Citizens Capital Budget Advisory Committee Review

University of North Carolina at Charlotte
Gerald G. Fox Master of Public Administration

UNC CHARLOTTE

MPA Team Members:
Catherine Carter, Jeremy Christ, Ashley Farley, Alex Farmer-Graham,
Lief Fitzpatrick, Cortney Graham, Olivia Hubert, Jess-Mara Jordan,
Michael Lang, Andreas Lefrank, Katherine Osborne
Caroline Tippette
MPA Professors:
James Douglas, Douglas Bean

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PROJECT OVERVIEW AND METHODOLOGY

The Mecklenburg County (County) Financial Services Department (Financial Services), in partnership with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), has tasked students from the Gerald G. Fox Master of Public Administration (MPA) program at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte (UNCC) with assessing the role and procedures of the Citizens Capital Budget Advisory Committee (CCBAC). The MPA Team has made several recommendations designed to improve the CCBAC's overall usefulness in providing quality citizen input to the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) regarding the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).

The CCBAC is a seven-member citizen advisory committee that currently evaluates capital projects for compliance with established standards. These capital projects are part of the County's CIP, a comprehensive 5-year plan for acquiring, developing, and repairing capital investments. While the CCBAC was originally chartered in 1995, it has undergone periods of inactivity. In reestablishing the group, Financial Services has expressed a desire to align the activities of the CCBAC with best practices in order to optimize the CCBAC's provision of citizen input to the BOCC.

METHODS

The MPA Team used several data collection methods to establish its recommendations, including:

- An extensive literature review of effective advisory committee best practices.
- Interviews with current and former CCBAC members.
- Interviews with Mecklenburg County officials directly involved in the CIP process.
- Interviews with other counties that use advisory committees in their capital improvement planning process.
- Review of other county citizen advisory committee charters, meeting minutes, training documents, internal reports, and references from their capital planning process.

The MPA Team used these data to create 13 recommendations that fall within one of four categories: CCBAC Roles, Membership, Orientation and Training, and Collaboration.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Brief descriptions of the categories and corresponding recommendations are provided below.

- **Roles:** the functions and responsibilities of an entity created to guide its behavior. Common advisory committee roles include making recommendations, providing insights on specific topics or issues, and sharing feedback from the community to the governing body.

- **Membership:** the number of members and their demographics. Relevant advisory committee demographics include race, ethnicity, gender, age, geographic location, and professional background.

- **Orientation and Training:** the process for preparing both new and experienced advisory committee members to effectively carry out their roles.

- **Collaboration:** the interaction of the advisory committee with relevant actors.

The MPA Team identified best practices for advisory committees within each of these categories. The best practices were then used to develop recommendations for the CCBAC. Specific recommendations are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: CCBAC Recommendations

Category	Recommendations
CCBAC Roles	Involve the CCBAC in developing project prioritization criteria.
	Consider project prioritization criteria used in other counties when developing criteria for Mecklenburg County.
	Solicit CCBAC review of technical capital standards and application of technical capital standards to projects.
	Involve the CCBAC in applying project weighting criteria and recommending projects for inclusion in the County's CIP.
Membership	Establish a diversity policy for advisory committee membership.
	Increase the size of the CCBAC.
	Advertise for CCBAC vacancies throughout Mecklenburg County, using a variety of outlets.
Orientation and Training	Develop an orientation package for new CCBAC members.
	Create a comprehensive introductory training session for CCBAC members, to be held annually.
	Incorporate value-based budgeting training, using simulations such as Bottom Line!
Collaboration	Continue to provide strong staff support for the CCBAC.
	Increase interaction between CCBAC and the BOCC.
	Conduct an annual performance assessment of the CCBAC.

INTRODUCTION

The Mecklenburg County (County) Financial Services Department (Financial Services), in partnership with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), has tasked students from the Gerald G. Fox Master of Public Administration (MPA) program at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte (UNCC) with providing recommendations that will increase the effectiveness of the Citizens Capital Budget Advisory Committee (CCBAC) and increase overall public engagement with the County's Capital Improvement Program (CIP).

The current 5-year CIP has a budget of over 1 billion dollars to fund capital projects throughout the County. These projects impact all County residents, as they include County-owned facilities, infrastructure, equipment, and land acquisition. The County also funds capital projects for Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools (CMS), Central Piedmont Community College (CPCC) and the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library. The CIP for FY2014-FY2018 provides a funding plan for 120 capital projects.

Advisory committees play a vital role for governing bodies, because they represent an avenue for citizen participation in decision-making, ultimately leading to more efficient and effective delivery of public goods and services. The CCBAC was established specifically to support the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC), and to provide citizen input in the CIP process.

The MPA Team analyzed current and past CCBAC activities and roles through data gathered from interviews with previous CCBAC members, County employees, and BOCC members. The MPA Team also identified best practices through interviews with county officials and capital improvement advisory committee members in similar municipalities (hereafter referred to as "benchmarks"), as well as a thorough review of academic and professional literature in this area. These best practices were used to create a list of final recommendations.

This report proceeds first with a brief examination of Mecklenburg County's capital improvement program and capital planning process. Finally, an overview of the importance of advisory committees and the role of the CCBAC specifically is provided. Then, an overview of the data and methodology used by the MPA Team is discussed. Next, the findings from the research are used to generate recommendations, which are grouped into the following categories: **CCBAC Roles**, **Membership**, **Orientation and Training**, and **Collaboration**. The report concludes with a summary of the MPA Team's analysis.

ROLE OF ADVISORY COMMITTEES

According to a Gallup Poll (2016), 71% of Americans trust their local governments to address problems within their communities. Government effectiveness, however, can often be improved by active participation on the part of local citizens. This active participation can be achieved by engaging citizens in decision-making and ensuring transparency and accountability (O'Neill, 2012).

Advisory committees are rooted in the Jeffersonian tradition of American politics, which involves a local bottom-up government that is responsive to citizens (Berner, 2001). While there are multiple avenues for encouraging citizen participation, many municipalities have formed topic-specific advisory committees, which allow citizens to "talk, explore, argue, disagree, offer insights, and learn together to produce meaningful results and impact" (Joyaux, 2013). North Carolina is a state that fosters citizen participation at the local level. At a minimum, North Carolina General Statute 159-12 mandates that, on the same day that a budget officer provides a budget to a governing body, a copy shall also be filed with the Clerk to the Board to be made available for public inspection. Additionally, the board must hold a public hearing, open to all citizens for comment, prior to adopting the budget ordinance (G.S. 159-12, 1971).

Citizen advisory committees offer many advantages, for both citizens and governments. Citizens can develop skills, become active participants in the decision-making process, share their views with government, and influence better policy and implementation decisions. Governments can build trust with citizens, gain legitimacy for their decisions, build strategic alliances, and, ultimately, make better decisions (Irvin and Stansbury, 2004).

Citizen advisory committees are used widely across North Carolina local governments. In 2001, Maureen Berner, a researcher at the University of North Carolina School of Government (SOG), published citizen engagement survey results from 167 municipalities and 56 counties across the state. Respondents were asked specifically about their organization's desire for public involvement in the budgeting process, the methods they used to capture citizen engagement in budgeting, and what they believed was most and least effective. Thirty-one percent of respondents indicate that they use a citizens' advisory committee in their budgeting process, with about half of advisory committees being engaged at the beginning (52%) or early in the budgeting process (48%). Many county respondents also indicated that advisory committees were used at the department level to increase participation prior to the county-level budgeting process (Berner, 2001).

THE CCBAC

The CCBAC was formed in February, 1995. According to the current CCBAC charge, "The County values citizen input that will guide and shape the infrastructure needs of the Mecklenburg County community" (Mecklenburg County, 2011). The group consists of seven members with varied backgrounds, preferably related to different capital project categories (e.g. Solid Waste, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, etc.). The CCBAC has had a few periods of inactivity, most notably 2009-2011, when the County declined to adopt new CIPs due to the economic downturn.

Initially, the CCBAC provided citizens' input to the BOCC by:

- Commenting on the County's capital budgeting process and procedures.
- Reviewing priorities and assessing proposed capital projects in relation to these priorities.
- Making recommendations to the County Manager and Board of County Commissioners on processes, priorities, and projects.
- Facilitating the exchange of information and coordination between the County and the City of Charlotte on capital needs and planning.
- Reviewing progress reports from staff departments on a quarterly basis on the status of capital projects.
- Evaluating the stewardship of each agency or County department that requests funds for capital projects using bond funds previously approved (Mecklenburg County, 2011).

In 2012, the BOCC revised the role of the CCBAC. The current role of the CCBAC includes:

- Reviewing the current standards for capital improvement projects in Mecklenburg County, and developing new standards as appropriate.
- Evaluating capital project submissions from each department and agency to ensure compliance with the adopted standards.
- Revising and making recommendations to the County Manager and the BOCC every five years regarding the existing standards.
- Reporting to the BOCC on the progress of meeting capital standards (Mecklenburg County, 2011).

After the CCBAC evaluates all submitted projects for compliance with agreed-upon capital standards, the CIP Staff Review Committee prioritizes the approved projects, in accordance with the weighting criteria approved by the BOCC. The CCBAC updates the BOCC on CIP progress, periodically, throughout the multi-year process (Mecklenburg County, 2011).

Financial Services is currently reestablishing the CCBAC, and has already appointed several new members. There are significant opportunities for the CCBAC to engage with the BOCC throughout the CIP process, potentially leading to decisions that best represent the preferences of citizens.

THE COUNTY'S CIP PROCESS

Each year, the County follows a similar process to approve its CIP. Table 2 provides the timeline for the 2016 County CIP Process, and shows where the CCBAC has been involved in the past.

Table 2: CCBAC Timeline

"Pre-Submission" 9/1/16 – 9/30/16	- Determine the County's debt service and operating conditions - Determine escalation rate. Will there be one for this process? - Discussions begin with various departments and agencies on projects - Share project updates with executive team - Determine how the CCBAC will be involved in this capital budgeting cycle
"Submission" 10/7/16 – 11/10/16	- Capital Kick Off Meeting - Provide submission request instructions - Provide overall debt policy and parameters based on financial forecast - Department/Business partners submit completed ranking/submission form
"Evaluation and Ranking Phase" 11/15/16 – 1/20/17	- Departments/Business partners present capital project and costs to the CIP Review Team - CCBAC will evaluate projects according to standards or some other revised measure - CIP Review Team ranks capital projects per approved criteria - Ranked capital list is shared with management - Incorporate changes from management - Funding source determined for each project category
"Capital Project Approval Phase" 1/23/17 – 5/22/17	- Capital projects review by the executive team - Capital projects review by the BOCC - BOCC makes preliminary decisions so that education of the public can begin before the capital budget hearing (if needed) - Capital Budget approved

DATA AND METHODOLOGY

The MPA Team used several data collection methods to establish its recommendations, including:

- An extensive literature review of effective advisory committee best practices.
- Interviews with current and former CCBAC members.
- Interviews with Mecklenburg County officials and employees directly involved in the CIP process.
- Review of the County's relevant documents, related to the responsibilities of the CCBAC over time.
- Interviews with other counties that use advisory committees in their capital planning process in order to evaluate current practices and compare them to both Mecklenburg County and established best practices.
- Review of other local government citizen advisory committee charters, meeting minutes, training documents, internal reports, and references from their capital planning process.

