/or projects focused on equity.
- The TPB could encourage agencies that implement transportation projects to give preferences or percentages in contracting to minority-owned firms.
- It is important to understand and remember the purview of the TPB on issues of equity (and other issues as well); if we try to be everything, we could end up being nothing. It is important to target actions toward outcomes.

**As we move past the constrained element of Visualize 2045, what are some ways we can address climate change in the plan?** Committee members provided the following responses:

- The TPB should explore and identify new ways to incorporate considerations of greenhouse gas emissions into the plan.
- There needs to be a greater emphasis on transportation policies to mitigate climate change, such as increased support for alternative-fuel vehicles and mass transit. Leaders should consider establishing incentives/disincentives for various modes.
- The TPB should encourage community improvements using a “Complete Streets” approach that make walking and biking more attractive.
- The region’s problem with affordable housing is both an equity issue and a climate change concern. Increasingly, people can only afford to live in places that are farther out and more auto-dependent.
- The region needs to make infrastructure more resilient to climate change through better design, drainage, and permeable surfaces.

Some broader points raised by committee members included:

- Changes in road space during the pandemic – such as the establishment of outdoor dining spaces and increased pedestrian and bicycle access – should be continued into the future. TPB Transportation Planner Stacy Cook responded that the Voices of the Region survey found that there was high support for the continuation of those kinds of changes. She said that Visualize 2045 will reflect this finding.
- The American Jobs Plan, the infrastructure legislation proposed by the new Administration, offers a rare opportunity to shape transportation for generations to come. The TPB should get involved in shaping this legislation, as much as possible and appropriate. Lyn Erickson of the TPB staff answered that the TPB is prohibited from lobbying, but in the past the TPB has developed policy principles on federal legislative proposals.
- Transportation planning nationally and in our region has become too politicized. The TPB should seek to de-politicize the planning process and policy making by emphasizing data and known equity and climate impacts.

The committee also discussed ways the TPB can incorporate public input into the planning process.

- Members suggested that the CAC can be a liaison between the TPB and communities in the region.
- They also suggested that the CAC should have representation on task forces and other special committees to be sure “Voices of the Region” continue to be heard.

Finally, regarding the recent public comment period for the project inputs to Visualize 2045, a CAC member asked the following questions:

- How many comments had been received and how many mentioned equity? Stacy Cook answered that 206 comments had been received. Approximately 180 of these comments were broad and many mentioned equity in some fashion.
- Has the TPB asked for an extension to the deadline for approval of Visualize 2045? Ms. Cook answered that the TPB has submitted a letter to the federal transportation oversight agencies regarding an extension and is awaiting a response.

## OTHER BUSINESS

Lyn Erickson, TPB Plan Development and Coordination Program Director, walked the committee through the May TPB agenda.

During the Staff Update Mr. Swanson updated the committee on COG's plans for re-entry to the building and plans for partial in-person meetings starting in the Fall.

## ATTENDEES

<b>Members</b>	
Nancy Abeles	Katherine Kortum
Ashley Hutson	Michael Arston
Dan Papiernik	Lorena Rios
Delia Houseal	Ra Amin
Delishia Pittman	Robert Jackson
Eyal Li	Ron Sktz
Jeff Jamawat	Solomon Haile
Jeff Parnes	Michael Arston
Tracy Duvall	Jemila Kia James
Rafael Sampayo	Justin Isbell
<b>Guests</b>	
Bill Orleans	
<b>Staff</b>	
Abigail Zenner	Stacy Cook
John Swanson	Lyn Erickson
Karen Armendariz	