
**COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MONTHLY REPORT TO THE TPB**

October 15, 2025
Daniel Papiernik, CAC Chair

The September and October meetings of the CAC were held virtually on Thursday, September 11, and Thursday October 10, respectively. The meetings featured further discussion and finalization of consensus-based comments for the DMVMoves Community Partners Advisory Group (CPAG), a deep-dive into the TPB Transportation Resilience Plan's inland flooding analysis in September, and in October, preparations for the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Forum and a presentation on all of the many studies making up the Visualize 2050 plan documents.

DMVMOVES COMMENTS

The CAC's Vice-Chair, Ra Amin, delivered the CAC comments to the Community Partners Advisory Group (CPAG) on September 19. The CAC chose to concentrate on the four initiatives that are public facing, including: fare policy integration; regional service guidelines and performance reporting; consistent bus stop design, wayfinding and customer information; and a regional approach to bus priority. In addition, members of the CAC understand that funding and financing are the critical issues the effort needs to address. The CAC provided comments on this as well. The CAC wholeheartedly supports the leadership in finding a consensus-based path to meet the funding needs that a world-class transit system will take.

Overall Comments

Focus on the service-related initiatives should not distract task force members from making a decision on finding sustainable and equitable funding for transit. The CAC strongly urges the board to continue public engagement with the CAC and other organizations as funding policy decisions and strategy continue to be fleshed out.

- It's fundamental to understand that transportation issues are tied to the decision's jurisdictions make about land use. In particular, encouraging sprawl fosters pollution and congestion that the Region cannot afford. The jurisdictions must prioritize and encourage affordable infill and transit-oriented development.
- Consistent policies across the DMV are better than the status quo.
- Implement what you can agree on; don't call for more studies.
- The recommendations will be more compelling to the public if there are examples of success stories from other regions.

The entire comments delivered are attached to this report.

INLAND FLOODING ANALYSIS UPDATE

Katherine Rainone, TPB Transportation Resiliency Planner, provided a thorough presentation on the recent work TPB has undertaken to provide better information across the region on flood hazards and their impact on transportation. She explained that the analysis is a valuable supplement to the FEMA-informed flood risk maps, allowing jurisdictions to make better decisions about transportation assets at risk for flooding. Member discussion centered on how the data would be used, including expanding mapping to include bike trails, further refinement of other risk-based tools, and clarification on data sources and their utility.

THE VISUALIZE 2050 PLAN

At the October meeting, Andrew Austin, TPB Transportation Planner, discussed plans for the November 13 TIP Forum, which will be held in conjunction with the CAC's November meeting. Cristina Finch, TPB Transportation Planner, followed by providing a comprehensive overview of all the plans and program developments that constitute the Visualize 2050 Plan and FY 2026-2029 TIP. Plans were also shared on public involvement and communications for the final comment period.

Rachel Beyerle, TPB Communications Manager, detailed the communications outreach planned and solicited the CAC's help in spreading the word about the final comment period for the plan by accessing the Ambassador Toolkit as soon as the plan is released for comment on October 23. Questions from members included understanding more about the financial plan element, some details in various supporting plan documents, and information on how funding and financing approaches are reflected. The CAC Chair asked that the CAC be provided the Ambassador Toolkit as soon as possible in order to share the information with their groups.

ACT LOCALLY ROUND ROBIN

Members continue to be involved in a variety of community initiatives, including attending a presentation from the Northern Virginia Regional Commission on a range gauge platform, community bike rides and walk audits, exploring Environmental Justice through public art, improving access for people with disabilities in Brentwood, preparing legislative issues to be presented to elected officials in Virginia, writing the WMATA Board regarding use of land value return, and getting involved in roadway planning, such as BRT design in Montgomery County and redesign on Braddock Road in Alexandria.

ATTENDANCE

Daniel Papiernik, Chair
Ra Amin, Vice-Chair
Felicia Brannon, Vice-Chair
Tim Davis
Heather Gaona
Martha Fedorowicz
Dan Hardy
Madeline Kaba
Jenene Lee (September)
Monica Martinez Lopez (September)
Dorothy Menelas (September)
Felipe Millan (September)
Asa Orrin-Brown
Jeff Parnes
Lorena Rios (September)
Gail Sullivan (September)
Connor Young (September)

Staff
September
Laura Bachle
Amanda Lau
Lyn Erickson
Katherine Rainone
Tom Harrington

October
Laura Bachle
Rachel Beyerle
Lyn Erickson
Amanda Lau
Kanti Srikanth
Cristina Finch
Andrew Austin
Jamie Bufkin



MEMORANDUM

TO: DMV Moves Community Partners Advisory Group (CPAG)
FROM: Ra Amin, CAC Vice-Chair, CPAG Representative
SUBJECT: Transportation Planning Board Community Advisory Committee (CAC) Comments
DATE: September 19, 2025

BACKGROUND

The CAC is a group of 24 residents of the metropolitan Washington region who represent diverse viewpoints on regional transportation issues. CAC members represent environmental, business, and civic interests in transportation. Fifteen of the 24 members are appointed evenly among the District of Columbia, suburban Maryland, and Northern Virginia. An additional nine members are appointed to represent [TPB member jurisdictions](#) and to ensure a diverse committee including representation of low-income individuals, people with disabilities, and traditionally disadvantaged racial and ethnic population groups.