These data were used to identify best practices and opportunities for increased citizen participation in the CIP process moving forward. A more detailed explanation of each method employed by the MPA Team is outlined below.

Literature Review
The MPA Team conducted a thorough literature review on several topics, including public participation in government; citizen engagement in municipal budgeting; the role, membership, and activities of advisory committees; designing and implementing effective orientation and training programs; the importance of feedback and collaboration; and retention of advisory committee members. This process was iterative, in that initial research was conducted, gaps were identified, and targeted information was gathered. The resulting information is incorporated in each category in the introductions and explanations of best practices.

CCBAC Member Interviews
The MPA Team interviewed six CCBAC members who served during or after 2005. These interviews were designed to elicit information regarding:

- How members learned of the CCBAC.
- What the selection and orientation process was like.
- What members considered to be the strengths and areas of opportunity for the CCBAC.
- Member's thoughts on the CCBAC's role in the CIP.
- How members felt about CCBAC coordination, feedback, and collaboration.

Questions were primarily open-ended, and an interview questionnaire was used as a guide for conversation. Interviews were conducted via phone or email, depending on the preference of the person being interviewed. CCBAC members were encouraged to share other thoughts, in

Mecklenburg County Employee and Public Official Interviews
The MPA Team conducted interviews with county staff, including the County Manager, the County's Asset and Facilities Manager, representatives from Park and Recreation and the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School System, and several members of the Financial Services Department. These interviews focused on previous interactions with the CCBAC, the role that the CCBAC should play in capital planning, and other feedback that staff had for the group. Additionally, the MPA Team interviewed two members of the BOCC, to solicit feedback on the effectiveness of the CCBAC and the potential role of the CCBAC in the future.

Questions were primarily open-ended, and the interview questionnaire was used as a guide for conversation. The questionnaire for these interviews is available in Appendix A . Interviews were conducted in person, or via phone or email, depending on the preferences of the person being interviewed.

Benchmark Capital Advisory Committees
The MPA team performed benchmarking research to build the foundation of this report and the final recommendations for increasing the effectiveness of the CCBAC. Benchmark organizations were originally identified using a broad internet search. The MPA Team searched specifically for jurisdictions with advisory groups that focused on the capital improvement process. Once jurisdictions with similar advisory groups were selected, materials were mined from these jurisdictions' websites. Interviews were then conducted via phone and/ or email (based on the preference of the point of contact) with representatives from the jurisdictions. The questions asked during the initial interviews are available in Appendix B. Fourteen jurisdictions were identified and used as benchmarks. Appendix C provides more detailed information about the benchmarks and how information was gathered

The MPA Team identified the following appropriate benchmarks for its analysis, shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Benchmark Jurisdictions

Benchmarks	
Type	**Location**
City	Bellaire, TX
City	Charlottesville, VA
City	Olympia, WA
City	Richmond Heights, MO
City	Urbandale, IA
County	Chatham County, NC
County	Hennepin, MN
County	Loudoun County, VA
County	Ramsey County, MN
County	Washington County, MD
County	Chesterfield County, VA
Municipality	Princeton, NJ
State	Minnesota
Town	Bridgton, ME

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The MPA Team's findings and recommendations are grouped into four categories: CCBAC Roles, Membership, Orientation and Training, and Collaboration. Subsections are organized in the following manner. First, the category is defined, its importance and relevance are explained, and an initial listing of recommendations is provided. Second, previous and current practices of the CCBAC applicable to the finding area are discussed. Third, best practices relevant to the categories are identified, and recommendations pertinent to each best practice are given. Finally, concluding thoughts regarding the categories are provided.

Category Definition

Previous and Current CCBAC Practices

Best Practices and Recommendations

Concluding Thoughts
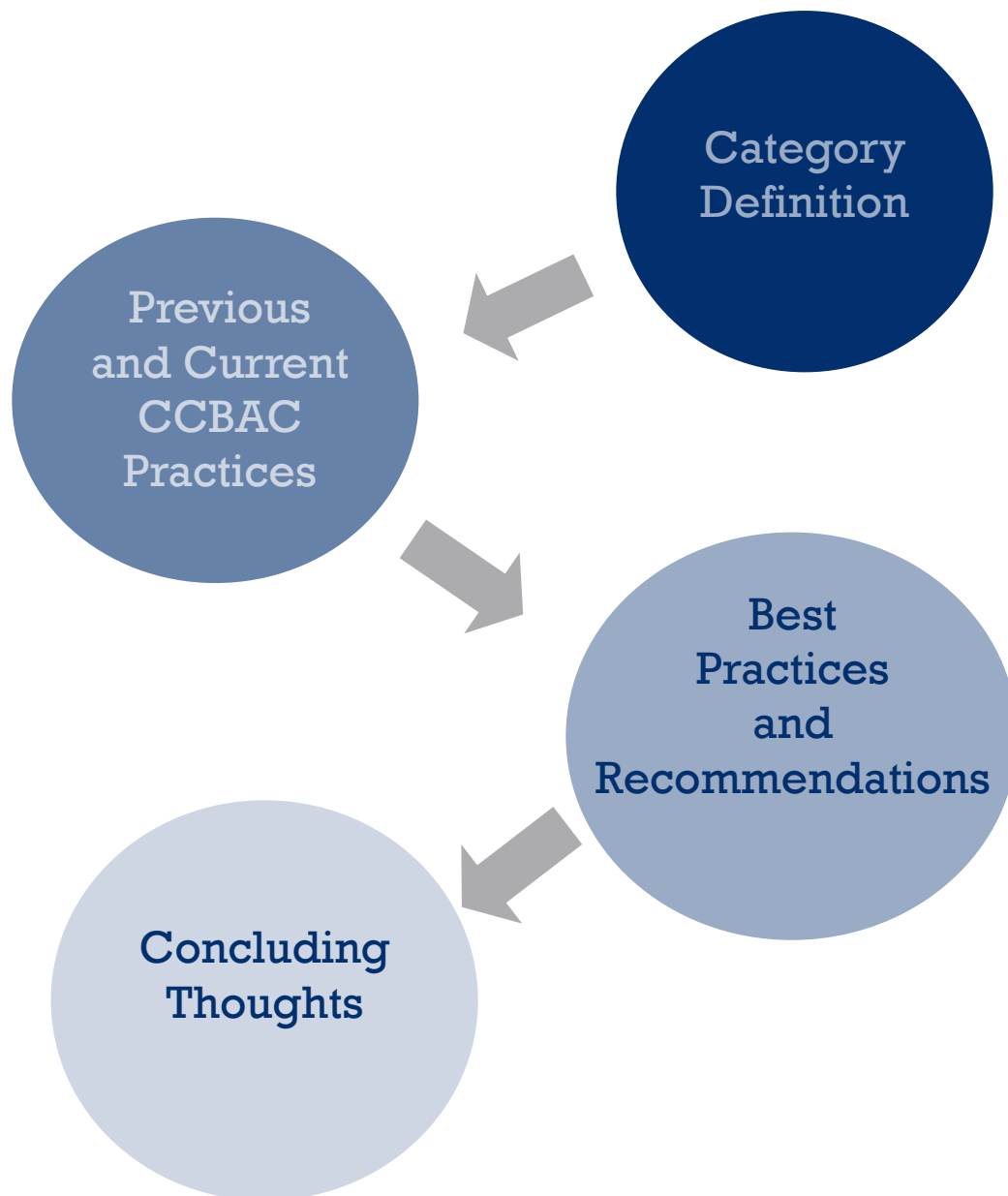
CCBAC ROLES

INTRODUCTION

Roles establish the functions and responsibilities of an entity in order to guide its behavior. Establishing clear roles for advisory committees ensures that both citizen participants and government officials understand the types of information and advice the committee is tasked to generate. Advisory committees are a collection of individuals who use their knowledge and skill-sets to augment those of a governing body. Advisory committees' roles often include making recommendations, providing insights on specific topics or issues, sharing feedback from the community to the governing body, and affording staff with a fresh perspective on programmatic issues (Smith, 1998).

The CCBAC exists, specifically, to provide citizen input to the BOCC regarding capital projects. The capital projects process happens over several stages, moving from prioritization criteria development, to department-level CIP proposals, to evaluation of those proposals based on technical capital standards and prioritization criteria, culminating in a series of countywide CIP recommendations to the BOCC. The MPA Team makes the following recommendations regarding roles for the CCBAC:

- Involve the CCBAC in developing project prioritization criteria.
- Consider project prioritization criteria used in other counties when developing criteria for Mecklenburg County.
- Solicit CCBAC review of technical capital standards and application of technical capital standards to projects.
- Involve the CCBAC in applying project weighting criteria and recommend projects for inclusion in the County's CIP to the BOCC.

CURRECT CCBAC ROLES

The current role of the CCBAC is to review, evaluate, and recommend technical capital standards for adoption in Mecklenburg County, in order to guide the County's capital improvement program.

Each year, the County's CIP process begins with Financial Services developing a set of prioritization (weighting) criteria that is to be applied to all potential projects. These criteria allow for dissimilar projects to be compared and ranked, based on their adherence to the BOCC's priorities. County staff then present their proposed criteria to the BOCC for review and approval, after which the finalized criteria are disseminated to the Departments for incorporation into project proposals.

The role of the CCBAC in CIP process has shifted since the group's inception in 1995. Originally, the CCBAC's primary roles included, "reviewing priorities and assessing proposed capital projects in relation to those priorities" and "making recommendations to the County Manager and the BOCC on process, priorities, and projects" (Mecklenburg County, 2011). In 2009, Mecklenburg County elected not to adopt a new capital budget or issue bonds for several years due to the financial crisis, resulting in the suspension of CCBAC activities (Mecklenburg County, 2011).

When the CCBAC was reestablished in 2013, the Citizens Capital Budget Advisory Committee Revised Role document clarified the new CCBAC role, which does not include providing input on the relationship between capital projects and County priorities or recommendations regarding process, priorities, and projects. Under the current document, the CCBAC's role is to provide input to the BOCC by:

- Reviewing the current standards for capital improvement projects in Mecklenburg County, and developing new standards as appropriate.
- Evaluating capital project submissions from each department/agency to ensure compliance with the adopted standards.
- Revising and making recommendations to the County capital standards every five years to the County Manager and the BOCC.
- Reporting to the BOCC on the progress of meeting the capital standards (Mecklenburg County, 2011).

Technical capital standards are very different than the project prioritization (weighting) criteria. Prioritization criteria are used as a framework to determine which projects should move forward (e.g. points are assigned based on how well a project meets a set of criteria, with projects that earn more points being completed ahead of projects that earn fewer points). Technical capital standards guide the development of new capital facilities. For example, the technical capital standards in Loudoun, VA are based on four main components:

- The types of capital facilities the county would like to develop, per department service plans, in quantities that are driven by demographic or geographic considerations.
- The typical square footage to be developed for each type of facility.
- The demographic or geographic factors by which a new facility is "triggered" to begin development.
- The acreage required to site the facility. Each standard provides an approximate acreage to develop that type of facility on a stand-alone site, and provides estimates for the building footprint, parking areas, storm water management ponds, required zoning setbacks, and well and drain field areas in the event a site is not located on public water and sewer systems. Except for parks, the acreage is provided on an "up to" basis, meaning the facility can be developed on a site of up to the proposed acreage (Loudoun County, 2017).

