



December 9, 2008

To: Citizen Advisory Committee
From: Kathi Wiederhold
Subject: Item 4: Public Participation Plan

Action Recommended: Develop approach to 2009 annual evaluation of the *Public Participation Plan*.

The purpose of this agenda item is to seek direction from the committee for the 2009 annual evaluation of the Public Participation Plan, hereafter called the Plan. Policy 3.2 on page 10 of the Plan directs that the Plan shall be reviewed annually.

Recommendations

The committee spent considerable time over four meetings discussing the 2008 evaluation of the Plan and struggling with the broader question of how to reach more members of the public about transportation planning. The committee and staff have been working to implement the central clearinghouse recommendation from the 2008 evaluation. The committee and MPO partner staff also have been working to develop the relationship and establish communications as a starting point to implementing the rest of the 2008 recommendations.

Staff recommends that the committee use a leaner approach to the 2009 evaluation and continue to actively work on implementing the 2008 recommendations. An option for such an approach could involve review and discussion at one meeting of a summary of how well the outreach over the initial year met the evaluation measurements, performance objectives, and methods to meet the objectives in the Plan.

Background

The Citizen Advisory Committee conducted the first annual evaluation of the Plan at the December 2007 through March 2008 meetings. The committee considered a number of pieces of information in conducting the evaluation of the Plan:

- Public involvement for the recent update of the Regional Transportation Plan as a way to examine the usefulness of the Plan.
- A summary report on how well the outreach over the initial year met the evaluation measurements, performance objectives, and methods to meet the objectives in the Plan.
- Presentations from and roundtable discussion with local staff of MPO partners regarding public outreach they conduct for local planning activities and programs.

The following is a summary of the conclusions reached by the committee as a result of the 2008 evaluation.

1. The MPO Public Participation Plan was followed when conducting public outreach for the Regional Transportation Plan.
2. The public is most interested in having meaningful input at a point in the planning process which allows for changes to be made, for example, to projects on the project list. This opportunity largely occurs during the local planning processes and during the environmental review for a project, not at the MPO Regional Transportation Plan level. The project lists in the Regional Transportation Plan are generated from the local plans, thus projects have undergone public input during the adoption of the local plans. The public should be given a comprehensive picture that included all of the agencies involved and emphasized the opportunities to get involved early on.
3. The first year of implementing the Plan was a good start towards conducting public outreach for the key MPO products in a way that meets the requirements in the Plan. There is room to improve in the future.
4. The committee reflected that it was clear from the presentations from local staff from MPO partners that there were multiple opportunities for public involvement at every step in the process for every local planning activity and project.
5. The local process does not make it clear to the public what the issues are, how they affect people, and that now is the time to be involved.

Mayor Piercy and Vice-Chair Dave Jacobson jointly presented the CAC recommendations (see Attachment 1) from the 2008 evaluation to the Metropolitan Policy Committee at the May 8, 2008, meeting. Mayor Piercy is the Metropolitan Policy Committee liaison to the Citizen Advisory Committee.

Attachment 1

Citizen Advisory Committee Recommendations Regarding Public Involvement

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