REPORT
TPB Citizens Advisory Committee
May 15, 2014
Tracy Hadden Loh, Chair

The CAC meeting on May 15 was conducted as a focus group to explore the committee's opinions about the implementation of the Regional Transportation Priorities Plan (RTPP).

Listening Session on RTPP Implementation

TPB staff explained that they are planning to conduct a series of approximately 15 listening sessions in June and July to learn whether and how key constituencies in the regional planning process believe the region is achieving the goals that were laid out in the RTPP. Participants at these sessions will include key stakeholder groups (such as the CAC, advocacy leaders, etc.) and the staff of the TPB's member jurisdictions. John Swanson of TPB staff explained that the CAC meeting was being used to test the format and content for these listening sessions.

The session was conducted as a focus group framed around the six goals that underlie the RTPP. To get a quick sense of the opinions of individual members of the group, the staff used web-based polling software which allowed participants to vote using their cell phones. The results of each polling question were displayed on a screen. These results were used to trigger discussion and to impel each member to briefly think through their individual opinions before the group discussion. Ben Hampton and Dan Sonenklar of TPB staff led the focus groups.

CAC member comments regarding the session format included the following key points:

- The group polling was a useful device for initiating discussion. However, many of the questions were confusing and participants answered them inconsistently. Before repeating the session, the questions need to be reworked.
- Facilitators need to clarify that the session is designed to mine the personal perceptions and attitudes of participants. Such opinions may be informed by professional judgments, but they are not supposed to be rote reflections of agency or organization positions. And neither are the sessions intended to be a "test" of how well participants understand the TPB's process or the contents of the TPB's plans.
- The session attempted to cover too much content. The CAC only got through four of the six goals in the RTPP.

The session highlighted some key questions that should be further explored:

- ***We are making progress, but is it sufficient?*** Much of the discussion focused on "glass half full/half empty" questions. On most polling questions, CAC members said they believe the region is making progress toward the goals of the RTPP. For example, they agreed that we increasingly are providing a comprehensive range of transportation options (Goal 1). But members were divided on whether our region's progress is sufficient. One participant said noted that the majority of transportation funding over the next two decades will be dedicated to transit and he said this is evidence that we are

taking sufficient steps to provide a range of transportation options. On the other hand, another member pointed out that mode share is not expected to change significantly by 2040. SOV driving will remain dominant, which he said is a sign that we are not doing enough.

- ***So how should the region be seeking to measure progress?*** Discussion among CAC members highlighted the fact that it is not clear how we, as a region, will identify and define the gaps in our region's progress. Future discussions and future TPB analysis can explore such questions.

- ***What is the role of regional planning?*** Participants noted that perceptions about local and regional progress may be different. They said that a lot of positive changes may be occurring at the local level, but they questioned whether enough cross-jurisdictional coordination was occurring. Members suggested that the TPB, as a regional planning body, should explore how successful activities and innovations at the local level can be understood and enhanced from a regional systems perspective.

Other Discussion

- Mr. Griffiths, Acting Co-Director of the Department of Transportation Planning, briefed the committee on the April TPB Agenda.
- The CAC will elect vice chairs at its meeting in June.

ATTENDEES
CAC Meeting, May 15, 2014

Members Present
1. Tracy Hadden Loh, Chair (MD)
2. Tom Burrell (VA)
3. Veronica Davis (DC)
4. John Epps (MD)
5. Jeff Parnes (VA
6. Cindy Petkac (DC)
7. Lorena Rios (VA)
8. Tina Slater (MD)
9. Zachary Smith (DC)
10. Jarrett Stoltzfus (MD)
11. Emmet Tydings (MD)

Members Not Present
1. Neha Bhatt (DC)
2. Andrea Hamre (VA)
3. Erin McAuliff (DC)
4. Stephen Still (VA)

Alternates Present
Cherian Eapen (MD)
Tom Sanchez (VA)
Douglas Stewart (VA)
Karen Young (MD)

Staff and Guests
Bob Griffiths, COG/DTP staff
John Swanson, COG/DTP staff
Ben Hampton, COG/DTP staff
Dan Sonenklar, COG/DTP staff
Bryan Hayes, COG/DTP staff
Paul DesJardin, COG staff
Sophie Mintier, COG staff
Bill Orleans, citizen