



January 3, 2008

To: Metropolitan Policy Committee

From: Kathi Wiederhold

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

Action Recommended: None. Information only.

Report

The committee held their regular meeting on December 5, 2007, with twelve of the fourteen voting members in attendance. It was the last meeting for Jeanne-Marie Moore, who was an original member of the committee, due the expiration of her term of office as member. The committee thanked her by presenting a certificate of appreciation in Braille. Since the December meeting, Donald Holtgrieve has submitted his resignation because the committee meeting time conflicts with a class he is teaching. Donald has been a member since August 2007. There currently are twelve voting members on the committee after accounting for the two recent resignations.

The main agenda items were reports back from the committee on testing the e-MPO website, review of the air quality synopsis as a prototype, and evaluation of the Public Participation Plan. The agenda item on the Transportation Improvement Program was deferred to the January 16 meeting.

e-MPO Website

The e-MPO is in the testing phase and the Citizen Advisory Committee took on a homework assignment to help with that at the November meeting, agreeing to spend some time exploring the site before their next meeting. The committee reported back on their testing with praise for the site, saying that it was well done and easy to use. They suggested a number of improvements to make it easier to use the site, including offering an option of “skip to text only” when loading the site and including a link to the LCOG staff person who maintains the web site. The committee reiterated their enthusiasm expressed at the November meeting about the site as a tool for the public to use.

Air Quality Synopsis

The committee took on another homework assignment at the November meeting—to review the synopsis for the air quality determination in light of using it as a prototype. Staff asked the committee to consider format and ease of understanding in their review. The committee felt that the synopsis could be improved to make it more readable and a good number of members offered to try their hand at rewriting the document. A

subcommittee will work with the edited versions to create a new draft to send back to the committee.

The MPO has been moving for some time in the direction of making regional transportation planning easier for the public to learn about. One of the pieces we plan to use to do this is an executive summary or synopsis for each key product that is in plain language. We can then post these on the web as an up-front piece aimed at most readers, translate them into Spanish, and use as part of our basic public outreach tools.

Public Participation Plan

The Metropolitan Policy Committee adopted the Public Participation Plan one year ago, in January 2007. Two policies in the Plan direct an annual review and evaluation of the Plan. The committee began evaluation of the Plan by looking at how it served during the recent update of the Regional Transportation Plan. Staff suggested that the committee consider the following questions:

How well did the Plan hold up when following it to guide public involvement for the update?

What worked well?

What didn't work well?

Does the Citizen Advisory Committee have any big issues with the Plan?

The committee started a lively discussion about public participation in regional transportation planning, touching on issues such as the need for a longer timeline to allow early involvement of the public before a project goes through the regional transportation planning process, how to grab the interest of the public, and the role of TransPlan in driving current transportation decisions. The committee will continue discussion of this topic at the January 16 meeting and make recommendations to the Metropolitan Policy Committee at a later date.

In addition, as part of addressing questions from the Metropolitan Policy Committee, the CAC was asked at its December 5 meeting to review the RTP public involvement process, the petition from the Goal 1 Coalition, and questions from the MPC, and consider an analysis of the process and how the process can be improved. Please refer to the cover memo for agenda item 5.e for a summary of the committee's discussion of these questions.

Attachment 1 – Minutes from CAC meeting, December 2007.