

REPORT
TPB Citizens Advisory Committee
October 11, 2012
Tina Slater, 2012 CAC Chair

The CAC's meeting on October 11 included discussion on the following: agenda topics for the remainder of the year, "Safe Routes to School" (SRTS) Programs, and new MAP-21 Transportation Alternatives Program.

The CAC has two formal action items before the TPB:

- 1. The CAC requests representation on the Street Smart advisory committee by proposing that one slot on this committee become designated for a CAC member.**
- 2. The CAC recommends that the TPB move forward expeditiously to develop a competitive regional program for implementing the new federal Transportation Alternatives Program, using a transparent project selection process and regional project selection criteria.**

Discussion of CAC Agenda for the Remainder of the Year

The CAC discussed setting agenda items for the remaining three meetings of the year. In particular, the CAC discussed methods of developing a formal opportunity for involvement in reviewing and providing feedback on the new Street Smart Campaign, which is a topic that has become increasingly important to the committee over the past several years. The CAC is scheduled to serve as a focus group for providing feedback on the Street Smart Campaign at its December meeting. Mr. Farrell of TPB staff discussed the process for developing the Street Smart Campaign, including the role of the advisory committee, which he said is comprised of jurisdictional staff. **The CAC requests representation on the Street Smart advisory committee by proposing that one slot on this committee become designated for a CAC member. The CAC also requests to receive a briefing from TPB staff on the Street Smart campaign well in advance of the campaign's release so that the CAC-designated member to the advisory committee can serve as a proper conduit for expressing the CAC's views on the new campaign.**

The CAC also discussed the Regional Transportation Priorities Plan, and requested that it receive a brief overview of the context for developing such a plan. Many of the CAC members are new to the committee, and are unaware of the historical activities that have contributed to the plan's development thus far. One of the longstanding members of the CAC offered to provide this information at the November CAC meeting.

Update on TPB Public Involvement Activities

Mr. Swanson of TPB staff mentioned the upcoming Community Leadership Institute, which will be held on November 29 and December 1, and reminded graduates of this program to spread the word and help recruit new candidates. He also mentioned that the CAC will soon be celebrating its 20th year, and that this, combined with the overall desire to commemorate longstanding CAC member Harold Foster, may serve as the impetus for holding a social gathering of CAC members past and present. More details on this gathering will be available soon.

Briefing and Discussion about “Safe Routes to School” Programs

Christine Green, the Greater Washington Greater Washington DC Regional Policy Manager of the Safe Routes to School National Partnership, presented an overview of the Safe Routes to School Program. She discussed the program’s history and structure, and provided information on how the program has taken shape throughout the region, including specific examples. She also mentioned ways that other MPOs around the country have interacted with the SRTS program.

Members of the CAC brainstormed strategies to further promote the SRTS, including methods to enhance collaboration. Some of the ideas included:

- The TPB should provide information-sharing opportunities for community activists from around the region.
- The SRTS program could consider linking with standing TPB program that are similar in nature, such as Bike to Work Day. Ms. Green mentioned that the SRTS program conducts a Walk to School Day every October, and a Bike to Work Day every May. She added that having the TPB make a formal proclamation on these events could be one way to promote the SRTS efforts around the region.
- TPB could, through its existing survey efforts, collect travel data on students throughout the region.
- TPB could centralize and coordinate information on the rules regarding cycling on sidewalks in various member jurisdictions. The CAC noted that these rules vary greatly, and increased knowledge of what is permissible may enhance understanding of safety for kids on bikes.

Discussion about the New MAP-21 Transportation Alternatives Program

The Committee discussed the new Transportation Alternatives Program, which has been legislated under the new federal transportation authorization law known as MAP-21. The program consolidated three programs – the Transportation Enhancements Program, Safe Routes to Schools, and Recreational Trails – that have funded small capital projects, such as pedestrian and bicycle improvements. With some new restrictions, the new program includes most eligibilities from those previous programs.

Legislative language from MAP21 states that Metropolitan Planning Organizations with an urbanized area with a population of more than 200,000 (such as the TPB), “shall select projects carried out within the boundaries of the applicable metropolitan planning area, in consultation with the relevant State.” The CAC expressed interest in the role of the TPB in this new program.

Members discussed the ways in which the program could serve as a “mini-incubator” for the Regional Priorities Plan, and how the TPB could add great value by using a series of regional criteria for the selection of projects to be funded . Members further noted that the program will complement and build upon a number of past and ongoing regional planning activities, including promoting regional activity centers, the TLC Program and COG’s Region Forward activities. Members also spoke about the need to be sure the Transportation Alternatives Program is implemented in a unified manner within our region and is not simply three separate programs in D.C., Maryland and Virginia.

Given the fact that this new federal program represents a rare opportunity for regional planning but that the TPB faces a unique challenge in coordinating among three state-level jurisdictions to implement a regional program, the CAC unanimously passed the following resolution:

“The CAC recommends that the TPB move forward expeditiously to develop a competitive regional program for implementing the new federal Transportation Alternatives Program, using a transparent project selection process and regional project selection criteria.”

ATTENDEES
CAC Meeting, October 11, 2012

Members Present

Tina Slater, Chair (MD)
Maureen Budetti (VA)
Larry Martin (DC)
Allen Muchnick (VA)
Jeffrey Parnes (VA)
William Soltesz (VA)
Veronica Davis (DC)
Kelby Funn (MD)
Rob Mandle (DC)
Emmet Tydings (MD)

Members Not Present

Bill Easter (MD)
Anita Hairston (DC)
Stephen Still (VA)
Krystle Okafor (MD)

Alternates Present

Justin Clarke (MD)
Fred Walker (VA)
Tracey Hadden Loh (DC)
John Epps (MD)
Kim Kaplan (VA)

Staff and Guests

John Swanson, COG/TPB staff
Deb Bilek, COG/TPB staff
Mike Farrell, COG/TPB staff
Christine Green, Safe Routes to
School National Partnership
Bill Orleans, citizen