



June 2, 2010

To: Metropolitan Policy Committee

From: Kathi Wiederhold

Subject: Item 5.a: Report from the Citizen Advisory Committee

**Action Recommended: None. Information only.**

### **Report**

The Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) held their regular meeting on May 20, 2010, with 11 voting members and the MPC liaison present. The main agenda items were: continuing the annual review of the Public Participation Plan; completing the annual review of the Title VI Plan; and recommending an outreach strategy for the Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program.

### **Annual Review for Public Participation Plan and Title VI Plan**

The CAC began the annual review at the April 15, 2010 meeting by focusing on goals and addressing the broad question: Are we headed in the right direction? The CAC concluded that we are headed in the right direction and made several specific comments that will be forwarded to the subcommittee.

The committee continued their discussion of the annual review at the May meeting by focusing on objectives and actions. They focused on the broad question: Are we using the right tools and strategies? When asked to weigh in on the question after their discussion, a good portion of the committee felt like we are using the right tools and strategies. But, more members felt like we needed to broaden and strengthen our public involvement. They felt the MPO should: do a better job reaching underrepresented groups; use some different tools, such as social media; increase public awareness about the CAC as a group they can come to with transportation questions and concerns; and better connect local to regional information.

The next steps are for the Annual Review Subcommittee to meet and draft recommendations to the Metropolitan Policy Committee for the CAC to consider at the July 15, 2010 meeting (the CAC is having a field trip in lieu of their June meeting.)

### **Annual Review for Title VI Plan**

Because there is a lot of overlap between the Public Participation Plan and the Title VI Plan, the CAC melded much of their discussion on both. In addition, the CAC responded to the following specific question posed by staff: "How can we improve outreach to Title VI communities?"

The committee talked about the successes of MPO public involvement and areas of needed improvement. Successes mentioned included: the Community Focus Group, August 2009; Cornucopia multicultural event, October 2009; outreach for CAC recruitment, Fall 2009; the bus posters in English and Spanish used as part of the recruitment; and starting to form relationships with minority and under-represented communities. Areas of needed improvement identified included: public hearings are in the middle of the day when everyone is at work; sending outreach materials to churches for placement in newsletters and posting flyers; and reaching a broader cross-section of the community. One suggestion was to make the Community Focus Group an annual event. The CAC identified Surface Transportation Program-Urban funding, anything that affects greenhouse gases, and general outreach as plans and programs for which the MPO should conduct broader outreach.

As often is the case when the CAC wrestles with the question of how to engage a broader public in regional transportation planning, the discussion touched on at least two familiar themes: the role of the CAC in outreach for non-MPO projects, plans, and programs; and how to interest people in transportation planning issues that are not controversial. There seemed to be a sense amongst committee members that they would like to serve a “go to” role for the community regarding transportation, a place where the public can raise a question and get help in finding the right outlet to address their concerns.

### **Public Outreach Strategy for the Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP)**

The committee briefly reviewed the core public involvement that the Public Participation Plan directs for the MTIP. The CAC did not feel that any additional outreach was needed in light of the nature and scope of the MTIP. They voted unanimously to forward a recommendation to the Metropolitan Policy Committee to direct staff to conduct the core public involvement for the MTIP as indicated in the Public Participation Plan.

### **Attachments**

Attachment 1: Minutes for the April 15, 2010, CAC Meeting