The CAC appreciates the opportunity to have ongoing participation in the DMVMoves regional transit initiative's Community Partners Advisory Group (CPAG) and offers to advise the effort from the point of view of informed community members who regularly consider regional transportation matters. Through our representative on the CPAG, Ra Amin, the CAC has been kept informed and has offered reflections on the work of the task force and the advisory group to date. Now that the work of the CPAG is drawing to a close, we are offering these observations and recommendations for the group's consideration.

SCOPE OF THE CAC DISCUSSIONS

The CAC has chosen to concentrate on the four initiatives that are public facing, including: fare policy integration; regional service guidelines and performance reporting; consistent bus stop design, wayfinding and customer information; and a regional approach to bus priority. In addition, members of the CAC understand that funding and financing are the critical issues the effort needs to address. The CAC is providing comments on this as well. We wholeheartedly support the leadership in finding a consensus-based path to meet the funding needs that a world-class transit system will take.

Overall Comments

Focus on the service-related initiatives should not distract task force members from making a decision on finding sustainable and equitable funding for transit. The CAC strongly urges the task force to continue public engagement with the CAC and other organizations as funding policy decisions and strategy continue to be fleshed out.

- It's fundamental to understand that transportation issues are tied to the decision's jurisdictions make about land use. In particular, encouraging sprawl fosters pollution and congestion that the region cannot afford. The jurisdictions must prioritize and encourage affordable infill and transit-oriented development.
- Consistent policies across the DMV are better than the status quo.
- Implement what you can agree on; do not call for more studies.

- The recommendations will be more compelling to the public if there are examples of success stories from other regions.

Fare policy integration

Fare policy should be part of a broader strategy for funding transit. The fare box captures value from individual riders, but transit provides benefits to the communities it serves that stretch beyond those individual rides, such as pollution reduction, congestion mitigation, and increased land value. Inadequately capturing this value can disproportionately place the burden of funding transit operations and improvement on transit riders and municipalities. There are many available strategies for capturing transit value outside of the fare box.

(see <https://gwwash.org/view/98516/an-un-fare-kind-of-evasion> for a deeper discussion on capturing land value returns as an example).

Generally, there was overall support among the CAC members on universal transit credits and expanded regional transit passes. One shared concern was whether consideration had been given to potential impacts if there are changes to programs that help people qualify for the discounted fares, such as SNAP and Medicaid. Perhaps individuals can qualify through some other means? There are also ongoing problems with enforcement, for example, people not swiping their fare cards when boarding the bus.

There needs to be a balanced approach to providing free or discounted fares. Fare policies for seniors, youth, and people with disabilities should be uniform. Regarding the age at which older adults should start receiving fare discounts, look at when DC, MD, and VA require driver's license renewals. There is a tie to aging out of driving and moving to transit. CAC members understand that federal regulations set senior fares to age 65 and that there has been no discussion of changing this.

Consideration may need to be given to entire families, not just children or older adults. This effort could benefit by hearing from low-income families experiencing challenges. The approach low-income families use for these discounted fares might differ from the way in which they are administered. For example, a child receiving a voucher may be sharing it with a working parent—another example of ongoing problems with enforcement and lack of uniformity.

Some consideration should be given to making it easier for people with disabilities and older adults to receive their discounts from any transit provider. It can be extremely challenging to navigate the various policies that different providers have in addition to the physical challenges of physically obtaining the fare discounts. It is also preferable not to need to pull out cash or a credit card to pay. Members of the older adult and disability communities have expressed that they feel unsafe pulling out a form of payment at the farebox or faregates.

A unified approach should be considered for college students and youth. Encouraging transit use among teens and young adults develops the transit user base, but if each provider or college administers their fare policy differently, it can dissuade youth from transit.

Micromobility providers should also be considered as part of fare policy integration. These providers are an important link in the whole commute, especially with use of these providers among low income communities rising.

Fare policies are tied to steady ridership. If there is a predictable level of riders, there is a stable base from which to plan. More riders need to be convinced to take transit, and they get convinced when service is reliable. Quality service will deliver more riders regardless of whether the fares are discounted or not.