Table 4 highlights the differences between technical capital standards and project prioritization criteria.

Table 4: Technical Capital Standards vs. Project Prioritization Criteria

Technical Capital Standards	Project Prioritization Criteria
Developed based on work of technical agencies, industry best practices, and state improvement standards.	Developed based on community priorities, strategic planning goals, etc. Often value-based.
Evaluation – Projects meet or do not meet technical capital standards	Evaluation – Projects are assigned a score, based on the extent to which they meet the criteria, and weighted. Highly weighted projects represent higher priority projects to complete.
Examples: • 0.7 sqft of library space per capita • 1 recreational center per 15,000 people • 70 sqft of CPCC space per 1.5% of Mecklenburg County	Examples: • Public Health and Safety • County-Adopted Strategic Priorities • Environmental Impact

Once the CCBAC ensures project compliance with the County's technical capital standards, staff applies its prioritization criteria to the list of remaining capital projects, which develops a rank-order of projects to move forward. Staff recommends the top priorities to the BOCC for its consideration.

The MPA Team identified three best practices regarding CCBAC roles, and developed four corresponding recommendations.

Best Practice: Use Capital Advisory Committees to Provide Feedback on Public Priorities During Project Prioritization Criteria Development

Involving advisory committees in the development of prioritization criteria increases the governing body's ability to understand public priorities in planning, budgeting, and managing services, especially when revenues are not sufficient to pursue all proposed projects (GFOA, 2009). All of the benchmark jurisdictions that were interviewed have advisory committees that work with staff to develop an initial set of prioritization criteria, which is then jointly recommended to the governing body. In fact, the original charter for the CCBAC identifies one of the group's roles as "(making) recommendations to the County Manager and the BOCC on process, priorities, and projects" (Mecklenburg County, 2011). The CCBAC's feedback helps to ensure that the community's views are incorporated into capital project planning, which leads to more informed decision-making by the BOCC and increases community buy-in and support for BOCC decisions.

Examples of capital advisory committees providing feedback during prioritization criteria development include the Capital Improvement Program Advisory Committee of Ramsey County, MN, which develops the criteria and weighting scheme for projects under $1,000,000, and makes criteria recommendations to the governing body for projects over $1,000,000 (Ramsey County Interview, 2017). Similarly, Cohasset, MA, develops and issues guidance on its annual capital planning criteria, and weighs all projects that exceed $10,000 in a given year (Cohasset, 2017). Another example is Clemmons, NC, where one of the roles of the Stormwater Advisory Board is to "Provide guidance for long-range capital improvement planning with clear identification of prioritization criteria" (Clemmons, 2017).

> *"The CCBAC's feedback helps to ensure that the community's views are incorporated into capital project planning."*

Including citizen participation in the development of weighting crite0ria for capital projects is important for Mecklenburg County, because these sets of criteria are not one-size-fits all – they need to evolve to meet the needs of the community. Mecklenburg County currently weighs capital projects based on the following criteria:

- Mandate/Contractual (0-20 points)
- Building Safety (0-20 points)
- Economic Outcome (0-20 points)
- Funding Source (0-15 points)
- Board Priority (1-10 points)
- Operating Budget Outcome (0-10 points)
- Joint Use (0-10 points)
- Growth (3-15 points)
- Timeliness (10 point penalty if started in future year)

Table 5 shows additional sets of capital project weighting criteria for other benchmark local governments. The differences between the local governments demonstrate that there are various types of criteria that can be used. Getting citizens' perspectives on which criteria they deem to be important can therefore be useful.

Table 5: Example Capital Project Weighting Criteria

Charlottesville, VA	Washington County, MD	Ramsey County, MN
City Council Adopted Strategic Priorities (0-5 points)	Legal Mandates	Public Health and Safety (25%)
Public Health and Safety (0-5 points)	Public Health and Safety	Replace / Maintain Facilities (22%)
Infrastructure Investment/ Protection (0-5 points)	Environmental Impact	Protect Property (15%)
Operational Finances/ Revenue Generation (0-5 points)	Conformity to County Commissioner Goals	Reduce Operating Costs (15%)
Leverages Outside Funding (0-5 points)	Conformity to Department Plans	Provide Public Service (10%)
Environmental Sustainability (LEED) (0-5 points)	Community Support	Provide Public Convenience (7%)
Encourages Economic Development (0-5 points)	Project Cost	Enhance County Image (6%)
Ties to Other Projects/ Organizations (0-5 points)	Funding	
Improves Service Levels (0-5 points)	Operational Budget Impact	
	Preservation of Facility	
	Project Life	
	Economic Impact	
	Preservation, Cultural, or Aesthetic Value	
	Percent of Population Benefitting	

Recommendation: Involve the CCBAC in developing project prioritization criteria.

Specifically, the MPA Team recommends that Financial Services hold a workshop with the CCBAC prior to the departments beginning their CIP proposals. Financial Services and the CCBAC should review the prior year's prioritization criteria, discuss any proposals for additional criteria or weighting modifications, and try to achieve consensus on an updated set of prioritized criteria and criteria weights. Following this discussion, Financial Services and the CCBAC should develop a joint recommendation to the BOCC, with any areas of disagreement noted.

Soliciting input from the CCBAC in developing the project prioritization criteria affords citizens an opportunity to consider and share the values that are important to them, and to play a meaningful role in the development of the County's capital improvement program. This benefits the BOCC by ensuring that citizens' values and preferences are known and can be incorporated into final decisions.

Recommendation: Consider project prioritization criteria used in other local governments when developing criteria for Mecklenburg County.

The MPA Team notes several differences between the project prioritization criteria used by the County and the criteria used by the benchmark local governments. For example, each of the benchmarks prioritizes "public health and safety," while the County lists only "building safety" as its criteria. Additionally, Washington County, MD, includes "community support" as a criterion, which may be a beneficial addition for the County, as it would allow the County to more fully represent the public's preferences in capital recommendations and decision-making.

Because prioritization criteria are not one-size-fits-all, the MPA Team believes that it would be appropriate for the CCBAC to periodically research and review the criteria of other counties, and to consider opportunities to enhance the County's prioritization scheme based on their findings.

Best Practice: Incorporate Citizen Feedback on Technical Capital Standards

Citizens play a role in capital decisions through expression of aspirations, preferences, and priorities regarding levels of service provided by local governments. This best practice provides citizen feedback on technical capital standards. Technical capital standards are driven by the types of capital facilities that a local government would like to develop, based on demographic or geographic considerations (Loudoun County, 2017).

Since technical capital standards provide guidance on the minimal requirements for a project, there may be cases where it is in the County's best interest to raise or lower the minimum standards. According to the City Engineers Association, technical standards change due to safety, technology, legal issues, development pressures, and other government mandates (City Engineers Association, 2009). Incorporating citizen feedback helps to bring a fresh perspective and ensures alignment between the technical capital standards and the community's preferences. In Mecklenburg County, the CCBAC could be asked to provide input prior to changing standards. However, a comprehensive review of all standards may be better suited to staff, or a separate advisory committee with members selected specifically for their existing technical knowledge, rather than the current advisory committee, which is designed to elicit citizens' general perspectives.

"Incorporating citizen feedback helps to bring a fresh perspective and ensures alignment between the technical capital standards and the community's preferences."

In 2003, one of the CCBAC's recommendations to the BOCC was to institute a process of continuous review by knowledgeable professionals of the technical capital standards applied to government facilities. In making its recommendation, the CCBAC cited the challenge of applying standards to facilities that "are diverse in use and represent a wide variety of building types" (CCBAC, 2003). Since the members of the CCBAC may not have the technical expertise to determine whether proposed projects meet the technical capital standards, and because this activity is outside of the scope of the capital improvement advisory committees that the MPA Team has contacted, the initial compliance evaluation for each capital project may be better performed by staff members. The CCBAC could then review and recommend changes where necessary based on the staff's evaluation, rather than the CCBAC conducting a comprehensive application of standards. The MPA Team, therefore, makes the following recommendation.

Recommendation: Solicit CCBAC review of technical capital standards and application of technical capital standards to projects.

As previously discussed, the CCBAC currently reviews technical capital standards, develops new standards as necessary for capital projects, and reports on the County's progress in complying with those technical standards to the BOCC on an annual basis (Mecklenburg County, 2011). Additionally, the CCBAC evaluates capital project submissions from each department/agency to ensure compliance with the adopted standards. The MPA Team believes that this role should be adjusted to:

- The CCBAC reviews technical capital standards by exception (e.g. when modifications are proposed by staff, or when state or national legislation changes).
- The CCBAC reviews staff's application of the technical capital standards to projects, rather than the CCBAC applying the standards and determining project compliance itself.

The CCBAC currently presents the County's compliance levels to the BOCC. The MPA Team's recommendation for the review process would still culminate in a joint report to the BOCC regarding the County's progress toward complying with its technical capital standards, which allows for broader citizen input and helps to ensure the alignment of the County's technical capital standards with the community's preferences.

Best Practice: Include Citizen Feedback in Application of Project Prioritization Criteria

Based on the benchmark interviews, the most common roles for capital advisory committees include ranking capital projects according to weighting criteria and recommending a CIP to the governing body, as demonstrated in Table 6, which highlights the roles of similar committees. This is distinct from the first best practice in this section, which includes citizen feedback in the development of the County's priorities, rather than using the priorities to rank specific projects.

Table 6: Example Advisory Committee Roles

Advisory Committee	Charge
Capital Improvement Committee, Bridgeton, MA	"... A standing committee, charged with annually reviewing the CIP, prioritizing identified projects, and identifying new projects for possible inclusion."
Capital Improvement Program Citizen's Advisory Committee, Ramsey, MN	"... Listen to presentations, rate, and rank all submitted CIP projects for recommendation."
CIP Committee, Urbandale, IA	Reviews staff recommendations, prioritizes projects, hosts public hearing, and recommends finalized CIP to the Urbandale Mayor and City Council
Capital Budgeting Task Force, Hennepin, MN	"The task force submits to the Hennepin County Board a recommended annual capital budget and five-year capital improvement program"
Public Improvements Advisory Committee, Kansas City, MO	"...solicit resident input and make recommendations regarding both the citywide and neighborhood portions of the capital budget."

A document, provided by the County staff, specifying the CCBAC roles, references the group's responsibility to "Review priorities and assess proposed capital projects in relation to those priorities," and "Make recommendations to the County Manager and the BOCC on process, priorities, and projects" (Mecklenburg County, 2011). Re-inserting the CCBAC into this part of the CIP development process represents a strong opportunity for meaningful citizen input. One of the CCBAC members from prior to the role shift stated that "[Assessing proposed capital projects] was messy at times, but was a really good method for gauging citizen input on capital program development"

Upon completion of project weighting, the CCBAC and staff should provide a joint recommendation to the BOCC with clear recommendations for projects to pursue or hold, identifying any areas where consensus has not been reached. Soliciting feedback from the CCBAC on each project's weighting provides an additional opportunity to capture citizen's preferences and to build support for the BOCC's final recommendations. The MPA Team, therefore, makes the following recommendation:

Recommendation: Involve the CCBAC in applying project weighting criteria and recommend projects for inclusion in the County's CIP.

