

## REPORT

TPB Citizens Advisory Committee

April 20, 2011

Zach Dobelbower, 2011 CAC Chair

The CAC met on April 14 and spent the majority of the meeting discussing the scope for the Regional Transportation Priorities Plan and WMATA governance issues.

### **Discussion on the Draft Scope for the Regional Transportation Priorities Plan**

Ron Kirby reviewed the revised scope of work and process to develop a regional transportation priorities plan, and summarized the agenda for the upcoming meeting of the TPB Priorities Plan Scoping Task Force, which is scheduled to meet prior to the TPB on April 20. He said the task force is scheduled to vote on approving the scope during the upcoming meeting. That meeting will include discussion of performance measurement and the use of benefit/cost analysis to identify regional priorities.

Members had the following observations regarding Mr. Kirby's draft scope:

- ***How will performance measures be used?*** Members in favor of using performance measurement in developing the plan, but they also expressed confusion as to whether performance measures would be used to score projects. Mr. Kirby answered that performance measurement would not be a project scoring mechanism, but instead would be intended to provide a “top-down” regional approach to priority-setting. Performance measures would be used to identify performance gaps that the region needs to address in order to meet regional goals.
- ***A systems approach.*** Several members spoke about the importance of developing a systems approach for the priorities plan in which different scenarios would offer synergistic combinations of land-use and transportation projects and programs. These members suggested the priorities plan development should not turn into a scorecard for evaluating individual projects.
- ***How is this different from the scenario study?*** CAC members asked how this effort differs from and is similar to the TPB's previous scenario analysis. Mr. Kirby replied that scenario analysis will be important particularly for longer-term priorities, but he said shorter-term priorities might not be packaged in that way. He said that obvious short-term priorities can already be easily defined—for example, the need to ensure WMATA maintenance is fully funded.
- ***Planning for “TIGER-readiness.”*** CAC members noted that many TPB members had emphasized the need to develop a list of priority projects that would be ready to be submitted for future federal grant opportunities. They discussed whether it would be

beneficial to conduct such short-term priority-setting on a separate track. Mr. Kirby said that he believed it would not be beneficial to segregate short-term and longer-term priorities planning.

Regarding public involvement, Chairman Dobelbower emphasized that the TPB needs to cultivate a sense of public interest and enthusiasm as part of this planning process. The committee discussed the need to make a tangible connection between local interests and the regional context. Members suggested that the TPB staff should coordinate with the planning staff in individual jurisdictions. They also discussed holding CAC meetings at different locations throughout the region and using the CAC as a way to send educational messages about the importance of participation in the Regional Transportation Priorities Plan.

Chair Dobelbower asked the CAC to review the draft revised scope of work and process to develop a regional transportation priorities plan that was circulated, and send comments to him via email by COB Monday in advance of the Task Force Meeting so that the CAC's interests could be represented at the meeting.

### **Discussion with WMATA Board Chair Cathy Hudgins on WMATA Governance**

Cathy Hudgins, Fairfax County supervisor and current WMATA board chair, briefed the CAC on WMATA governance matters. She noted that WMATA is now 35 years old, and that its responsibility has shifted from constructing the transit system to operating it. She said the time was right for a fresh look at how the organization is governed, and that certain changes have already been implemented, such as the introduction of an orientation for new Board members.

Ms. Hudgins focused mainly on the work of the standing WMATA Governance Committee that was established earlier this year. She said the Governance Committee had reviewed two recent reports, one by its Riders Advisory Council and the other a joint effort by COG and BOT. She said one criticism of WMATA is that there is too much instability caused by year-to-year changes, and she stated that the Governance Committee is producing WMATA's first set of bylaws to address this. She said the bylaws are a work in progress, but a draft version should be released for the public comment in the next couple of months. She said that the bylaws and an updated version of the procedures would include sections pertaining to the rotation of the Chairmanship, the use of the jurisdictional veto, and the role of alternates, although some of the changes that have been called for could only be implemented by amending the Compact.

Ms. Hudgins mentioned that a Governance Work Group established by the Compact signatories (Virginia, Maryland and the District) is conducting its own review of WMATA's governance, and that she expected WMATA to work in tandem with the Work Group on these issues. She also expressed her appreciation for the support offered by COG and the TPB to address WMATA's funding needs, as she said there has been too much short-termism in budgetary decisions and that a more strategic approach is required to help run a sustainable system.

In response to questions from CAC members, Ms. Hudgins provided insight into other WMATA governance matters. For example, she reported that a process was underway to better align the

operational targets of the GM /CEO with the policy objectives of the Board, and she said that it was too soon to know the implications of the recent decision to provide the Virginia Governor with an appointment to the WMATA Board. Ms. Hudgins also spoke about the role of the CAC in WMATA decision-making, noting that it could take advantage of the existing processes for public input, and that the CAC has a formal relationship with WMATA via the TPB Board.

### **Complete Streets Policies**

The CAC briefly discussed whether the region should be encouraged to develop a more coordinated approach to Complete Streets planning, perhaps through the development a regional policy on this topic. The committee plans to take up this topic at its next meeting.

### **Other Business**

One CAC member expressed her frustration at the new images for Street Smart Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Campaign, saying she found the images “incredibly offensive.” She advocated for the CAC to have a role in developing or vetting campaign materials in the future.

## **ATTENDEES** **CAC Meeting, April 14, 2011**

### **Members Present**

1. Zach Dobelbower (DC), Chair
2. Bill Easter (MD)
3. Harold Foster (DC)
4. Kelby Funn (MD)
5. Larry Martin (DC)
6. Allen Muchnick (VA)
7. Tina Slater (MD)
8. Fred Walker (VA)

### **Members Not Present**

1. Maureen Budetti (VA)
2. Howard Levine (MD)
3. Stephen McCoy (DC)
4. Madeline McDuffy (VA)
5. Emmet Tydings (MD)
6. Faith Wheeler (DC)
7. Brian Winterhalter (VA)

### **Alternates Present**

- Mauricio Hernandez (DC)
- Kimberley Kaplan (VA)
- Kevin Posey (VA)
- Stephen Still (VA)

### **Staff and Guests**

- Cathy Hudgins, WMATA Chair and Fairfax Co. Supervisor
- Ron Kirby, COG/TPB staff
- John Swanson, COG/TPB staff
- Deborah Bilek, COG/TPB staff
- Gareth James, COG/TPB staff
- Bill Orleans, citizen