Regional service guidelines and performance reporting

Both guidelines and reporting are important to the CAC. Members would like to see these as transparent as possible to the public. Regional service "guidelines" are not as effective as "requirements." While it is important to set goals and aspirations, if guidelines are unenforceable, are they going to be effective? There should be some consideration of baseline requirements.

Having a common set of metrics would clarify how regional service operators are performing individually and how the region is performing overall. There should be some common guidelines, such as meeting rider expectations for frequency, on-time performance, and safety. Perhaps some software provided to all operators, so they are all gathering the same data. Perhaps a regional dashboard displaying the metrics would help with accountability and assurance. Whatever is done with the metrics needs to be shareable.

Extending bus route naming/signage that identifies the current level of service that a route provides similar to WMATA's new bus routes would be good for all regional bus providers. For example, quickly identifying routes on a map based on whether they have a commuter-level of service, regional-level of service, local-level of service, and rapid transit-level of service. This information would help riders plan their transportation use efficiently and would help advocates and planners quickly identify where bus service is lagging current or planned development in an area.

Consistent bus stop design, wayfinding, and customer information

The CAC members favor a bus stop design that meets some agreed-upon standards, uniform wayfinding aids, and the one-call customer information number approach. There is not a need for uniform physical design so long as they meet standards for accessibility and make the wait attractive to riders. Language access was also suggested as a uniform standard to be addressed, including the use of braille at a uniform location at all stops.

This discussion on consistency should include first-party apps, websites, and other online or third-party resources since these are often a primary method for wayfinding and trip planning. There should also be consistent access to live location tracking as a means of knowing when other buses on other routes in the vicinity may be arriving so a person can make decisions.

Bus stop designs should be friendly for everyone and within the context of the surroundings. Adding cardinal points to wayfinding would also be very helpful. Connecting bike routes and sidewalks should be designed along with the bus shelter and kept in good repair. Amenities and wayfinding should incorporate the inclusion of Transportation Network Companies (TNCs) as part of the region's transportation services.

Customer service is related to bus driver training. Beyond a good pool of drivers, some baseline of consistent expectations for bus drivers across the DMV would be helpful. Related to that is managing expectations among the public about what they can expect (or not) from a bus driver.

A regional approach to bus priority

In general, members support moving forward with the implementation of the bus priority routes identified rather than waiting for more analysis. The method of determining which routes to prioritize appears to be clear. These routes need to be administered in a coordinated manner. Also, expectations should be managed about implementation of routes.

Currently, the recommendation reads like all six projects will be completed in ten years. The BRT investments are aggressive considering other DMVMoves objectives, inviting scrutiny of their feasibility that should be met with a robust path forward. Shared use of assets and grouped procurements, while achieving longer-term efficiency, will require some short-term disruption. Avoid the suggestion that all six projects will be completed in ten years. As an alternative, we suggest a 10-year window with incremental advancement. The final report should emphasize the need to “advance” BRT or “deliver BRT elements.”

Consideration needs to be given to the next set of priority routes, such as MD 210, routes further out in Virginia, Southeast DC, and southern Maryland overall. These routes could serve to grow ridership. Pilot projects could be explored for routes experiencing congestion that may not otherwise meet the criteria for BRT, being innovative in implementation, like using shoulders. Also the CAC is not suggesting other priority projects in design like Richmond Highway or MD 586 be deferred because they are not the top regional priority.

BRT projects should be planned with a full complement of improved pedestrian and multimodal last mile connectivity. It makes no sense to have a BRT stop that does not help you get to your ultimate destination.

CONCLUSION

The CAC appreciates the work of the task force to date and the opportunity for informed community members such as we to advise on these decisions. Funding a world-class transit system is paramount, and the CAC stands ready to support the task force in achieving this goal.

CAC MEMBERS

Daniel Papiernik	Chair	Fairfax County
Ra Amin	Vice Chair	DC Ward 5
Felicia Brannon	Vice Chair	Montgomery County
Keba Baldwin		Prince Georges County
Juanita Beltran		DC Ward 8
Timothy Davis		Frederick County
Kyle Dunn		Montgomery County
Martha Fedorowicz		DC Ward 4
Heather Gaona		Rockville
Dan Hardy		Fairfax County
Kevin Jiang		Arlington County
Madeline Kaba		Charles County
Jenene Lee	AFA Representative	Prince Georges County
Cooper Lohr		DC Ward 3
Mónica Martínez López		DC Ward 5
Dorothy Menelas		Frederick City
Felipe Millan		Prince Georges County
Asa Orrin-Brown		Alexandria

Jeffrey Parnes	Fairfax County
Lorena Rios	Loudoun County
Rick Rybeck	DC Ward 1
Mark Scheufler	Prince William County
Gail Sullivan	DC Ward 6
Connor Young	Manassas