The MPA Team found substantial evidence from the benchmarks that supports capital improvement advisory committee involvement in applying prioritization criteria and weighting schemes to projects proposed by the departments. This suggests that the information that capital improvement advisory committees provide to governing bodies is useful to their decision-making process.

This involvement could occur through a series of workshops, which could start with County staff providing an initial application of the prioritization criteria to all proposed projects. Department representatives could then give brief presentations summarizing the benefits and costs of the projects that they have proposed. This would allow the CCBAC to work from the initial criteria to make any modifications and develop consensus around a recommendation for the BOCC.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Advisory committees operate on the premise that increased input from citizens will lead to better-informed decision making at the governing body level. The CCBAC has several opportunities to increase that feedback, and to get involved with different parts of the capital planning process. The recommendations in this area are designed to engage the CCBAC early in the process by soliciting feedback on project weighting criteria, through the recommendation of the draft CIP to the BOCC. Table 7 presents a summary of the recommendations in this section.

Table 7: CCBAC Committee Role Recommendations

CCBAC Committee Role Recommendations
Involve the CCBAC in developing project prioritization criteria.
Consider project prioritization criteria used in other counties when developing criteria for Mecklenburg County
Solicit CCBAC review of technical capital standards and application of technical capital standards to projects
Involve the CCBAC in applying project weighting criteria and recommending projects for inclusion in the County's CIP

CCBAC MEMBERSHIP

INTRODUCTION

Membership deals with the number and composition (i.e. backgrounds) of participants in a committee, group, or organization. Membership for citizen advisory committees is a voluntary, civic activity (Herman & Van Til, 1989). A diverse advisory committee with respect to race, ethnicity, gender, and age ensures the consideration of various perspectives during the decision-making process. Representativeness with regard to geographical location and professional background also enriches the experience of the citizens that participate in the capital planning process. Diverse citizen advisory committees allow the contribution of a broad range of interests (Applegate, 1998).

The MPA Team recommends the following regarding CCBAC membership:

- Establish a diversity policy for advisory committee membership.
- Increase the size of the CCBAC to ensure representative input to the CIP.
- Advertise for CCBAC vacancies throughout Mecklenburg County, using a variety of outlets.

CURRENT CCBAC MEMBERSHIP PRACTICES

CCBAC Membership Requirements
The only explicit requirement for becoming a member of CCBAC is residency in the County. Based on interviews, the County finds it preferable for applicants to have some professional experience that relates to different capital project functional areas in order to bring technical expertise to the decision-making process, including:

- Government facilities
- Court facilities
- Law enforcement facilities
- Solid waste
- Storm water
- Park and recreation
- Library facilities
- Central Piedmont Community College
- Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools (Mecklenburg County, 2017)

Upon being appointed to CCBAC, members agree to abide by the following attendance requirements:

- Any member who fails during any calendar year to attend 75% of all regular, special and assigned subcommittee meetings from the time one's term begins until the end of that calendar year and each subsequent calendar year thereafter, shall be automatically removed from said committee.
- Members must be present for 50% of a meeting to be counted present at that meeting.

In addition to attendance requirements, there is a conflict of interest policy that applies to all County advisory committee members.

Diversity and Demographics
The CCBAC is a seven-member committee. The BOCC appointed five members to the CCBAC on March 21, 2017. Three of the members were reappointed after serving previous terms, and two were new members. Two of the members are men, and three are women. These CCBAC members were selected for two-year terms.

Application Process
Mecklenburg County residents interested in becoming a member of the CCBAC have the option of either applying through the County's website or by submitting a paper application. If a candidate prefers a paper application, he or she can call or email the Clerk to the Board and request an application by mail. All applications are valid for one year after submission. The Clerk's Division of the County Manager's Office maintains submitted applications and notifies applicants in the pool when positions are available. The actual application for CCBAC membership is a standard application for all citizen advisory committees in Mecklenburg County. The following information is gathered from all interested candidates:

- Name
- Address
- Home Phone
- Work Phone
- Email
- Occupation
- Place of Employment
- Race
- Sex
- Age
- Hours per month available for the position
- County advisory committee currently serving on
- Education
- How applicants heard of this position (radio, TV, online, newspaper, other)
- Business and civic experience
- Areas of expertise and interests/skills

After the one-year application period, individuals that were not appointed by the BOCC must reapply to remain in the advisory committee applicant pool. The Clerk to the Board screens applications for residency, conflicts of interest, occupation, place of employment, voter registration, multiple committee membership, and application thoroughness before forwarding them to the BOCC for review and consideration. When there is a vacancy on an advisory committee, appointments are made by the BOCC in a two-step process; candidates are nominated at one meeting, then voted upon at a subsequent meeting. Candidates must receive a majority of votes from the BOCC to be appointed to the CCBAC.

CCBAC Vacancy Advertisements
Mecklenburg County residents interested in becoming a member of the CCBAC learn about committee vacancies primarily through the County's website. Occasionally, vacancies are posted in *The Charlotte Observer*. Vacancies have also been published in *The Charlotte Post*. However, through a cost-benefit analysis, County staff determined that running monthly print advertisements did not increase the number of applications.

The Clerk to the Board is responsible for recruiting candidates to serve on various citizen advisory committees. Occasionally, the County Manager's Office will make candidate recommendations to the BOCC.

The MPA Team identified one best practice regarding advisory committee membership, and developed three corresponding recommendations.

Best Practice: Advisory Committees Should Represent the Community Adequately

A diverse advisory committee with respect to race, ethnicity, gender, and age, ensures the consideration of various perspectives during the decision-making process (Bradbury & Kellough, 2010; Upshaw, 2010). Diversity and representation are critical for citizen advisory committees because members are often entrusted to represent the interest of the entire community by voicing the aspirations, preferences, and priorities of the community (Arnstein 1969; Upshaw 2010; Applegate 1998; Wenting & Palma-Rivas 1998).

Committee composition impacts an organization's performance (Siciliano, 1996, p. 1313). A diverse and representative advisory committee better reflects the preferences of the entire community and, therefore, provides higher quality information to elected officials. Diversity benefits advisory committees by avoiding groupthink and increasing innovation (The BridgeSpan Group, 2017). The MPA Team found that all benchmark counties contacted placed a high value on diversity and representativeness. For example, Chesterfield County, VA's Citizen's Budget Advisory Committee contact person made the comment that "We [the county] don't want to just be folks that think numbers up and down so we try to have a variety of walks of life on the committee."

Recommendation: Establish a diversity policy for advisory committee membership.

The first step to attaining a diverse committee is establishing a diversity policy. The MPA Team assessed the demographics of current and previous CCBAC members to determine the necessity of a diversity policy. For CCBAC members that served during or after 2005, the MPA Team used stakeholder interviews and a CCBAC demographic document, provided by County Staff, to evaluate the demographics. From this assessment, the MPA Team concluded that former CCBAC groups showed a diverse composition and provided a good representation of the County's demographics. However, prior members indicated that they believed the committee should have been more racially diverse, with one former member suggesting that younger residents were not well-represented, and another noting a lack of geographic diversity, during their respective tenures. Membership diversity should reflect the County's demographic composition. Fostering geographic, gender, and age diversity within the CCBAC allows the County to receive more viewpoints, thus enabling the advisory committee to serve as a richer source of information to the BOCC.

The MPA Team recommends that Financial Services work with the BOCC to identify diversity objectives for CCBAC membership. The CCBAC diversity objectives should be based upon member characteristics that the BOCC believes will provide it with high quality recommendations (i.e. characteristics that are likely to contribute points of view that have particular value to the BOCC). The BOCC might identify such attributes by conducting a stakeholder analysis to ensure that all relevant community interests are represented in the CCBAC's membership (Kandil, 2016). The application process should reflect the diversity policy established by the BOCC to recruit CCBAC candidates.

Recommendation: Increase the size of the CCBAC.

Accomplishing the goals of the diversity policy, as recommended above, may necessitate a larger CCBAC membership. While the academic literature does not identify an exact "ideal size" for advisory committees, (Courter, 2010; Kandil 2016) they should be large enough to have a broad range of ideas, but small enough to be managed effectively (Courter, 2010). Committees comprised of approximately 12 to 15 members have been found to function effectively (Brown, 1955; Kandel, 2016). Additionally, increasing committee size has proven to be an effective strategy for improving diversity (Ernst and Young, 2015). As a result, the BOCC has the opportunity to increase the size of the committee (above the current seven members) in order to increase diversity, without risking a drop in the committee's performance. The MPA Team, therefore, recommends that CCBAC membership be increased in order to meet the BOCC's diversity goals.

> *"Advisory boards should be large enough to have a broad range of ideas, but small enough to be managed effectively."*

Recommendation: Advertise for CCBAC vacancies throughout Mecklenburg County, using a variety of outlets.

The County currently posts vacant CCBAC positions on its website, and has determined that continuous print advertisements in local newspapers have not been effective in the past. The BOCC should determine a pipeline for recruiting diverse CCBAC candidates. According to research, elected officials often approach individuals who travel within their social circles and networks to participate in citizen advisory committees (The BridgeSpan Group, 2017). This appointment method does not adequately promote diversity for advisory committees. The MPA Team recommends identifying groups who are not applying for the CCBAC, and determining the best ways to target them. This pipeline of potential candidates can be targeted through the following advertising outlets:

- Distribution of material throughout different geographic areas and county buildings.
- Social media.

Advertisements for vacant CCBAC positions should be distributed widely within the community. Active methods for disseminating information, such as press releases, local newspapers, or even a direct mailing to all citizens, are more effective for receiving applications than "visiting the government's website, administrative buildings, or public library" (Yusuf, Jordan, Neill, & Hackbart, 2013, p. 110). Broader advertising leads to a more diverse distribution of positions throughout the entire County and will help reach potential CCBAC members.

Social media allows for information to be distributed widely throughout communities, and the County will benefit from creating a social media presence for CCBAC vacancies. Although the County utilizes social media sites, vacant CCBAC positions are not posted. Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn are effective for recruiting candidates. Social media allows for organizations to form new connections with the public (Wellman, Salaff, Dimitrova, Garton, Gulia, & Haythornthwaite, 1996).

Although continuous posts within *The Charlotte Observer* and *The Charlotte Post* were not effective for CCBAC advertising, there are other forms of print and online advertising techniques for the County to utilize. For example, *The Charlotte Agenda,* which is an online user's guide to Charlotte, has over 24,000 subscribers within the area (Charlotte Agenda, 2017). CCBAC vacancies can be posted to *The Charlotte Agenda*'s job board and/or submitted to be featured in an article. Advertising widely within the County will help recruit new and diverse candidates for the CCBAC. Outreach through multiple sources, including social media and online advertising, reaches the broader community and the underrepresented age, gender, and geographic categories.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

If the County focuses on community representation by developing a diversity policy, increasing the size of the CCBAC, ensuring that the CCBAC application process supports a more inclusive advisory group, and broadly advertises vacancies, the County will be able to receive more diverse input for capital project decisions. Table 8 presents a summary of the recommendations in this section.

Table 8: CCBAC Membership Recommendations

CCBAC Membership Recommendations
Establish a diversity policy for advisory committee membership.
Increase the size of the CCBAC.
Advertise for CCBAC vacancies throughout Mecklenburg County, using a variety outlets.

