

REPORT

TPB Citizens Advisory Committee December 17, 2008 Larry Martin, CAC Chairman

At the normal business meeting of the CAC on December 11 the Committee largely focused on a detailed discussion of current TPB Scenario Planning activities. The CAC also received briefings on technology options to facilitate remote participation in CAC meetings, and on alternative approaches for linking greenhouse gas reductions to metropolitan transportation planning. In addition, the Committee held an election for the six CAC-selected spots on the 2009 CAC.

Update and Discussion on TPB Scenario Planning Activities: “CLRP Aspirations” and “What Would It Take?” Scenarios

Michael Eichler of TPB staff gave the Committee a follow-up presentation to last month’s briefing on the development of two new scenarios for study. This included greater detail on the goals and guiding principles used in developing proposed land-use shifts for the “CLRP Aspirations” scenario, and more information about the proposed transit and HOT-lane networks in the scenario. He also explained in more detail the analysis techniques being used for the “What Would It Take?” scenario, and presented an example of a combination of fuel efficiency, fuel carbon intensity, and travel behavior changes that would achieve the 2030 carbon emissions reduction goal adopted by the COG Climate Change Steering Committee. He noted that even with significant advances in fuel efficiency and technology, substantial reductions in vehicle-miles of travel (VMT) would still be necessary to reach the goal.

The CAC spent the majority of its two-hour meeting discussing various aspects of the scenario development. Particular areas of interest included the following:

- **What will analysis of the “cost effectiveness” of the various strategies and interventions explored in the “What Would It Take?” scenario actually entail?** Members were interested in knowing what the maximum of each “slider” would be – for example, how much of an increase in fuel efficiency would be required to reach the emissions reduction goal through that method alone. They also wanted to clarify that a cost-effectiveness analysis would inherently provide more detail on specific strategies. As opposed to simply stating “fuel carbon intensity would decrease X%”, for example, the possible scenario would study a specific goal of half of the vehicle fleet to be plug-in hybrids as a way to move that indicator.

- **How will the results of both scenarios feed into each other, as called for in the CAC’s recent recommendations to the TPB Scenario Study Task Force?** Committee members continued to express some concern that the two activities would not be integrated – in particular that the recognition from the “What Would It Take?” scenario activities that substantial reductions in VMT are necessary would not be reflected in more aggressive land-use pattern and transportation investment shifts in the “CLRP Aspirations” scenario.
- **How will TPB staff convey to officials and to the public the scale of the density envisioned in the “receiving zones” for land use shifts?** One member asked if TPB staff had good real-world examples of each of the proposed “receiving zone” types, with similar densities and land-use mixtures. The committee emphasized that in presenting the new scenario, staff would need to show positive examples, especially because many people assume that higher densities equal massive, tall buildings.
- **Why is the new transportation scenario so focused on BRT on variably priced lanes?** Committee members sought more information on how TPB staff and the Scenario Study Task Force had arrived at the current focus on HOT Lanes with rapid bus service. Mr. Eichler explained how the results of TPB study of value pricing, along with the lack of funding for and the difficulty in obtaining right-of-way for new transportation corridors, had led to the conclusion that a focus on revenue-generating HOT lanes and transit service on those lanes was the most reasonable and realistic approach. This generated a larger discussion among members of the relative cost efficiency of various modes, with some arguing that heavy rail service is just as economically viable as BRT, and others pointing out that since the highway network is not truly self-financing, the same should not be expected of transit networks. Mr. Eichler also noted that connecting currently less-dense areas in the region with BRT service and encouraging focusing future development in those areas could bring those locations to density levels that would support rail service in the future.
- **Are the jobs-housing ratios called for in the proposed land-use scenario appropriate and feasible?** One member said that the categories of receiving zones seemed imbalanced toward housing. Mr. Eichler noted that the original Activity Center designations were based on employment density, and many of the areas need more housing growth in order to reach a more sustainable balance.
- **How can the CAC play a role in the next phase of the Scenario Study?** One member pointed out how much influence the CAC has had in shaping the Scenario Study to this point, and members were generally pleased with the character and status of the new scenarios. The focus then turned to public advocacy, with many wondering what the next round of public outreach will entail.

Darren Smith of TPB staff also briefly reviewed the role that the CAC played in past outreach efforts related to the Scenario Study, and again drew members’ attention to the Outreach Feedback Summary Report from July 2007:

(<http://www.mwcog.org/uploads/committee-documents/s1ZaWfg20071010165101.pdf>).

He pointed out that the current Scenario Study timeline calls for a new round of public outreach and feedback in the latter half of 2009, and said that the CAC can play an important part in assisting staff with that effort, particularly in advising staff on the information and materials that should be developed to explain the scenarios to the public.

Update on the Potential for Alternative Methods of Attendance at CAC Meetings

Sarah Crawford of TPB staff briefed the Committee on several opportunities for alternative participation at CAC meetings. This presentation resulted from several requests by CAC members to both hold meetings outside of COG offices, as well as participate in CAC meetings remotely. She presented two technologies: the Regional Video Conference Network and the Adobe Connect Software. While videoconferencing allows for face-to-face interaction, participants must travel to specific locations around the region, which may not be available for use after business hours. Discussion focused primarily on the Adobe Connect Software, which allows users to participate from any location with an internet connection and phone line. Participants would also be able to view presentations occurring at the meeting. This technology would be available for meetings held outside of the COG offices. The CAC requested a demonstration of this software at its January meeting.

Election of Six Members for the 2009 Citizens Advisory Committee

The CAC held its annual election at the December 11 meeting. Per the CAC bylaws outlined in the TPB Participation Plan, the CAC is tasked with selecting six members at the end of each year to continue service on the CAC for the following year. The 2008 CAC elected the following six members to serve on the 2009 CAC:

District of Columbia:

- Harold Foster
- Shirley Williams

Maryland:

- William Klenke
- Emmet Tydings

Virginia:

- Allen Muchnick
- G. Gail Parker

The 2009 TPB Officers will appoint nine additional members for the 2009 CAC and alternates, if desired. All CAC members and alternates (if applicable) will be commissioned at the January 21, 2009, TPB Meeting.

Other CAC Business

- Mr. Smith reported to the Committee on the recent Community Leadership Institute that was held in November for an audience of elected officials.
- Ron Kirby of TPB staff provided an overview of items on the November 19 TPB Agenda. This included details about Item 11, during which Mr. Kirby will present to the TPB some options for regional action based on California Measure SB 375, which links greenhouse gas emissions to metropolitan transportation planning. He said that the California measure presents a good model that could be applied by the TPB in a context of voluntary regional action.

ATTENDANCE
CAC Meeting, December 11, 2008

Members in Attendance

1. Larry Martin, DC, Chair
2. Harold Foster, DC
3. Bill Klenke, MD
4. Jim Larsen, VA
5. Robin Marlin, DC
6. Allen Muchnick, VA
7. Gail Parker, VA
8. Todd Reitzel, MD
9. Lynn Shanton, MD
10. Emmet Tydings, MD
11. Shirley Williams, DC

Alternates in Attendance

Members Not in Attendance

1. Farrell Keough, MD
2. Grace Malakoff, DC
3. Suresh Narasimhan, VA
4. Daphne Sahlin, VA

Staff/Others

Ron Kirby, COG/TPB
Sarah Crawford, COG/TPB
Michael Eichler, COG/TPB
Darren Smith, COG/TPB