

REPORT

TPB Citizens Advisory Committee June 16, 2010 Maureen Budetti, CAC Chair

At the regular business meeting of the CAC on June 10, the Committee received an update on the Greater Washington 2050/Region Forward initiative, and discussed the outcomes of the May 26 Conversation on Setting Regional Transportation Priorities and possible next steps. The Committee also briefly discussed agenda topics for its meetings for the remainder of 2010.

Outcomes of the May 26 Conversation on Setting Regional Transportation Priorities and Discussion of Potential CAC Next Steps

John Swanson of TPB staff summarized for the Committee the report on the May 26 event developed by staff. He explained that the report was compiled from the notes taken at each discussion table by TPB staff and the real-time summaries from which TPB Chairman Dave Snyder spoke at the conclusion of the event. The report was organized on the basis of the questions that guided the May 26 conversation:

- How do we understand the current process?
- What are the reasons to change?
- What are the options for change?

Mr. Swanson noted that the bulk of the conversation at the tables, and consequently the bulk of the report, focused on various options for changes to the current process. Suggested changes included development of a regional transportation priorities plan and integrating such a plan with the existing process, incorporating some way of tracking regional indicators and scoring or ranking projects using related regional performance measures, advocating for regional transportation funding mechanisms, and improving public education and public involvement related to the existing planning process. The CAC expressed sincere appreciation for the willingness of the TPB to sponsor the Conversation, and felt it offered a wide variety of stakeholders an opportunity to meet and exchange ideas on regional priorities, and other relevant transportation concerns.

The report outlines five general “next steps”:

- Form a task force to determine if a regional transportation priorities plan is feasible.
- Develop an inventory of unfunded transportation priority projects.
- Investigate what other MPOs are doing.
- Take steps to increase public information about TPB procedures and goals.
- Continue the conversation [about the regional transportation planning process].

In response to Mr. Swanson's summary, the CAC discussed whether tracking regional performance measures would affect the makeup of the CLRP. Members generally acknowledged the difficulties inherent in scoring or ranking projects and the unlikelihood that such measures would actually be used by the TPB in evaluating project submissions. However, some saw doing some kind of quantitative evaluation of projects through a regional lens as a prerequisite to demonstrating the influence of regional goals and the TPB Vision on project selection.

The Committee also discussed the idea expressed at the Conversation and in subsequent meetings by representatives of state and local transportation departments that the CAC members need to understand the TPB's project development process better, and would then better understand the role of the TPB and regional goals in shaping that process. Some members expressed frustration with this viewpoint, noting the committee's concern that project selection for the CLRP is an opaque process, and not guided by clearly established regional priorities.

Some members acknowledged the TPB process does provide regional planning coordination, but that public involvement is primarily at the local/state level and does not provide clear communication to the public of how local, sub-regional, and state-level planning reflects the TPB Vision and regional priorities. Members said that they could thus understand why the perspective of agency professionals would be different from their own.

The CAC discussed at length what its next steps should be in promoting the idea of a regional transportation priorities plan, with some members expressing a desire to take time to further develop ideas for possible change, and others encouraging a call for action by the TPB to at least lay out how the discussion could move forward. A consensus emerged that the Committee should seek a decision by the TPB on initial steps for continuing the conversation and preliminary work that would inform the discussion. Accordingly, it was moved, seconded, and approved unanimously by the CAC that the June CAC report endorse the five "next steps" outlined at the conclusion of the report on the May 26 event (and listed above), and request TPB action on these steps at the earliest opportunity, preferably in July.

Update on the COG Greater Washington 2050 Initiative and the Region Forward Report, and Development of a COG Application for a HUD Sustainability Grant

John Mataya of COG staff gave a PowerPoint presentation summarizing the Region Forward report that stemmed from the Greater Washington 2050 initiative. He described for the Committee how the report sets regional goals, targets, and indicators in various sectors, and proposed a regional compact that commits the region's jurisdictions to working toward these goals. He said that the compact had been endorsed by most of COG's member jurisdictions, with more endorsements pending.

Mr. Mataya also described an effort underway at COG to develop an application for a HUD

Sustainability grant, which could help the region analyze its performance in relation to the targets outlined in the Region Forward report, and plan for additional regional strategies for addressing those goals.

CAC members asked for additional information about the indicators included in the report, and suggested ways in which grant money might be used in the region. Ideas included innovative public involvement techniques such as electronic town halls, and incorporation of additional technical tools for modeling regional outcomes in relation to the many indicators mentioned in the report. The Committee expressed a strong interest in the effort, and a desire to be kept up-to-date on its progress.

Discussion of CAC Agenda Items for the Remainder of Calendar Year 2010

The Committee provided feedback to an outline developed by TPB staff for upcoming CAC meeting agendas. There was overall support for the following rough outline:

- **July** – Visit from the chairman of the Metro Riders Advisory Committee and discussion of shared interests and issues
- **September** – Briefing and discussion on the TPB’s Commuter Connections program, including program expansion and the results of this year’s State of the Commute Survey
- **October** – The CLRP/TIP Forum
- **November** – The possibility of a meeting held outside the COG offices
- **December** – CAC elections and the development of the CAC End-of-Year Report

Committee members also expressed a desire for an opportunity to discuss the ongoing effort regarding a Regional Transportation Priorities Plan at each regular meeting. Additional ideas for agenda topics included a discussion of regional freight- and passenger-rail expansion plans, possibly featuring representatives from MARC, VRE, and CSX. One member suggested adding a discussion of shifts in commuting patterns due to BRAC to the briefing on the State of the Commute Survey. Another member suggested that the Committee could learn more about regional efforts to provide affordable housing near transit stations as part of transit-oriented development. There was also a desire to receive continued updates on TPB Scenario Study activities, the TLC Program, and CLRP performance analysis.

Other CAC Business

- John Swanson introduced new TPB staff member, Gareth James, who will be assisting with climate change analysis and other TPB programmatic work.
- Ron Kirby of TPB staff provided an overview of items on the June 16 TPB Agenda.

ATTENDANCE
CAC Meeting, June 10, 2010

Members in Attendance

1. Maureen Budetti, VA, Chair
2. Zach Dobelbower, DC
3. William Easter, MD
4. Harold Foster, DC
5. Larry Martin, DC
6. Allen Muchnick, VA
7. Gail Parker, VA
8. Tina Slater, MD
9. Emmet Tydings, MD

Alternates in Attendance

1. Kim Kaplan, VA
2. Kevin Posey, VA
3. Frederick Walker, VA

Members Not in Attendance

1. Farrell Keough, MD
2. Jim Larsen, VA
3. Stephen McCoy, DC
4. Madeline McDuffy, VA
5. Roxanne Taylor*
6. Faith Wheeler, DC

Staff/Others

Ron Kirby, COG/TPB
John Swanson, COG/TPB
Darren Smith, COG/TPB
Gareth James, COG/TPB
John Mataya, COG
Bill Orleans

* Ms. Taylor sent a message on June 9 announcing her resignation from the CAC.