ORIENTATION AND TRAINING

INTRODUCTION

According to Jackson and Holland (1998), purposeful committee training can influence committee and organizational performance. Orientation and training also provide guidance on the roles and functions of the committee, thereby focusing the efforts of members on appropriate activities (Brown, 2007). A thorough orientation and training strategy ensures that all members of an advisory committee are prepared to participate and provide information and advice most useful to elected officials (MRSC, 2008). A well-organized advisory committee program produces greater performance, a smooth transition for new members, and introduces new committee members to their responsibilities as representatives of the County (MRSC, 2008).

Based on best practices, the MPA team recommends the following orientation and training practices for the CCBAC:

- Developing an orientation packet for new CCBAC members.
- Creating an annual comprehensive training session for CCBAC members.
- Incorporating training on value-based budgeting, utilizing simulations, such as the UNC School Of Government's Bottom Line!.

CURRENT CCBAC TRAINING AND ORIENTATION PRACTICES

Previous CCBAC members, interviewed by the MPA Team, indicated that orientation and training activities provided an overview of the CCBAC's charge, but were fairly minimal, lasting 20 to 30 minutes. Several previous members indicated that their orientation and training activities assumed that they brought subject matter expertise to the CCBAC. One previous member suggested that he would have appreciated a longer orientation that more fully prepared the group for the range of CCBAC activities.

Best Practice: Begin Advisory Committee Tenure with a Formal Orientation Process

Advisory committee tenure should begin with formally planned orientation sessions (MSRC, 2008). Prior to beginning their service, new members should receive a briefing package with governance information. This information might include the organization's charter, bylaws, committee meeting minutes and agendas from the previous 12 months, the previous CIP, and any other information that could help to create an understanding of the committee's role and status (AGB, 2017).

Several of the benchmark organizations offer relatively extensive orientation activities. Chesterfield County, VA, begins each committee member's tenure by providing educational materials for new members to review prior to commencement of formal activities. In Hennepin, MN, a departmental liaison meets with new members and reviews past budgets and budget processes, as well as the goals and expectations of the task force.

Committee orientation processes typically address several topics, including:

- General committee responsibilities, as well as governance policies specific to the individual committee.
- Institutional history and mission.
- Institutional priorities and challenges.
- An overview of committee-specific content and processes.
- A timeline of typical activities (Dalhousie University, 2006).

In general, successful committee orientations include opportunities for an exchange of questions and ideas, which help new committee members become comfortable with their roles and the expectations associated with membership (AGB, 2017). Orientation should be mandatory for all new committee members, and should occur each time a new member is added. Orientation activities should also be open to all committee members, so that everyone can refresh their understanding (AGB, 2017).

"Successful committee orientations include opportunities for an exchange of questions and ideas,."

Recommendation: Develop an orientation packet for new CCBAC members.

The MPA Team recommends an orientation briefing package that includes:

- The CCBAC Charter.
- CCBAC Bylaws.
- The County's CIP Timeline.
- Agendas and minutes for committee meetings for the 12 previous months.
- The previous CIP.
- The current Mecklenburg County Strategic Plan.
- Names and contact information for other members and the staff liaisons.

This package should be sent to new committee members, prior to CCBAC training activities, so new committee members can familiarize themselves with the background of the County's CIP process, previous allocations, the priorities of the County, and the BOCC's expectations.

Best Practice: Hold Annual Introductory Training Sessions for CCBAC Members

Advisory committee training should focus, primarily, on building a content knowledge base for advisory members to draw upon during their activities, as well as general training on topics such as nationwide trends, legal issues, and County-specific topics (Bellaire, 2012). For a capital improvement advisory committee, appropriate training might focus on the budgeting process (funding levels and types, reserves, policies, etc.) and the capital improvement planning process (how departments determine their capital needs, prioritization scales, historical allocations, etc.).

For example, the following is the agenda for the Ramsey County, MN, Capital Improvement Program Advisory Committee (CIPAC) training:

- CIPAC's Purpose.
- Background and History of Program.
- Ramsey County CIP 101.
- Ramsey County 2016 & 2017 CIP Budgets.
- 2018-2019 Budget Process.
- CIPAC's Role.
- Responsibilities in CIP Approval Process.
- Budget Process Steps.
- CIPAC Schedule 2016-2017.
- Terminology.
- Staff (Ramsey County, 2017).

The full Ramsey County CIPAC training presentation is presented in Appendix E.

Finally, some local governments require that all elected and appointed officials receive ethics training. For example, Palm Beach County, FL, has a 41-minute Code of Ethics training video that all municipal employees and officials are required to watch and sign an acknowledgement form, pursuant to Article XIII, section 2-446 of the Palm Beach County Code (Palm Beach County, 2017). The City of Charlotte, NC, amended its Code of Ethics to apply to members of Boards, Committees, and Commissions (City of Charlotte, 2015). Miami-Dade County, FL, San Bernardino County, CA, and Montgomery County, NY, all have similar requirements.

Recommendation: Create a comprehensive introductory training session for CCBAC members, to be held annually.

The MPA Team recommends developing a comprehensive training session for new and existing CCBAC members. The training session should include:

- CCBAC Purpose.
- An introduction to:
    - Budgeting.
    - Mecklenburg County capital improvement planning.
    - Technical capital standards.
    - CCBAC's role in the capital improvement process.
    - Typical annual activities, with schedule.
    - Expectations of the CCBAC.

Additionally, while the County's Code of Ethics only applies to elected officials and County employees, it may be beneficial to include a brief ethics overview during CCBAC training. This training will help to ensure that conflicts of interest do not exist, and that the recommendations that reach the BOCC are representative of the citizens' perspective.

Best Practice: Incorporate Specific Training on Values-based Budgeting

In 2012, the University of North Carolina at Charlotte School of Government (SOG) launched a budgeting simulation called Budgetopolis, which was designed to help public officials make budgeting decisions based on community values. The subsequent iteration, Bottom Line!, focuses on county-level decisions and scenarios.

Budgetopolis and Bottom Line! are simulations designed for elected officials, managers and department heads, citizen groups and advisory committees, youth groups, and regional groups of public officials. According to the SOG website, "In rounds that present real-world budget challenges such as a natural disaster or state-mandated cut, players are given alternatives for cutting services and options to generate revenue. Participants are asked to balance the budget while considering the long-term impact on their communities."

Including a values-based budgeting exercise helps CCBAC members recognize the perspective that they bring to the capital budgeting process. Understanding those perspectives and the differences within the group can assist in having productive discussions and building internal consensus, which provides the BOCC with clear recommendations regarding citizen preferences.

Recommendation: Incorporate value-based budgeting training, using simulations such as Bottom Line!.

The MPA Team recommends incorporating Bottom Line! exercises on value-based budgeting into CCBAC training activities on an annual or bi-annual basis. This training sets the stage for productive and respectful committee discussions, while exposing participants to budgeting at the county level, which enhances the CCBAC's ability to provide the BOCC with clear information and recommendations.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Committee orientation and training are essential to ensuring that committee members understand expectations associated with their committee and their responsibilities as committee members and officers, as well as having a common understanding of the CIP process, county-level budgeting, and the County's prioritization scheme. In the short-term, Financial Services could put together orientation packets, as most of the information that would be helpful to new members already exists. Then, as the committee matures, or as the County deems it necessary, simulations such as Bottom Line! could be a useful training tool to employ, which would require coordination with the SOG and a small fee.

These actions will help CCBAC members to better understand their roles and responsibilities, as well as the expectations placed upon them as a group, ultimately allowing the CCBAC to meet the expectations of and provide the information required by the BOCC. Table 9 presents a summary of the recommendations in this section.

Table 9: CCBAC Orientation and Training Recommendations

CCBAC Orientation and Training Recommendations
Develop a formal orientation briefing package for new CCBAC members
Create a comprehensive introductory training session for CCBAC members, to be held annually.
Incorporate value-based budgeting training, using simulations such as Bottom Line!.

COLLABORATION

INTRODUCTION

Advisory committees interact with government staff, elected officials, and other stakeholders. These interactions are necessary to ensure that the advisory committee receives the information it needs, carries out its expected function, and provides useful information to elected officials (MRSC, 2008). Organizational literature suggests that there is an increasing emphasis on how organizations learn through participation in alliances, partnerships, and collaboration (van Winkelen, 2010). Collaboration is most effective when it involves cooperative relationships built upon on-going communication and trust (van Winkelen, 2010). Creating and maintaining highly effective relationships between organizations helps to ensure that the desired outcomes are achieved (Easterby-Smith et al., 2008).

The purpose of the CCBAC is to provide useful information regarding the CIP to the BOCC. It is, therefore, important that the CCBAC maintain an effective collaborative relationship with the BOCC and County staff. The MPA Team recommends the following practices:

- Continue to provide strong staff support to the CCBAC.
- Increase interaction between the CCBAC and the BOCC.
- Conduct an annual performance assessment of the CCBAC.

CURRENT CCBAC PRACTICES

The original CCBAC charge stipulated that "The chair and vice chair are required to meet periodically, no less frequently than bi-monthly, with the Effective and Efficient Government Committee of the Board of County Commissioners, or such other Committee of the Board as the Board of Commissioners shall at other times designate, to report on the activities of the CCBAC since the last meeting of the Board Committee at which the chairperson gave such a report" (Mecklenburg County, 2011).

The current CCBAC charge states that "County staff is assigned to the Committee and its subcommittees to provide information and administrative support for the Committee's charge" (Mecklenburg County, 2011). According to County staff, the interactions between the CCBAC and staff are primarily administrative, with staff providing materials and orientation, setting meetings, and providing other administrative support, as necessary.

The current CCBAC charge does not outline a meeting schedule for CCBAC and BOCC representatives. Regarding the full CCBAC's interaction with the BOCC, CCBAC members described meeting with the BOCC only after full recommendations had been developed. One of the County Commissioners confirmed this, stating that there was very little interaction with the CCBAC until the CCBAC had finished accumulating its information and presented it to the BOCC.

Best Practice: Build Effective Advisory Committee-Staff Relations

A productive working relationship between the advisory committee and staff is vital to the success of the advisory committee, because this relationship builds trust, allows for information to be freely shared, and creates more effective work teams (Chugg, 2015). In some cases, staff that support advisory committees are referred to specifically as liaisons, to highlight the role of these individuals as "those who maintain communications" (Olympia, 2005). Effective advisory committee-staff relations occur when advisory committees receive information and support necessary to develop strong recommendations for the governing body, stay on track and focused, and maintain positive working relationships with staff (Olympia, 2005).

Previous CCBAC members spoke highly about the dedication of County employees that work to support the committee, noting the staff's professionalism and commitment to incorporating the CCBAC into the CIP. As the CCBAC considered each department's CIP recommendations, the County Sherriff, the President of Central Piedmont Community College, and/or other departmental leadership often attended, showing their dedication to the process. One previous CCBAC member noted that the Budget Officer and the Director of Asset and Facility Management were particularly helpful in improving CCBAC members' understanding of the rationales and justifications for different projects. In fact, all of the previous CCBAC members, who were interviewed, expressed a strong sense of satisfaction with the support they received from County staff. One former CCBAC member noted that the staff was highly competent and did an excellent job arranging presentations from the various requesting agencies, as well as providing background information on issues that were raised.

