
**TPB CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
ANNUAL REPORT**

April 17, 2019

Rob Jackson, CAC Chair

The Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) met on Thursday, April 11. At the meeting the committee met with representatives of the federal transportation agencies to provide input for the TPB's Federal Certification Review. The committee also received briefings and provided comments on Bike to Work Day and the Washington-Baltimore Air Passenger Survey.

DISCUSSION WITH FEDERAL AGENCY REPRESENTATIVES REGARDING THE TPB'S FEDERAL CERTIFICATION REVIEW

As part of the quadrennial certification review of the TPB's planning process, representatives of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) spent an hour with the CAC discussing the TPB's public outreach activities. The federal team was led by Sandra Jackson of FHWA who distributed a list of questions in advance to the committee members.

Here is a sampling of CAC members comments and suggestions:

What public engagement activities have worked well?

- *Outreach for Visualize 2045 engaged lots of people, in different ways.* CAC members said they were pleased that outreach for the plan was expanded beyond activities conducted in the past. Staff went to "where people are," such as festivals and markets, and used "ambassadors" as conduits to reach deeper into communities throughout the region. CAC members also spoke about the effectiveness of Visualize 2045 branding.
- *The CAC has historically had an impact.* Members said the committee has a track record of promoting change within the TPB process, including pushing for more outreach as part of long-range planning. They noted that past achievements can and should encourage the committee to continue to seek change.
- *Activities to educate the public about regional planning are important.* Some members noted the effectiveness of the Community Leadership Institute, and said they were glad that this program was being revived this spring.
- *Several recent small improvements have been successful.* For example, a CAC member expressed appreciation for the live audio streaming and posted recordings of TPB meetings.
- *TPB staff work is effective.* Members expressed appreciation that TPB staff seem to really care about their work and fully participate in the CAC's activities.

What are the challenges for TPB outreach?

- *It's difficult to get citizens interested in planning.* Committee members noted that regional planning is exceptionally complex— much more than local or even state planning. They said that individuals who get deeply involved in regional planning need to have a wider perspective if they want to be effective.

- *Change moves slowly.* Several CAC members commented that regional planning is under a lot of constraints and progress is often incremental. Plus, they noted that the TPB does not have the authority to directly effect change.
- *Compared to the size and complexity of the region, the TPB's resources for outreach are very limited.* Members suggested that outreach efforts invariably need to be targeted.
- *Important communities can be hard to reach.* This is particularly true for low-income and minority communities, as well as for young people.

What could be improved?

- *Conduct outreach activities on a more regular basis.* A member suggested that the TPB should not just seek public input when a long-rang plan is under development.
- *Use outreach to more clearly define the TPB's role.* A member suggested that the TPB should more forcefully assert its role as a neutral "regional umpire." Another participant said that outreach efforts sometimes seem to be just "going through the motions" and are not focused on promoting the TPB's role and positions.
- *TPB outreach efforts should get outside of the COG offices.* Members suggested that TPB staff should be more involved in local and state-level meetings.
- *The CAC should coordinate its work with other citizen groups in the region.* In particular, the CAC might effectively collaborate with WMATA's Riders Advisory Committee.
- *Practical steps should be taken.* A member suggested that TPB staff could compile a master list of civic groups that are working on transportation. Others spoke about opportunities to use technology to conduct outreach with videos and other means.
- *Potential CAC name change?* A federal representative noted that the word "citizen" in the CAC's name could be interpreted as exclusionary. Members generally agreed that a name change might be appropriate. One member noted the importance of using language that is inclusive and welcoming. Some members supported changing the name to Community Advisory Committee, although others noted that members are appointed to represent themselves as individuals, not specific communities. Other suggestions for a new name included: "Civic Advisory Committee" and "Resident's Advisory Committee."

BIKE TO WORK DAY

Nick Ramfos, Director of Transportation Operations Programs, briefed the committee on Bike to Work Day, which will be held at 115 locations in the region on Friday, May 17. He said that these events encourage the business community and other regional decisionmakers to support increased bicycle commuting through bicycle-friendly policies and initiatives.

Members expressed support for the program. Questions and comments included the following:

- *Why does the TPB need to vote on the Bike to Work Day proclamation every year?* Mr. Ramfos answered that it is important to give this event prominence at the TPB. He said that a formal action by the TPB helps to galvanize interest and support.

- *It is important to get high-level officials involved in these events.* Mr. Ramfos agreed with this comment. He noted that for years, the mayors of D.C. and other prominent elected officials have been enthusiastic participants at Bike to Work Day rallies and at pitstops.

WASHINGTON-BALTIMORE AIR PASSENGER SURVEY

Arianna Koudounas of the TPB staff briefed the committee on key findings of the 2017 Washington-Baltimore Regional Air Passenger Survey, a biannual survey conducted as part of the Continuous Airport Systems Planning (CASP) Program, which addresses ground access planning needs for the region's three large commercial airports.

The committee asked a number of detailed questions about the study's findings. Their comments included the following:

- *It would be interesting to know why more people do not use transit to get the airports.* A member suggested that staff might dig deeper into the data on ground access to explore ideas for getting more people to use public transit.
- *Travel patterns at Dulles and BWI seem like they might be different at different times of the year.* Ms. Koudounas said this might be true. She said the study was conducted in October because that is considered a neutral time that is broadly reflective of travel patterns during the rest of the year.

THE COMMITTEE ALSO DISCUSSED

- Lyn Erickson, TPB Plan Development & Program Coordination Director, reviewed the agenda for the April TPB meeting.

ATTENDEES

MEMBERS PRESENT	ALTERNATES	TPB STAFF AND GUESTS
Rob Jackson, chair	Tahari Johnson	Lyn Erickson, TPB staff
Daniel Papiernik	Jacqueline Manapsal	John Swanson, TPB staff
Jeffrey Parnes	Ronit Dancis	Bryan Hayes, TPB staff
Lorena Rios	Tony Giancola	Abigail Zenner, TPB staff
Nancy Abeles, vice chair MD	Beth Peralta-Reed	Nick Ramfos, TPB staff
Karthik Balasubramanian	Elisa Walton	Arianna Koudounas, TPB staff
Meredith Howell, vice chair D.C.		Sandra Jackson, FHWA
Katherine Kortum		Ivan Rucker, FHWA
Jasmine Young		Janine Ashe, FHWA
		Tonya Holland, FTA
		Victor Austin, FTA
		Dan Koenig, FTA
		Bill Orleans, public