

REPORT
TPB Citizens Advisory Committee
June 18, 2014
Tracy Hadden Loh, Chair

The CAC meeting on June 12 included a discussion about the federal transportation reauthorization and an open discussion about the update to the Participation Plan.

Briefing and Discussion on Federal Transportation Reauthorization and Regulations

Delania Hardy, Executive Director of the Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (AMPO), briefed the CAC on the status of the Highway Trust Fund (HTF) and reauthorization of MAP-21, the federal surface transportation legislation. She emphasized that the HTF is scheduled to run out of funding this summer. She also spoke about ways in which legislative reauthorization might affect the work of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO), including the TPB.

CAC members asked a number of questions about the looming transportation funding crisis and the potential impacts of further delays of reauthorization.

The committee also discussed potential recommendations it might make to the TPB regarding federal reauthorization. In particular, committee members discussed opportunities for the federal law and regulations to strengthen MPO authority through potential changes in the federal Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality (CMAQ) program or other changes in federal programs.

In the coming weeks, the CAC members will further explore how it might craft recommendations to the TPB regarding reauthorization that will be useful and applicable in our multi-state region.

Discussion on the Discussion Draft of the Updated TPB Participation Plan

John Swanson of TPB staff briefed the committee on the discussion draft of the TPB's Participation Plan. He said the new draft leaves the structure and strategic direction of the 2007 Participation Plan largely in place. He described additions to the new draft, including information on recent TPB participation activities and enhancements that were suggested by federal agencies. He said a revised version is scheduled to be released for a 45-day public comment period on July 10. He said the TPB will be asked to adopt the updated plan at its September 17 meeting.

CAC members expressed concerns about the discussion draft. Several members suggested that the Participation Plan should be more visionary. They said that it placed too much emphasis on procedure—it reads as if it were written as a checklist to meet federal requirements—and does not provide a sufficient explanation about why a participation plan is important, or how that plan will be used. There was uncertainty about the target audience for the plan. Members also

suggested that an executive summary, or a clear overview in the first chapter of the document, would help to make the plan more accessible to a general audience.

The committee also discussed the mission and procedures for the CAC as included in the Participation Plan. Most members said they view the primary role of CAC as “providing advice” to the TPB, which is a key part of its existing mission. Members also noted that the committee has not typically emphasized “promoting public involvement,” although that is the second part of its two-part mission. The committee discussed whether the CAC could and should do more to push TPB staff to conduct public outreach.

The committee also discussed the CAC selection process and the group’s operating procedures. There was some agreement that these processes are somewhat complicated, but it was not immediately clear how they might be restructured. In the coming weeks, the committee may further explore potential recommendations to the TPB regarding some key issues related to the way CAC business is conducted, including whether it would make sense for the CAC to directly elect its own chair and whether the selection process can be streamlined.

Other Discussion

- Mr. Griffiths, Acting Co-Director of the Department of Transportation Planning, briefed the committee on the April TPB Agenda.
- The CAC voted for Tom Burrell (VA) and Veronica Davis (DC) to serve as vice-chairs for the 2014 CAC.

ATTENDEES CAC Meeting, June 12, 2014

Members Present

1. Tracy Hadden Loh, Chair (MD)
2. Tom Burrell (VA)
3. John Epps (MD)
4. Erin McAuliff (DC)
5. Cindy Petkac (DC)
6. Lorena Rios (VA)
7. Stephen Still (VA)
8. Jarrett Stoltzfus (MD)
9. Emmet Tydings (MD)

Members Not Present

1. Neha Bhatt (DC)
2. Veronica Davis (DC)
3. Andrea Hamre (VA)
4. Jeffrey Parnes (VA)
5. Tina Slater (MD)
6. Zachary Smith (DC)

Alternates Present

- Gary Hodge (MD)

Staff and Guests

- Bob Griffiths, COG/DTP staff
John Swanson, COG/DTP staff
Ben Hampton, COG/DTP staff
Bryan Hayes, COG/DTP staff
Lamont Cobb, COG/DTP staff