> *"A productive working relationship between the advisory committee and staff is vital to the success of the advisory committee."*

Another CCBAC member stated that the staff was both helpful and proficient, clearly explaining County staff's responsibilities and how they expected to interact with the CCBAC, as well as providing additional clarifying information whenever necessary.

Recommendation: Continue to provide strong staff support for the CCBAC.

The MPA Team notes that the current relationship between County staff and the CCBAC is quite effective, and recommends building on the success experienced in prior years. A strong relationship between the County staff and the CCBAC promotes a positive and engaging experience for CCBAC members, effectively incorporates large amounts of information into succinct recommendations, and ultimately allows increased confidence for the BOCC in the recommendation generation process.

Best Practice: Periodic Advisory Committee-Governing Body Interactions

Periodic check-ins between advisory committee members and the governing body are beneficial to both groups, because this contact helps to ensure alignment and provides a forum for feedback. This interaction can take several forms, including:

- **Governing body appointment:** Some municipal organizations, like Richmond Heights, MO, appoint a member of the governing body to each citizen's committee or commission, which helps to communicate the needs, policies, and interests of the governing board to the advisory committee (Richmond Heights, 2010).
- **Governing body and advisory work sessions:** Princeton, NJ, specifies in its Boards and Commissions handbook that "Periodically, the mayor or council may have a work session with a committee or commission. These work sessions serve as an open dialogue for matters of mutual concern" (Princeton, 2013).
- **Advisory committee attendance at governing board meetings:** Interaction can also occur through advisory committee members attending governance body meetings, which are primarily held in open session. Although its capital advisory committee members are not required to attend commissioner meetings in Ramsey County, MN, they are still informed when the CIP budget is presented to the board. According to the Chief Financial Officer for Ramsey County, the Capital Improvement Program Advisory Committee (CIPAC) chair presents the CIPAC recommendations to the committee at the annual budget hearing. Similarly, Chatham County, NC, conveys an expectation in its Citizen Advisory Committee Policy that members of its citizen committees attend meetings of the governing board (Chatham County, 2011).

Encouraging periodic interaction with the governing body facilitates collaboration, improving advisory committee members' understanding of the larger CIP process, and the priorities and expectations of the governing body.

Recommendation: Increase interaction between the CCBAC and the BOCC.

The MPA Team recommends increasing the interaction between the CCBAC and the BOCC. Such interaction has the potential to benefit both groups by supporting knowledge sharing and learning-based collaboration between the CCBAC and BOCC. To improve this interaction, the MPA Team believes that attendance by a BOCC representative at the CCBAC's first meeting each year would be useful, as it would allow the BOCC to share its priorities for the County's CIP and inform the CCBAC about the types of information the BOCC deems valuable. This initial interaction will help the CCBAC to understand its role in the capital improvement process, and to align its activities with the goals of the BOCC.

To further increase interaction between the two groups, the MPA Team recommends encouraging CCBAC members to attend BOCC meetings, particularly when issues pertaining to the CIP are on the agenda. Attending these meetings will help put CCBAC activities into context, and will facilitate CCBAC members' understanding of the overall process, which may lead to better recommendations from the CCBAC.

Best Practice: Incorporate Performance Feedback to Improve Future Activities

With regard to advisory committees, feedback is information provided by elected officials and staff to advisory committee members regarding the quality and usefulness of their advice. Feedback may also include recommendations for how the committee might make improvements in the future. According to the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), "With effective feedback, individual and team performance will improve, which will make your organization more effective. With effective feedback processes, individuals or groups won't be working blind and, hopefully, will reach their destinations successfully" (OPM, 2017)

The CCBAC's primary role is to provide recommendations to the BOCC, who then makes decisions based on these recommendations and input from other sources. While best practices do not suggest that advisory committees be provided with the rationale for governing body decisions, incorporating feedback can be useful for improving performance. Previous CCBAC members indicated that they would be interested in receiving feedback, as they did not know the extent to which the BOCC found their recommendations useful. For example, one of the more recent CCBAC members suggested that the group would have felt more successful if there had been an opportunity to test the standards developed by the group, and verify that the standards were appropriate for the County. This CCBAC member indicated disappointment as a result of not knowing whether work done by the CCBAC was helpful. Previous CCBAC members generally expressed that some level of feedback from County staff or the BOCC would likely improve the CCBAC's performance over time.

Governing bodies often gain feedback via performance assessments. Organizational performance assessments are systematic processes for obtaining valid information about an organization's performance and the factors that affected that performance. According to the OPM, "a well-defined performance management program addresses the individual and organizational performance matters necessary to create and sustain a healthy and effective results-oriented culture (OPM, 2017). Typically, these performance assessments consider an organization's external environment, motivation, and organizational capacity, including performance metrics, such as effectiveness, efficiency, and relevance (Adrien and Carden, 2002).

Performance assessments can assist advisory committees in measuring progress, generating consensus around what works well, and providing an opportunity to reflect on the organization's challenges (Cropp, 1996). An annual review of advisory committee activities where staff and advisory members discuss the following topics may, therefore, be beneficial for building future success:

- Annual accomplishments.
- Strengths and weaknesses of the advisory committee.
- Challenges and opportunities to improve the advisory committee.
- Effectiveness of internal and external communications.
- Satisfaction with the advisory process and outcomes (Cropp, 1996).

Recommendation: Conduct an annual performance assessment of the CCBAC.

The MPA Team recommends that CCBAC members meet with County staff after completing their work on the CIP to conduct a performance assessment. It would be particularly useful if County staff could attain feedback from BOCC members regarding the CCBAC's work. The assessment should focus on the CCBAC's accomplishments and consider opportunities for improvements.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Ensuring productive relationships between advisory groups, staff liaisons, and governing bodies is beneficial for several reasons. This improves the experience for members, facilitates knowledge transfer, promotes a broader understanding of complex subjects, encourages goal alignment, and facilitates dialogue with elected officials. By supporting the CCBAC as a positive part of the CIP process, Financial Services can promote satisfied participants, successful interactions, and long-lasting relationships between county staff, the BOCC, and the CCBAC. Table 10 presents a summary of the recommendations in this section.

Table 10: CCBAC Collaboration Recommendations

CCBAC Collaboration Recommendations
Continue to provide strong staff support for the CCBAC
Increase interaction between CCBAC and the BOCC.
Conduct an annual performance assessment of the CCBAC.

CONCLUSION

Mecklenburg County has a long history of obtaining citizen feedback in its deliberations on public policy and decision making. The MeckConnect Initiative, which was developed out of the 2008-2010 BOCC Strategic Business Plan, actively sought to "Build and sustain effective participation of Mecklenburg County residents in the governance of their community," under the premise that comprehensive citizen engagement results in better governance, and that residents from all areas, representing all facets of life, must have opportunity and access to participate in governance activities (Mecklenburg County, 2010).

A good example of citizen engagement is the work done by the CCBAC. Since 1995, the CCBAC has, in varying roles, provided input to the CIP process. While the initial roles of the CCBAC included reviewing capital projects and providing recommendations on processes, priorities, and projects, the advisory committee's role shifted after the economic downturn. The committee is now responsible for developing and recommending new standards as necessary and reviewing projects for compliance with existing technical capital standards.

The MPA Team identified best practices to guide the future operations of the CCBAC, and used these best practices to make 13 recommendations. These recommendations fall in one of four categories: CCBAC Roles, Membership, Orientation and Training, and Collaboration, which are highlighted in Table 11.

Table 11: CCBAC Recommendations

Category	Recommendations
CCBAC Roles	Involve the CCBAC in developing project prioritization criteria.
	Consider project prioritization criteria used in other counties when developing criteria for Mecklenburg County.
	Solicit CCBAC review of technical capital standards and application of technical capital standards to projects.
	Involve the CCBAC in applying project weighting criteria and recommending projects for inclusion in the County's CIP.
Membership	Establish a diversity policy for advisory committee membership.
	Increase the size of the CCBAC.
	Advertise for CCBAC vacancies throughout Mecklenburg County, using a variety of outlets.
Orientation and Training	Develop an orientation package for new CCBAC members.
	Create a comprehensive introductory training session for CCBAC members, to be held annually.
	Incorporate value-based budgeting training, using simulations such as Bottom Line!.
Collaboration	Continue to provide strong staff support for the CCBAC.
	Increase interaction between CCBAC and the BOCC.
	Conduct an annual performance assessment of the CCBAC.

The MPA Team's research and subsequent recommendations should enhance the work of the CCBAC. This is accomplished through a committee that is larger, more diverse, and representative of the county; a committee that is more knowledgeable of Capital Improvement Planning and the County's priorities; a committee that works in collaboration with staff and the BOCC; and ultimately a committee that has a more significant role in advising the BOCC on establishing priorities for capital improvements.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Questionnaire for Board of Commissioners and Staff

The Mecklenburg County Financial Services Department has asked UNCC MPA students to evaluate opportunities to increase the effectiveness of the Citizen's Capital Budget Advisory Committee (CCBAC). Stakeholders are critical and we are interviewing you, as a key stakeholder (or representing a group of key stakeholders) to obtain your input concerning what the CCBAC does well, what it should improve on, your thoughts regarding the future of the advisory, the CCBAC's role in the community, and how the CCBAC can be more effective in meeting the community's needs.

Thank you for agreeing to talk to us. We have put together a list of questions, but at any time during our discussion please feel free to tell me what you think about any aspect of the CCBAC or trends that you believe will impact the CCBAC.

1. Please describe any professional interaction you have had with the CCBAC.

2. Please describe the CCBAC appointment process. How are applications screened?

3. Are there any changes that you would make to the advisory appointment processes?

4. What do you believe the CCBAC's current role is?

5. How effective do you believe that the CCBAC is in its role?
	Highly effective
	Effective
	Somewhat effective
	Neither effective nor ineffective
	Somewhat ineffective
	Ineffective
	Highly ineffective

Comments:

6. What do you believe that the CCBAC's role should be?
	Are there additional responsibilities that the CCBAC should take on?
	Should any responsibilities be eliminated?

7. How would you describe success of the CCBAC?

8. What do you believe the CCBAC's greatest strengths are?

9. What recommendations would you make for change?

10. What groups do you think should be represented, or need more representation on the CCBAC?

11. Do you believe that the CCBAC has an appropriate level of input into the CIP planning process?

12. To what extent does CCBAC influence final decisions?

13. Do you recommend expanding the CCBAC's role beyond an advisory capacity?

14. Is there any additional information that you believe would be helpful in our assessment of the CCBAC?

Appendix B: Questionnaire for Benchmark Counties

The Mecklenburg County Financial Services Department has asked UNCC MPA students to evaluate opportunities to increase the effectiveness of the Citizen's Capital Budget Advisory Committee (CCBAC). Stakeholders are critical and we are interviewing you, as a key stakeholder (or representing a group of key stakeholders) to obtain your input concerning what the CCBAC does well, what it should improve on, your thoughts regarding the future of the community, the CCBAC's role in the community, and how the CCBAC can be more effective in meeting the community's needs.

Thank you for agreeing to talk to us. We have put together a list of questions, but at any time during our discussion please feel free to tell me what you think about any aspect of the CCBAC or trends that you believe will impact the CCBAC.

1. What is your professional background?

2. How did you hear about the CCBAC (i.e. word of mouth, online, flyers, etc.)?
        Was it difficult to find out about it?
        Were you actively recruited?
        Would you consider joining the CCBAC again?

