

REPORT
TPB Citizens Advisory Committee
May 16, 2012
Tina Slater, 2012 CAC Chair
Veronica O. Davis, 2012 DC CAC Vice-Chair (presiding)

The CAC's meeting on May 10 included a briefing on the TPB's activities related to low-income and minority communities and people with disabilities as well as updates on the Regional Transportation Priorities Plan (RTPP) and the Draft Regional Complete Streets Policy. The CAC also participated in a brief focus group-style feedback session regarding the online publication *TPB Weekly Report*.

Briefing on TPB Activities Related to Low-Income and Minority Communities and People with Disabilities

Wendy Klancher of the TPB staff briefed the committee. She outlined the TPB's "Three As" approach – Awareness, Analysis, Action – to including low-income, minority, and disability issues and perspectives in the regional transportation planning process. She said that the TPB's Access for All (AFA) Advisory Committee is the main way that awareness of low-income, minority, and disability issues is raised, and that the AFA helps to make sure that those issues are raised throughout the TPB's various public outreach activities. She said that staff conduct extensive analysis of accessibility for low-income, minority, and disabled populations with every major four-year update of the Constrained Long Range Plan (CLRP), and she explained that the TPB is able to act to improve mobility and accessibility by awarding grants from two Federal Transit Administration (FTA) programs: Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) and New Freedom.

The feedback and questions of the Committee members focused on a few main issues:

- ***Impact of outreach activities on long-term planning.*** Members asked whether efforts to include low-income, minority, and disability perspectives – especially through the AFA – have had an impact on or changed the direction of the CLRP and other long-term planning activities. Ms. Klancher explained that the AFA tends to focus on short-term issues like Metro fares, affordable housing, and operational issues.
- ***Impact of planning activities on accessibility and mobility in the region.*** Members asked whether the TPB has been able to track and show progress in improving accessibility and mobility for low-income, minority, and disabled populations. One member also asked whether the programs awarded grants under JARC and New Freedom were sustainable without ongoing commitment of funding.

Ms. Klancher explained that there are a lot of data limitations when it comes to tracking progress over time, especially since far less information was available in the 2010 Census compared to the 2000 Census. She pointed out that the TPB does look at the number of

jobs that any given point in the region has within 45 minutes either by car or by transit, and then compares that with data on where people with low incomes, minority groups, and people with disabilities live.

She also pointed out that the AFA's recent response to proposed Metro fare increases probably contributed to WMATA backing down from some of the proposals, and she said that some TPB analysis has showed that widening of the regional east/west divide in job growth has slowed somewhat in recent years. She also noted that some JARC and New Freedom projects are able to find sources of ongoing funding, while others do not.

- ***How the CAC can contribute to the inclusion of low-income, minority, and disability perspectives in the regional transportation planning process.*** Members wanted to know how the CAC can help with the work of TPB staff and the AFA to include the perspectives of low-income, minority, and disabled populations. Ms. Klancher explained that more diverse representation on the AFA would be most useful. She welcomed any ideas for adding to or refreshing the AFA's membership, especially to include representatives of low-income and minority issues.
- ***Expanding the reach of the AFA Committee.*** Members wanted to know how hearing-impaired and senior populations were included in the AFA Committee. Ms. Klancher said that the disability representatives tend to focus on people with mobility challenges, but they want to include hearing-impaired populations. There is a representative for the senior community on the AFA, but they realize with the aging-in-place population more partners may need to be included.

Update on the Regional Transportation Priorities Plan (RTPP)

Ron Kirby of the TPB staff provided an update on the Regional Transportation Priorities Plan (RTPP). He outlined progress to date, explaining the lessons that were learned during the "listening sessions" phase of public involvement in January and February and how those lessons have been used to prepare for a June 2 "focus group" to test methods for communicating the RTPP goals, challenges, and strategies to the public. In particular, he explained that staff have backed off the use of performance measures to identify and explain regional challenges, instead using written narrative, graphics, and pictures. He said that the results of the focus group on June 2 will be used to further refine the draft challenges and strategies in time for an interim report to the TPB this summer.

