

Hear Every Voice

Case Study: Metropolitan Transportation Commission Policy Advisory Council



Ongoing stakeholder advisory committee charged with informing regional transportation policy

San Francisco Bay Area, California

Metropolitan Transportation Commission

Project Details

Location

Organizations

Case Summary

Context: The Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) was established in 1980 and serves as the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) in the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area, with responsibility for planning, coordination, and finance (MTC 2011b). The MTC is governed by a Policy Board consisting of local elected officials representing the various jurisdictions in the Bay Area. This board benefits from recommendations provided by a Policy Advisory Council established in 2010. The new Council combines three previous advisory committees, two of which were focused on specific populations, including an elderly and disabled committee and minority citizens committee. In recruiting for the Policy Advisory Council positions, MTC emphasized their desire to engage those who want “to jump into the transportation arena, learn about the complexities of funding, and help identify the connections between transportation and land use, air quality and climate change” (MTC 2009). The Council is intended to advise the MTC and its Policy Board on a wide range of transportation issues and provide insights from across the region. Each of the Policy Advisory

The Council's mission is “to advise MTC on transportation policies in the San Francisco Bay Area, incorporating diverse perspectives relating to the environment, the economy, and social equity” (MTC 2011c).

Public Involvement: The Policy Advisory Council’s 27 members represent three key interest areas commonly associated with sustainability—economy, environment, and social equity. The breakdown of membership is summarized in Table 1 below.

Environment & Economy 9 members	Equity 18 members	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 members representing economic interests • 4 members representing environmental interests • 1 member representing either • 5 of the 9 total members must be from the 5 most populous counties in the region 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9 members representing communities of color and issues affecting low-income communities or environmental justice • 4 members representing communities of color • 4 members representing environmental justice/low-income communities • 1 member representing either 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9 members representing transportation for seniors and persons with disabilities • 4 members representing seniors • 4 members representing persons with disabilities • 1 member representing either

Source: MTC, 2011c

Council members serve two-year terms. Members are required to apply for membership and are approved by the MTC. Members are required to maintain “an ongoing engagement with organizations and individuals from the categories and communities they represent” (MTC 2011c). Current Council member biographies, available on the MTC’s website, suggest that members represent a wide range of organizations and interests. Members include a county paratransit coordinator for Alameda County, Marin County Transit District community mobility manager, real estate director for East Bay Asian Local Development Corporation, co-chair of Chinatown Transportation Research Improvement Project, senior policymaker associated with the Public Health Institute, local president of the United Food and Commercial Workers Union, and co-founder of North Bay Institute for Green Technology (MTC 2011a). Most of the members have multiple affiliations through their employment and volunteer work.



Policy Advisory Council meeting in progress

Source: MTC

The Policy Advisory Council typically meets monthly on Wednesday afternoons. Members receive a stipend for meeting attendance and are reimbursed for travel expenses. Council meetings are open to the public.

References

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