
COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MONTHLY REPORT TO THE TPB

January 17, 2024
Richard Wallace, CAC Chair

The January meeting of the 2023-2024 TPB Community Advisory Committee (CAC) was held on Thursday, January 11. The meeting featured a briefing and discussion on the initial comments received for the Visualize 2050 plan update, as well as a discussion on last year's State of Public Transportation report.

DISCUSSION OF INITIAL PUBLIC COMMENTS RECEIVED FOR VISUALIZE 2050 NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Cristina Finch and Jamie Bufkin of the TPB staff provided an update on the comments received during last year's public comment period on project inputs to the plan. This comment period extended from February 15 through November 30, 2023, and was conducted as an "open" survey that did not use a statistical sampling method. Participation was open to any interested party and therefore, the input received cannot be considered statistically representative of the views of the region.

Staff said a total of 997 project comments were received. As overarching themes, staff said the input showed strong negative sentiment towards roadway widening and expansion projects and strong positive sentiment towards passenger rail expansion and improvements, bus improvements, bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure improvements, and BRT projects. At the CAC meeting, staff described comments received related to major projects.

The comment period used Survey Monkey and used conventional outreach methods, including TPB News, social media, etc., to solicit feedback. Staff noted that because the projects in question originate with localities and states, local government outreach was very important. Staff also noted that the extended length of the period – six months – made it hard to keep the outreach focused.

Discussion included the following questions and comments:

- ***Support for the outreach as a new activity.*** Members expressed appreciation for this comment period, noting it was new for the TPB to focus outreach on comments related to specific projects as a first step in the process ...
- ***... However, the purpose and role of this comment period was confusing.*** One member said it was unclear how this input would relate to later stages of plan development and outreach, and in general what weight it would have. Another member said it was unclear how the comments collectively would be considered. Should board members consider the number of comments? The vehemence of the comments? Some other measure?
- ***Concerns about the background data collected about participants.*** CAC members suggested that in the future, this kind of comment solicitation should collect demographic data and information about mode use.

- **Concerns that the comment period did not actively seek input from disadvantaged communities or apply a racial equity lens.** CAC members noted that the outreach did not appear to employ an equity lens by focusing on low-income communities or people of color. Staff responded that this outreach was just one of several methods that will be used to solicit input for the plan and future outreach will more explicitly seek input from historically marginalized communities.
- **Discussion about how to increase participation.** Staff noted that because project development is largely the responsibility of states and local governments, they were pleased that some local governments in our region conducted special outreach for this comment period. Staff also noted that in the future, it would be helpful if CAC members would reach out to their communities to encourage participation.

BRIEFING ON STATE OF PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION REPORT

Pierre Gaunard, TPB transit planner, briefed the committee on a new report that profiles each of the various transit systems in our region, including WMATA. Among other things, the report gets into the impacts of the COVID pandemic. The committee briefly discussed the seriousness and origins of WMATA's funding shortfall.

OTHER BUSINESS

- Lyn Erickson provided a summary of the upcoming January 17 TPB meeting agenda.
- This was the last meeting led by 2023 CAC Chair Richard Wallace. A new chair will be named at the TPB meeting on January 17.

ATTENDANCE

Members

Richard Wallace, MD, Chair
 Nancy Abeles, MD
 Jacqueline Overton Allen, MD
 Ra Amin, DC
 Timothy Davis, MD
 Chrisina Farver, VA
 Heather Gaona, MD
 Ashley Hutson, VA
 Felipe Franciso Millian, MD
 Daniel Papiernik, VA
 Jeffery Parnes, VA
 Lorena Rios, VA
 Rick Rybeck, DC
 Jason Stanford, VA
 Gail Sullivan, DC

Staff

Rachel Beyerle
 Lyn Erickson
 Leo Pineda
 John Swanson