



MEMORANDUM

TO: TPB Technical Committee
FROM: John Swanson, Transportation Planner
Bryan Hayes, Transportation Planner
SUBJECT: Briefing on the TPB's Community Leadership Institute
DATE: March 29, 2019

The TPB's Community Leadership Institute (CLI) is an educational program designed to help community leaders better understand how transportation decisions are made in the Washington region and how they can become more involved in the decision-making process. Later this spring, the TPB will host the 16th session of the CLI.

This memorandum provides background on the program's purpose and approach.

OVERVIEW: WHAT IS THE CLI?

The CLI is a three-part workshop in which participants learn how transportation decisions are made in this region and how community leaders can make a difference. Since it began in 2006, the CLI has brought together nearly 300 participants from all of the TPB's member jurisdictions. Approximately 20-25 individuals are invited to each session. They typically represent organizations such as civic groups, local advisory boards, neighborhood associations, business organizations, and other advocacy interests.

The workshops use interactive exercises and discussions to help community leaders better understand regional challenges and strategies for becoming more effective participants in the transportation decision-making process. At each step of the way, participants discuss ways in which the interests of their local communities connect with planning issues facing the entire region. By providing this big-picture context, the CLI encourages participants to "think regionally and act locally."

INTERACTIVE APPROACH

The CLI includes three separate sessions conducted over several weeks. The program uses exercises to simulate real-world challenges and relationships. A role-playing exercise on Day 1 puts participants in the middle of a fictitious (but familiar) local planning process that involves a state DOT, local agencies and elected officials. The experience emphasizes that there is no magic formula for successful community involvement. Projects often are propelled forward or stalled by unique factors, including funding availability and political circumstances. Successful community leaders know how to influence decisions at the right place and the right time.

The program also encourages leaders and activists to connect the interests of their local communities with the planning issues facing the entire Washington region. A map exercise on Day 2 asks participants to develop scenarios that distribute future jobs and housing, and add new transportation infrastructure. They are then asked to figure out how to pay for their plans. This activity helps participants better understand the relationship between land use and transportation on the regional scale, and the thorny issues of transportation funding.

A new module, on Day 3 of the upcoming CLI, asks participants to think about regional planning within the context of an uncertain future. Staff will present contents and analysis from Visualize 2045 and then participants will discuss whether and how recent planning activities will prepare the region to face long-term challenges, including concerns about economic opportunity, technology, and sustainability.

The sessions are facilitated by former elected officials familiar with the TPB and regional planning. These discussion leaders add a real-world political dimension to the workshops that participants find useful. Recent sessions have been facilitated by Kathy Porter, a former TPB chair and Takoma Park mayor. The original CLI facilitator was Peter Shapiro, who was also a former TPB chair as well as a Prince George's Councilmember. Mr. Shapiro helped to conceive the CLI program in 2006.

The CLI curriculum has evolved over the years and is frequently adjusted to include topics of current interest. Originally the CLI took place over two days, but it has recently been expanded to a three-day agenda. Over the years, several sessions of the CLI have been designed for target audiences, including organizations representing senior citizens and immigrants. In 2014, a CLI was conducted specifically for the staff of elected officials.

IN CONTEXT: HOW THE CLI FITS INTO THE TPB'S PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT OBJECTIVES

The CLI was designed to encourage citizens to get involved in transportation decision making at points and times when they can have the greatest impact. The TPB's Participation Plan, which was updated in September 2014, notes that "Given the fact that project-level planning usually occurs at the state and local levels, the TPB's plans and processes are often not the appropriate or most effective venues for public involvement." The CLI fulfills the Participation Plan's call for outreach activities that "build public knowledge about transportation decision-making to encourage meaningful public involvement at various stages of the process" (*TPB Participation Plan*, page 8).

At the same time, the CLI helps to spread the word about regional issues and challenges among local leaders in all corners of the region. Again, this is consistent with the objectives of the TPB's Participation Plan, which called for outreach activities that use "community leaders as conduits to disseminate information about regional issues at the grassroots level" (*TPB Participation Plan*, page 14).

The CLI also performs a vital role in developing cross-jurisdictional understanding and fostering networks. Every session brings together participants from all corners of the region – from inner and outer jurisdictions and from both sides of the Potomac – to look at common challenges.

The connections formed at the CLI have helped inform current and future participation in the TPB process itself. Several current members of the TPB and the CAC are graduates of the program. Over

the years, TPB staff has tapped participants to organize local forums and to provide input for regional planning activities, including outreach for Visualize 2045.

UPCOMING SESSION

The next round of the Community Leadership Institute will be held on three consecutive Thursdays — April 18, April 25, and May 2, 2019. The application deadline for the upcoming session was March 22. Because interest in this session was high, TPB staff is tentatively planning to conduct a second CLI session later this year or in early 2020.

For more information on the program, contact:

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