
COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MONTHLY REPORT TO THE TPB

June 18, 2025
Daniel Papiernik, CAC Chair

The June meeting of the CAC was held virtually on Thursday, June 12. The meeting featured a DMVMoves discussion, information on public involvement and communication, a mid-point check on CAC meeting dynamics, and a briefing on the Enhanced Mobility program. The CAC also held their monthly “Act Locally” round-robin.

DMVMOVES DISCUSSION

Vice-Chair Ra Amin led a discussion on the status of the DMVMoves effort. The CAC is being asked to provide recommendations to the Community Partners Advisory Group (CPAG) by September of this year on the six initiatives for which working groups have been tasked to develop recommendations. TPB staff discussed the status of each of the working group action plans briefly, with more time spent on the four initiatives that are public facing, including: fare policies, shared service guidelines, wayfinding and amenities, and bus priority strategies. The CAC resolved to look at these four initiatives in more detail at their July committee meeting. TPB staff will provide whatever information they can on the status of the action plans to the CAC, so that Vice-Chair Amin can convey the CAC’s recommendations to the CPAG in a timely manner.

Questions and comments included the following:

Regarding fare policies, does the issue of people who don’t pay the fare ever come up in the discussions?

Enforcement has not been a focus of the discussions to date. Universal transfers, expanded regional transit passes, consistent fare discounts, and fare reciprocity are the key themes so far. Enforcement matters vary across jurisdictions, so if there is a problem with fare-skipping, it is something that would be handled by the appropriate operator and local jurisdiction.

Comments on fare policies: One of the discussion points has been about the reduced or free fares for students. A situation to be aware of is the fact that some parents are using their children’s free fare cards because they can’t afford fares. It should be noted that DMVMoves is looking at recommendations to make low-income fare products more generally accepted across the region. It was suggested that the DMVMoves advisory groups should hear the perspectives of parents and children regarding the challenges they face in getting their children to and from activities in the summer and after school, especially across jurisdictions. Jurisdictions vary a great deal in how they administer reduced or free fares. There are challenges in producing a consistent policy across jurisdictions including financial implications. The goal is to recommend policy changes that make these discounts easy to understand and take advantage of across jurisdictions.

**Regarding shared service guidelines, how are the wait times determined on the bus routes?
Is it by ridership?**

The shared service guidelines have received some of the most discussion to date. They can vary widely across the region. Currently, it looks like this working group is leaning towards regional aspirational guidelines. In suburban and more rural areas, 15-minute headways (the time interval between two consecutive transit vehicles or wait time)) are seen as typically unnecessary because the ridership is lower and the cost of adding buses and operators to increase service would not be justifiable.

Discussion regarding wayfinding: Discussion to date in this working group has been overlapping with the Better Bus redesign. There is already preliminary implementation in the works of the “one flag” at the bus stop. There is also interest around one number to use to reach call centers. Further discussion about consistent policies on bus stop amenities might result in some shared guidelines. **CAC comment:** There is confusion right now among riders about the rollout of Better Bus. People are reluctant to use the bus because they are worried about getting stranded.

Discussion on Bus Priority Strategies: This working group has also drawn a lot of attention. What are the priority corridors across the region? How would that be determined? Each jurisdiction has their own plans and limited resources to implement Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) with dedicated bus lanes. There may be a short list of priority corridors that make the most of high frequency routes and which could garner more consensus support for extra funding in the shorter-term.

Was the WMATA Gender Equity Framework (2024) on the challenge women face using public transit considered by any of the working groups? The study explores the reasons why women may feel unsafe using transit.

No, but this sounds like a valuable resource that should be considered. Work will continue, including with respect to customer experience improvements and implementation, beyond the end of this phase of the DMVMoves Initiative.

How is the CPAG addressing relationships with micromobility and Transportation Network Companies (TNC's)?

The topics of micromobility and/or TNCs has not come up within DMVMoves discussions. While these offer transportation options, which can impact transit use positively or negatively, the focus of DMVMoves has been on funding the current system and on better integration across the public operators.

PUBLIC INVOLVMENT AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH

TPB staff provided an overview of best practices for public involvement and what the TPB's practices are for communications and outreach. CAC members were encouraged to share their experiences with staff on how they receive their news and information.

MID-COURSE REVIEW

The CAC membership responded to a series of polls on meeting management, including:

- Is the pace of the meetings appropriate? (5=too fast, 3=just right, 1=too slow)
- Are advance materials useful and timely? (5=very to 1=not at all)
- Is the amount of time provided for CAC member comment appropriate? (5=too much, 3=just right, 1=too little)

In general, members find that the pace of the meetings are okay, and the advanced materials useful. There was a general agreement that the amount of time for discussion is not adequate. Members often feel rushed. There are often too many presentations and little time for reflection. Staff will use this information to update the meeting agendas to accommodate more time for discussion.

ENHANCED MOBILITY

TPB staff provided a briefing on the FTA Section 5310 Enhanced Mobility program. The value, timeline, and qualifications for the upcoming solicitation was presented. TPB staff urged members to share information about the opportunity with their partners.

Questions and comments included the following:

What I hear most often is “I’m waiting for a ride and they don’t show up.” What are people supposed to do when that happens?

This grant program provides funds for organizations to increase the mobility of older adults and people with disabilities. It does not address operational matters with the providers, but COG wants to know if one of the grantees is not meeting expectations, so let us know when this is happening so we can look into it.

What about people with neurodivergence? Do any of these programs address this group? Often it is important for these people to have access to quiet cars, for instance.

This funding is provided by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) specifically for older adults and people with disabilities. Staff would need to find out if neurodivergence is included in the criteria.

The matching funds needed seems like a high bar. It’s hard to think that a grassroots non-profit would have the capacity meet this. Do the funding criteria tend towards more organized non-profits?

Yes, because we would need to have some assurance that the group has the capacity to manage a grant of this size, they do tend to go to those more organized who are able to raise the matching funds.

What about children with disabilities?

The criteria do not preclude funding programs for children with disabilities, but it also doesn’t target children specifically.

The map showing coverage doesn’t include Charles County. Why?

Charles County is within the area served by the Tri-County Council of Southern Maryland. They would be providing this grant opportunity to Charles County.

ACT LOCALLY ROUND-ROBIN

Members shared their local initiatives, including work on a 2025 Mobility Walk, Bike, Roll Bonanza in Brookland this August, attendance at Southside Expressway study public meetings, community outreach related to the DC Streetcar being taken out of service and new bikeways going in, and study/education on transportation justice topics.

ATTENDANCECAC Members

Daniel Papiernik, Chair
Ra Amin, Vice-Chair
Felicia Brannon, Vice-Chair
Tim Davis
Mónica Martínez López
Lorena Rios
Rick Rybeck

Heather Ganoa
Dan Hardy
Kevin Jiang
Madeline Kaba
Jenene Lee

Staff

Rachel Beyerle
Laura Bachle
Amanda Lau
Lyn Erickson
Pierre Gaunard
Cherice Sansbury
Eric Randall
Tom Harrington