The feedback and questions of the Committee members focused on a few main issues:

- ***Establishing and using a benefit/cost analysis framework in the priority-setting process.*** Members communicated the importance of "getting it right" when identifying and calculating the benefits and costs of proposed strategies in conducting a benefit/cost analysis for proposed strategies. One member questioned some of the figures used in the Bikeshare example in Mr. Kirby's presentation, noting that the value of projected public health benefits seemed to be especially low. One other member suggested tracking the

true costs and benefits of projects after they had been implemented to see if the projections used to prioritize the projects were accurate.

- ***Keeping in mind the long-term purpose of the RTPP.*** Members asked how the upcoming focus group on June 2 fit into the overall process of regional transportation priority-setting, which the CAC has been interested in for many years. Mr. Kirby said that the focus group is primarily an effort to test methods for communicating regional challenges and strategies.
- ***Opportunities for the CAC to be involved in the RTPP process.*** Members sought to clarify what opportunities the CAC would have to be involved in the RTPP process. Mr. Kirby said that CAC members were welcome to attend a work session immediately prior to the June 20 TPB meeting. He said the work session would be an open and informal discussion of work to date and where the RTPP is going.

Discussion on the *TPB Weekly Report*

Ben Hampton of TPB staff facilitated a discussion on the *TPB Weekly Report*, a new online publication designed to provide brief, timely summaries of recent TPB research, analysis, outreach, and planning. All CAC members and alternates are signed up to receive this report via email on a weekly basis. The intent of the discussion was to have the CAC act as a focus group to provide staff with feedback on the publication, and to identify areas of successes and areas for improvement. Members of the CAC made the following points with regard to the TPB Weekly Report:

- The text of the report is lengthy, which can hamper readership. The CAC suggested using a bulleted format and/or topical headers, and referencing the topic of the Weekly Report in the email subject line.
- Evaluate the intended audience. One CAC member noted that she reads the Weekly Report because she feels an obligation to do so due to her service to the CAC and the resulting relationship she has created with the TPB.
- Consider a consumer-friendly writing style; make the articles more “feature-like” and “lighter” in approach.
- Include a way to survey readers – either through linking to a survey page, or through surveying readers within the text of the Weekly Report itself by including questions at various points throughout it.
- Consider opportunities for readers to comment on articles.

Update on the Draft Regional Complete Streets Policy

Ron Kirby provided an overview of Item 7 for the TPB Meeting, the “Approval of Complete Streets Policy for the National Capital Region.” He said that the TPB will receive a briefing on the draft final Complete Streets Policy, and will be asked to approve it at the upcoming TPB meeting on May 16. CAC members discussed how new ideas for projects would be able to go through the

process of submission to the TIP. One CAC member asked if there would be a database formed for the TIP for all Complete Streets-related projects. Mr. Kirby emphasized that the adoption of a Complete Streets Policy is an effort to raise consciousness among the various jurisdictions in the region that may be in different places with regard to implementing Complete Streets projects and policies at the local level. The CAC discussed how the approval of a Regional Complete Streets Policy is a step towards Complete Streets becoming more common throughout the region.

Other Issues/Business

- Deborah Bilek of TPB staff provided an update of public involvement activities. She told the Committee that staff had selected a consultant to assist in developing a regional transportation clearinghouse website. She also mentioned that staff continue to analyze the results of the value pricing forums that were held between October 2011 and January 2012. Ben Hampton of TPB staff provided a few brief highlights of the analysis process.
- Ron Kirby provided a briefing on the TPB's upcoming agenda.

ATTENDEES CAC Meeting, May 10, 2012

Members Present

1. Maureen Budetti (VA)
2. Veronica Davis (DC)
3. Harold Foster (DC)
4. Kelby Funn (MD)
5. Anita Hairston (DC)
6. Allen Muchnick (VA)
7. Jeffrey Parnes (VA)
8. Stephen Still (VA)
9. Emmet Tydings (MD)

Members Not Present

1. Tina Slater, Chair
2. Bill Easter (MD)
3. Larry Martin (DC)
4. Rob Mandle (DC)
5. Krystle Okafor (MD)
6. William Soltesz (VA)

Alternates Present

- John Epps (MD)
Kimberley Kaplan (VA)

Peter Pennington (VA)
Fred Walker (VA)

Staff and Guests

Wendy Klancher, COG/TPB staff
Ron Kirby, COG/TPB staff
Ben Hampton, COG/TPB staff
Deborah Bilek, COG/TPB staff
Anne-Laure Jeannez, FTA Intern
Bill Orleans, citizen