3. Why did you decide to apply for the CCBAC, and what attracted you to this Board?

4. When did you serve on the CCBAC, and for how long?

5. Was there a CCBAC orientation process? Please describe.

6. Were you satisfied with the training/instruction for your term on the CCBAC?
        Highly satisfied
        Satisfied
        Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied
        Dissatisfied
        Highly Dissatisfied
   Comments:

7. How did participation change over the course of the 5-year CIP process?
        Increased
        Stayed the same
        Decreased

8. What groups do you think should be represented, or need more representation on the CCBAC?

9. What do you believe the CCBAC's current role is?
 Do you think it has the resources it needs to fulfill that role? Explain.

10. How effective do you believe that the CCBAC is in fulfilling its role?
 Highly effective
 Effective
 Somewhat effective
 Neither effective nor ineffective
 Somewhat ineffective
 Ineffective
 Highly ineffective
Comments:

11. What do you believe that the CCBAC's role should be?
 Are there additional responsibilities that the CCBAC should take on?
 Should any responsibilities be eliminated?

12. How would you describe success for the CCBAC?

13. What do you believe the CCBAC's greatest strengths are?

14. What recommendations would you make for change?

15. Please describe a typical CCBAC meeting.
 Please describe the interaction with staff in a typical meeting.
 Please describe typical levels of discussion.

16. How much weight does the BOCC give to the recommendations made by the CCBAC?

17. Is there any additional information that you believe would be helpful in our assessment of the CCBAC?

Benchmarks		
Type	**Location**	**Document Referenced**
City	Bellaire, TX	Boards Handbook
City	Charlottesville, VA	Advisory Committee Charge and Capital Project Weighting Criteria
City	Olympia, WA	Committee Roles & Expectations
City	Richmond Heights, MO	Guide to Citizen Advisory Boards, Committees and Commissions
City	Urbandale, IA	Advisory Committee Charge
County	Chatham County, NC	Citizen Advisory Committee Policy
County	Hennepin, MN	Advisory Committee Charge
County	Loudoun County, VA	Capital Planning (Technical Standards)
County	Ramsey County, MN	CIPAC Training Orientation and Capital Project Weighting Criteria
County	Washington County, MD	Capital Project Weighting Criteria
County	Chesterfield County, VA	Director of Budget & Management
Municipality	Princeton, NJ	Boards and Commissions Handbook
State	Minnesota	Engineering Design Standards
Town	Bridgton, ME	Advisory Committee Charge

Appendix C: Chart of Benchmarks

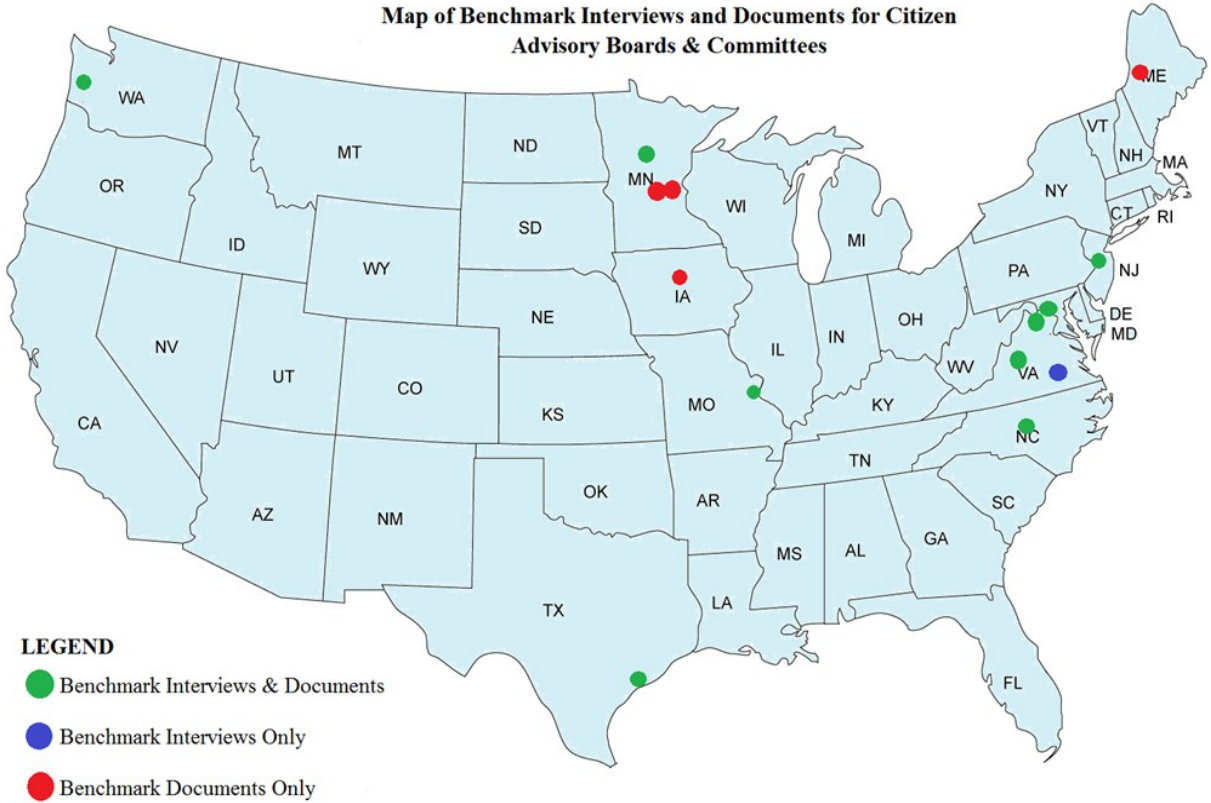| Benchmark Documents		
Type	**Location**	**Document Referenced**
City	Bellaire, TX	Boards Handbook
City	Charlottesville, VA	Advisory Committee Charge and Capital Project Weighting Criteria
City	Olympia, WA	Committee Roles & Expectations
City	Richmond Heights, MO	Guide to Citizen Advisory Boards, Committees and Commissions
City	Urbandale, IA	Advisory Committee Charge
County	Chatham County, NC	Citizen Advisory Committee Policy
County	Hennepin, MN	Advisory Committee Charge
County	Loudoun County, VA	Capital Planning (Technical Standards)
County	Ramsey County, MN	CIPAC Training Orientation and Capital Project Weighting Criteria
County	Washington County, MD	Capital Project Weighting Criteria
Municipality	Princeton, NJ	Boards and Commissions Handbook
State	Minnesota	Engineering Design Standards
Town	Bridgton, ME	Advisory Committee Charge

Benchmark Interviews		
Type	**Location**	**Point of Contact**
City	Urbandale, IA	Co-Chair of Capital Improvements Program Committee
County	Chesterfield County, VA	Director of Budget & Management
County	Hennepin, MN	Department Liaison
County	Ramsey County, MN	Finance Director
Town	Bridgton, ME	Chair of Capital Advisory Committee

Map of Benchmark Interviews and Documents for Citizen
Advisory Boards & Committees

LEGEND

● Benchmark Interviews & Documents

● Benchmark Interviews Only

● Benchmark Documents Only

Appendix D: Current Charge of the CCBAC

Mecklenburg County Capital Plan
Citizens Capital Budget Advisory Committee (CCBAC)
Revised Role

Background and old CCBAC Role:

The Citizen Capital Budget Advisory Committee (CCBAC) was established by the Mecklenburg Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) in February 1995. It has played a vital role in the capital budget process for the last 15 years. During this economic downturn, the BOCC made difficult decisions and the County had been on a "debt diet" since FY2009. The County has not adopted a new capital budget since FY2009.

Below are the charges that were established in February 1995 and revised in 2002:

- *To comment on the County's capital budgeting process and procedure;*
- *Review priorities and assess proposed capital projects in relationship to those priorities;*
- *Make recommendations to the County Manager and Board of county Commissioners on process, priorities and projects;*
- *Facilitate the exchange of information and coordination between the County and the City on capital needs and planning;*
- *Receive progress reports from staff departments on a quarterly basis on the status of capital projects;*
- *Evaluate the stewardship of each agency or county department requesting funds for capital projects in using bond funds previously approved, including projected costs associated with Pay-As-You-Go and facility maintenance programs and facility operating expenses. This evaluation is to ensure that planning and implementation of effective maintenance programs occur to protect the capital assests during the estimated useful lives;*
- *The chair and Vice Chair are required to meet periodically, no less frequesntly than bi-monthly with the Effective and Efficient Government Committee of the Board of County Commissioners, or such other Committee of the Board as the Board of Commissioners shall from time to time designate (the "Board Committee"), to report on the activities of the CCBAC since the last meeting of the Board Committee at which the chairperson gave such a report;*
- *The CCBAC is required to hold at least two joint meetings each year with the Board Committee to review the charge of the CCBAC, discuss the work program*

of the CCBAC for the year, and discuss any issues the members of the Board Committee or the CCBAC deem necessary or appropriate to discuss.
- *Recommend to the Board a set of reasonable community standards for capital infrastructure funded by Meckenburg County.*

CCBAC New Role:

As the County move forward and fund new capital projects it will be imperative that the CCBAC continues to play a role in the new defined processes of County Capital Plan. The County values and will continue to have citizen input that will guide and shape the infrastructure needs of the Mecklenburg County community. The new role effective FY2013:

- *Review* current standards for capital projects and *Develop* new standards where appropriate. the standards should meet and sustain the infrastructure need and expected quality of life of the Mecklenburg community. the standards should be based on national, state board, or communit standards. The CCBAC will present a set of capital project standards for adoption by the BOCC.
- *Evaluate* capital project submissions of each department/agency to ensure compliance with adopted standards. The findings will be shared and used by the CIP Staff Review Committee to assist in determining which capital projects will be funded in the upcoming fiscal year.
- *Revise* and make recommendations to capital standards every five years to the County Manager and the BOCC.
- *Report* to the BOCC on the progress of meeting the County goal toward the community standards.

Meeting Requirements:

- All meetings are open to the public

    1. A quorum must be present for an official meeting of the Committee and for official action to be taken. Decisions of the Committee are determined by a majority vote of the members present.

    2. Any member who fails during the calendar year to attend at least 75% of the combined number of regular meetings or subcommittees of the advisory board to which a member is assigned, except for meetings missed because of business conflict, illness, or death in the family, shall be removed from the advisory board. An absence can be excused; however, it must be in written form to the chairperson and done prior to or immediately following the absence.

3. Committee members must be present for at least 50% of the meeting to be counted as present.

4. It is appropriate for a member of the Committee to be excused where the member recognizes a conflict of interest between his own interest and the interest of the County. It is suggested that, if in doubt, the member should be excused. It is also appropriate for a committee member to be excused if he or she was not present for the discussion or dissemination of information in reference to the vote.

Committee Selection:

The CCBAC consists of seven members. The BOCC will appoint all seven members. The committee members will have varied backgrounds, preferably one that relates to the different capital project categories (Government Facilities, Court Facilities, Law Enforcement Facilities, Solid Waste, Storm Water, Park and Recreation, Library Facilities, Central Piedmont Community College (CPCC) and Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools (CMS).

Appointment Term:

The CCBAC members can only serve for two terms. The CCBAC appointments are for one term and possible reappointment to a second term. the terms should be staggered and for three years.

