

2016 End-of-Year Report
TPB Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)
January 18, 2017

Throughout 2016, the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) maintained an ongoing discussion about how the committee can more effectively advocate for better public involvement in the TPB's planning processes. This year's committee sees itself as part of a long line of advisory committees that have encouraged the TPB to explore new ways to raise awareness and get public input on regional transportation issues.

This year, that conversation concentrated on getting the public involved in the 2018 Long-Range Plan update. This work culminated in a recommendation that the CAC sent to the TPB at its November board meeting. This recommendation called upon the TPB to commit to developing a plan to seek public input as part of the 2018 Long-Range Plan Update.

The CAC agrees with the TPB's Participation Plan, which states that "the TPB believes that public input into its process is valuable and makes its products better." As the TPB works with jurisdictions in the region to prepare for future growth, the CAC urges the TPB and staff to exceed minimal engagement requirements and commit to exploring new and meaningful ways to inform and engage the public.

Accomplishments in 2016

CAC Work Plan

For the first time the CAC developed a work plan to focus committee efforts and maximize the impact of the committee. By setting priorities and goals, the work plan helped to set the agenda for the committee's monthly meeting. Although the CAC was not able to address all the priorities and goals outlined in the work plan, it did help to build momentum from one meeting to the next.

Focus on Public Involvement in the Long-Range Plan

The first priority, according to the work plan, states: "The CAC seeks to promote public input into the TPB's effort to develop a prioritized list of unfunded capital transportation needs." The committee work to realize this by completing two goals. First the committee appointed a CAC member to serve on the TPB's Long-Range Plan Task Force. Representatives of the CAC participated in all Task Force meetings.

More importantly, the committee wrote, passed, and sent a recommendation [attached] to the board requesting that, "the TPB commit to developing a plan to seek public input as part of the 2018 Long-Range Plan Update." In order to do this, the committee conducted discussions on public participation and the long-range plan at eight of its meetings throughout the year.

The committee presented this recommendation to the TPB in October. Although we have received verbal assurances from staff that our comments are under consideration, we have not received an official response from the board.

Transportation Safety

The CAC followed up with TPB staff on last year's CAC recommendation that the TPB should work to eliminate all traffic fatalities in the Washington Region. The CAC worked with TPB staff and the Transportation Safety Subcommittee to research and pull together a presentation describing the current state of plans and policies in place in the region that seek to eliminate traffic deaths.

Comment and Advice on TPB Plans

The CAC continued to comment on plans, including the CLRP. The CAC also participated in the biannual TIP forum.

The Year Ahead

In its final meeting of the year, the CAC conducted an after-action review to better understand the past year's accomplishments and provide suggestions for next year's committee. A summary of that discussion will be presented to the members of the 2017 committee at its first meeting on February 9.

In general, however, the members of the 2016 CAC agreed that public involvement in the long-range plan needs to remain a focus of the committee's attention. Committee members decided to develop a toolkit of public involvement activities that should be considered for use in the planning process.

We look forward to continuing this important work in 2017.



Citizens Advisory Committee

RECOMMENDATION

that the TPB commit to developing a plan to seek public input as part of the 2018 Long-Range Plan Update

October 13, 2016

The CAC has been actively engaged in and supportive of TPB discussions about incorporating unfunded projects into a Long-Range Plan Update since the genesis of these discussions in 2014. In November 2014, the CAC endorsed the request of TPB member Jonathan Way that the TPB staff compile a comprehensive inventory of unfunded transportation projects throughout the National Capital Region. Since then, the CAC has monitored the progress of the unfunded capital needs inventory of transportation projects and participated as a member of the Long-Range Plan Task Force.

The CAC has long promoted robust public involvement at the TPB, as directed by their mission to *promote public involvement in transportation planning for the region, and to provide an independent, region-wide perspective and citizen advice to the TPB on transportation plans and issues*. For example, in 2006 the CAC provided recommendations to the TPB for improving the information and analysis of the CLRP and the TIP, including holding public forums to allow citizens to learn from implementing agencies how projects are chosen, and identify unfunded regional priorities.

In monitoring and participating in the development of the unfunded projects list, the CAC has been particularly interested in public participation and has consistently encouraged the TPB to solicit public input in suggesting, prioritizing, and selecting unfunded projects for regional consideration. The TPB's approved Unified Planning Work Program for 2017 includes public outreach activities to inform the development of criteria and selection of unfunded regional projects. The UPWP calls for "develop[ing] and conduct[ing] workshops or events, as needed, to engage the public and community leaders on key regional transportation issues, including challenges reflected in the development of the CLRP, the TIP, and the forthcoming Plan of Unfunded Regional Priority Projects" (53).

Members of the CAC have committed to volunteering their time to support staff efforts to engage residents of the Washington region in the 2018 Long-Range Plan Update.

The CAC believes that:

- Effective public engagement must focus on specific questions and provide clarity about how public input will be collected and used to inform policy decisions.
- TPB staff should develop a plan for approval by the TPB that sets forth the means by which public input will be sought and how it will be used in prioritizing and selecting unfunded projects for regional consideration.
- In addition, TPB members have critical roles to play in informing their constituents about the Long-Range Plan and how it will affect their communities.
- As the Long-Range Plan Task Force moves onto Phase 2 of its work in which decisions will be made about how to prioritize unfunded projects, now is the time for action.

Therefore, the CAC recommends that the TPB commit to developing a plan for engaging and incorporating public input into the selection of a limited set of regional unfunded priority transportation projects as part of the 2018 Long-Range Plan Update.