

REPORT
TPB Citizens Advisory Committee
July 16, 2014
Tracy Hadden Loh, Chair

At the CAC meeting on June 10, the committee discussed and voted on a resolution to the TPB regarding the reauthorization of the federal surface transportation legislation. The committee also received a draft update of the TPB's Participation Plan, which has been released for public comment. The second half of the meeting was devoted to a public forum on the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Recommendations to the TPB on Federal Transportation Reauthorization Legislation

The committee discussed draft resolutions that CAC Chair Tracy Loh distributed to the committee in advance. Chair Loh developed these resolutions as follow-up to a discussion at the CAC's June meeting in which Delania Hardy, Executive Director of the Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (AMPO), briefed the committee on the reauthorization of MAP-21, the federal surface transportation legislation.

CAC members discussed whether the TPB should establish a working group to identify and articulate the region's key needs related to reauthorization. In general, members supported the formation of such a group. CAC members also generally supported federal action to increase funding for MPO decision making, although many members noted they would not support MPO funding that represented a decrease in federal funding to states which also goes to our region.

Members said the essential goal of reauthorization should be to increase funding overall, and they noted this issue was becoming increasingly urgent as the Highway Trust Fund stands to dry up this summer. Sounding a cautionary note, one member said that increased funding for MPOs is only warranted if regional planning is truly meaningful. This member questioned the value of the recent Regional Transportation Priorities Plan.

In voice votes, the committee approved the resolution attached to this report which called for the formation of a TPB working group on reauthorization and called for the TPB to support increased funding allocations to MPOs. One member voted against both points in the resolutions and one member abstained on the votes.

If the TPB does decide to form a working group on reauthorization and accepts CAC participation on the group, the committee determined that Erin Morrow and Gary Hodge will represent the CAC.

Discussion on the Draft of the Updated TPB Participation Plan

John Swanson of TPB staff briefed the committee on a revised update to the TPB's Participation Plan. He said the new draft update was being released for a 45-day public comment period on July 10. He said the TPB would be scheduled to vote on it on September 17.

Mr. Swanson said that a version of the document had been released as a “discussion draft” at the CAC’s June meeting. At that meeting, the committee expressed concerns about the document, saying it was too bureaucratic and not visionary enough. Mr. Swanson said that based on those concerns, the draft was revised to eliminate redundancies and the appearance of being simply a “checklist.” He said the new draft also provided more explanation of the purpose behind various public involvement activities. He said that the CAC operating procedures, which are included in an appendix in the document, had not been changed since the June draft.

Mr. Swanson noted that it is useful for staff to use this document to articulate its general approach to public involvement. However, he did note that the document itself is a federal requirement and therefore by definition may not be as citizen-friendly as some CAC members might like. He emphasized that it is most important that implementation of the Participation Plan is meaningful.

Chair Loh encouraged members to review the Draft Participation Plan Update. She further suggested that members might want to think about whether the committee should recommend that aspects of the CAC operating procedures or mission should be changed. She said the committee may decide to pursue this topic at its meeting on September 11.

Forum on the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the Constrained Long-Range Plan (CLRP)

As required by the Federal Metropolitan Planning Regulations, the TPB staff conducted a public forum on the FY 2015-2020 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Andrew Austin of TPB staff provided a briefing on the projects anticipated to be in the new TIP and CLRP, and the process for developing the documents. Eric Randall of TPB staff provided preliminary information on the financial analysis for the Constrained Long-Range Plan.

Members of the public and the CAC asked a variety of clarifying questions regarding toll funding, air quality conformity, specific projects, and other issues.

Participants asked about the draft CLRP’s lack of funding for the Metro 2025 (from WMATA’s *Momentum* Strategic Plan) package of core capacity improvements for Metro, including eight-car trains and core station improvements. One member asked if it was too late to include funding for Metro 2025 in this year’s CLRP and TIP. Staff answered that it is too late to include those projects in this year’s draft CLRP, which will be released in September. However, those improvements can be brought back to the TPB as amendments when and if funding is identified.

Members encouraged staff and the TPB to consider the economic implications of the CLRP, especially as they relate to COG’s *Economy Forward* initiatives. A member also suggested the TPB should more closely investigate and potentially support federal legislative proposals for infrastructure banking.

Other Business

- Mr. Griffiths, Acting Co-Director of the Department of Transportation Planning (DTP), introduced Kanti Srikanth who has been named the new DTP Director. CAC Chair Loh thanked Mr. Griffiths for his generosity and assistance to the CAC over the past eight months.
- Mr. Griffiths briefed the committee on the July TPB Agenda.

ATTENDEES

CAC Meeting and TIP Forum, July 10, 2014

Members Present

1. Tracy Hadden Loh, Chair (MD)
2. Tom Burrell (VA)
3. Veronica Davis (DC)
4. John Epps (MD)
5. Andrea Hamre (VA)
6. Erin McAuliff (DC)
7. Jeffrey Parnes (VA)
8. Lorena Rios (VA)
9. Tina Slater (MD)
10. Stephen Still (VA)
11. Jarrett Stoltzfus (MD)
12. Emmet Tydings (MD)

Members Not Present

1. Neha Bhatt (DC)
2. Cindy Petkac (DC)
3. Zachary Smith (DC)

Alternates Present

Gary Hodge (MD)

Staff

Bob Griffiths, COG/DTP staff
John Swanson, COG/DTP staff
Ben Hampton, COG/DTP staff
Bryan Hayes, COG/DTP staff
Lamont Cobb, COG/DTP staff
Andrew Austin, COG/DTP staff
Sergio Ritacca, COG/DTP staff

Guests

RESOLUTION

Approved by the TPB Citizens Advisory Committee

July 10, 2014

- The CAC requests that the TPB form a working group to draft a set of principles specifically for our region regarding the reauthorization of the federal surface transportation act, and that this working group include two representatives of the CAC.
- The CAC further resolves and requests that the TPB reauthorization principles include the following policy position:
 - Metropolitan regions are home to the vast majority of our population and economic activity. Our region has identified specific priorities to address congestion and air quality through our Regional Transportation Priorities Plan. The next federal transportation authorization should include an increased allocation of Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality (CMAQ) funding or other potential funding sources to federally designated MPOs to support implementation of these priorities.