Citizens Capital Budget Advisory Committee
Current Charge

1. The Committee will be focused on the charge given by the Board of County Commissioners:

   - *To review and develop capital standards across all functional areas as an indicator for determining the capital need for the Capital Improvement Program;*

   - *Ensure capital standards are based on national, state, community or best practice standards in a particular functional area (e.g., parks, schools, community colleges, government facilities, law enforcement facilities and etc.);*

   - *Seek input from the citizens on capital standards;*

   - *Recommend a set of capital standards to the County Manager and for approval by the BOCC;*

   - *Determine whether requested capital projects meet standards;*

   - *Report annually to Board of County Commissioners on progress of meeting capital standards;*

   - *The Chair and Vice Chair are required to meet periodically with the Office of Management and Budget, Budget and Management Director or designee to report on the activities of the CCBAC.*

2. A quorum must be present for an official meeting of the Committee and for official action to be taken. Decisions of the Committee are determined by a majority vote of the members present.

3. A chair and vice chair will be elected by members.

4. The Chairman may appoint subcommittees to work on specific tasks and reviews. These sub-committees will present information and recommendations to the Committee. The work of the subcommittees is considered "work in process" until official action is taken by the Committee.

5. The Chairman will approve the agenda for distribution to members. (When meeting on a monthly schedule, approval will occur one week before the scheduled meeting date. When meeting on a more frequent basis, approval will occur three business days before the scheduled meeting.) Items may be placed on the agenda by any member of the Committee in advance of a meeting by requesting such at a previous meeting of the Committee or by contacting the Chairman at least one day prior to the day of approving the agenda for distribution. In order to add an item to the agenda during a meeting, all Committee members present must vote in favor of adding the item.

5. All meetings of the Committee are open to the public.

6. The Chairman or his/her designee shall serve as the official spokesperson of the Committee. In doing so, the Chairman will convey official actions taken by the Committee and may discuss the different viewpoints and concerns of the membership relating to these actions. Members of the Committee are to refer the media to the Chairman for this information.

7. County staff is assigned to the Committee and its subcommittees to provide information and administrative support for the Committee's charge. Requests for information and support should be made to the assigned staff, preferably during meetings, rather than to individual County departments or other agencies participating in the County's capital program.

8. It is appropriate for a member of the Committee to be excused where that member recognizes a conflict of interest between his own interest and the interest of the County. It is suggested that, if in doubt, the member should be excused. It is also appropriate for a Committee member to be excused if he or she was not present for the discussion or dissemination of information in reference to the vote.

Revised August 20, 2002
Revised October 3, 2011

Appendix E: Ramsey County's CIPAC PowerPoint Training Presentation

RAMSEY COUNTY
County Manager

Finance Department
Capital Improvement Program—Overview
Capital Improvement Program Advisory Committee (CIPAC)

April 14, 2016

RAMSEY COUNTY
County Manager — Section Heading or Division Name

What We Will Cover

- ❖ CIPAC's Purpose
- ❖ Background and History of Program
- ❖ Ramsey County CIP 101
- ❖ Ramsey County 2016 & 2017 CIP Budgets
- ❖ 2018-19 Budget Process
  - · CIPAC's Role
  - · Responsibilities in CIP Approval Process
  - · CIP Budget Process Steps
- ❖ CIPAC Schedule 2016-2017
- ❖ Terminology
- ❖ Staff

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RAMSEY COUNTY
County Manager — Purpose

CIPAC's Purpose

- ❖ To provide citizen participation in the Capital Improvement Planning process (87-162)
- ❖ To provide input during the preparation of the County Manager's Proposed Budget on the various components of the Capital Improvement Budget and Plan

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RAMSEY COUNTY
County Manager — Background and History

Mid 1980's

- ❖ Capital infrastructure in very poor condition
- ❖ Buildings, roads and bridges deteriorating rapidly
- ❖ Chronic space shortages for basic operations
- ❖ High maintenance costs for old motor equipment
- ❖ Legislative approval required for bond financing
- ❖ Capital Needs Report in 1985 sets stage for CIP and legislative authority changes

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RAMSEY COUNTY
County Manager — Background and History

Late 1980's – Early 1990's

- ❖ 1987 County Board establishes CIP (87-089)
- ❖ 1987 County Board establishes 14 member CIPAC (two (2) members from each commissioner district) (87-162)
- ❖ 1988 State legislation allows counties to issue bonds with significant restrictions
- ❖ 1989 1st Board approved CIP budget adopted
- ❖ 1992 Ramsey County Home Rule Charter authorizes bond issuance through ordinance process
- ❖ 1995 Equipment Replacement program approved

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RAMSEY COUNTY
County Manager — Background and History

During 2000's

- ❖ Two types of routine projects are added to those with an identified funding source
  - ▪ Road and bridge maintenance: $1 million from the annual bond funds; move toward pay-as-you-go financing
  - ▪ The use of internal service funds as a stable funding source for routine activities was expanded for buildings and grounds that are not under Property Management. (Comprehensive Capital Assets Management and Preservation Plan—CCAMPP)
- ❖ Consider market rate rents for internal service funds

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Slide 7

Criteria from County Board

1. Protect Live/Safety
2. Maintain Public Health
3. Replace Facility
4. Maintain Physical Property
5. Reduce Operating Costs
6. Protect Property
7. Provide Public Service
8. Provide Public Convenience
9. Improve County Image

Res. 87-089

Slide 8

Capital Improvement Program Components

I. Non-Routine Capital Projects

I. Routine Capital Projects

Slide 9

Capital Improvement Program Components

I. **Non-Routine Capital Projects**
   A. Major Projects
   - Typically, the requested County funding is $1 million or more
   - County Board reviews projects individually.
   - County Board decisions occur throughout the year as appropriate.
   - Examples:
     - Construction of a building, such as East Metro Behavioral Crisis Center
     - Purchase and renovation of a building, such as Metro Square
     - Expansion of a building, such as Roseville Library

Slide 10

Capital Improvement Program Components (cont.)

II. Non-Routine Capital Projects
   B. Regular Projects
   - Typically, the requested County funding is between $50,000 and $1 million.
   - Projects are part of a countywide competitive process where the CIPAC recommends funding.
   - County Board decisions occur in a 2-year cycle as part of the County budget process.
   - Usually address the replacement, enhancement, or renovation of a building or a buildings component.
   - Examples:
     - Revamp of air handling units
     - Security system replacement
     - Air conditioning chiller
     - County Park redevelopment

Slide 11

Capital Improvement Program Components (cont.)

II. **Routine Capital Projects**
   A. Capital Equipment Replacement (motor equipment)

   A. Building Improvements/Repairs (CCAMPP) (buildings managed directly by specific departments, not by Property Management)

   C. Building Improvements— Property Management (Internal Service Funds)

Slide 12

Capital Improvement Program Components (cont.)

II. **Routine Capital Projects**
   A. Capital Equipment Replacement (motor equipment)
   - Systematic replacement of mobile/motorized equipment for Community Corrections, Parks & Recreation, Public Works, Sheriff Departments and other departments through centralized fleet
   - Replacement schedule is based on expected life
   - Full vehicle inventory by department, there are backlogs of vehicles older than the expected life
   - Funds allocated in a 2-year cycle as part of the County budget process
   - Examples: vehicles, tractors, snow plows, squad cars

RAMSEY COUNTY *County Manager*

Capital Improvement Program Components (cont.)

II. Routine Capital Projects

B. Building Improvements/Repairs ("formerly CCAMPP")
- Includes department managed buildings where rent is not paid to the County Property Management Department
- Buildings are included in the <u>Building Conditions Report</u>
- Addresses predictable life cycle maintenance of buildings and grounds.
- Allocated based on a building's share of the total square feet covered
- Work plans are prepared in 2-year cycles as part of the County budget process
- Includes: Boys Totem Town, Extension Barn, Family Service Center, Landmark Center, Parks & Recreation
- Projects too expensive for this program would be submitted as Regular or Major CIP project depending on the cost

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RAMSEY COUNTY *County Manager*

Capital Improvement Program Components (cont.)

II. Routine Capital Projects (cont.)

C. Building Improvements–Property Management (Internal Service Funds)
- Property Management managed properties (most County buildings)
- The maintenance schedule and funding requests are based on the <u>Building Conditions Report</u>, observations of actual conditions and professional management judgment
- The <u>Building Conditions Report</u>: all buildings,16 building systems
- Rent is paid by tenant departments. A share is dedicated to building improvements, $1.00/sq. ft. in 2016, $1.50/sq. ft. in 2017
- The work plan is prepared in 2-year cycles with the County budget
- Examples: Periodic maintenance and repairs including items such as carpeting and painting
- Projects too expensive for this program would be submitted as Regular or Major CIP project depending on the cost

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RAMSEY COUNTY *County Manager*

Ramsey County 2016 CIP Approved Budget

CIP Components	Funding Source (in millions)			
	County Bonds	County Levy and Other	Federal, State and Local	Total
Non-Routine Capital Projects				
Major Projects	$21.40	$ -------	$ -------	$21.40
Regular Projects	4.00	0.43	68.50	72.93
Routine Capital Outlay				
Capital Equipment Replacement	-------	2.50	-------	2.50
Build. Improvements/Repairs	-------	1.10	0.40	1.50
Building Improvements-Prop Mgmt	-------	6.73	-------	6.73
TOTAL	$25.40	$10.76	$68.90	$105.06

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RAMSEY COUNTY *County Manager*

Ramsey County 2017 CIP Approved Budget

CIP Components	Funding Source (in millions)			
	County Bonds	County Levy and Other	Federal, State and Local	Total
Non-Routine Capital Projects				
Major Projects	$3.80	$ -------	$2.83	$6.63
Regular Projects	4.00	0.64	36.80	41.44
Routine Capital Outlay				
Capital Equipment Replacement	-------	2.50	-------	2.50
Build. Improvements/Repairs	-------	1.10	0.37	1.47
Building Improvements-Prop Mgmt	-------	5.26	-------	5.26
TOTAL	$7.80	$9.50	$40.00	$57.30

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RAMSEY COUNTY *County Manager*

CIPAC's Role

For Projects requesting funds in Budget Years 2018 and 2019:

- ❖ Review and Comment on Major Projects requested
- ❖ Review, Rate, and Recommend on Regular Projects requested
- ❖ Review Capital Equipment Replacement and Building Improvements requested
- ❖ Recommend Approval/Denial on Contingent Requests and Capital Project Changes
- ❖ Monitor ongoing CIP Projects

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RAMSEY COUNTY *County Manager*

Responsibilities in CIP Approval Process

CIP Components	Department	CIPAC	County Manager	County Board	Detail in CIP Book
Non-Routine Capital Projects					
Major Projects	Submit Request	Review and Comment	Proposes to CB	Approves	Yes
Regular Projects	Submit Request	Review and Recommend	Proposes to CB	Approves	Yes
Routine Capital Outlay					
Capital Equipment Replacement	Submit Request	Review	Proposes to CB	Approves	Yes
Building Improvements/Repairs (formerly CCAMPP)	Submit Request	Review	Proposes to CB	Approves	Yes
Building Improvements-Property Management	Submit Request	Review	Proposes to CB	Approves	Yes

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RAMSEY COUNTY County Manager — 2018-19 Budget Process

CIP Budget Steps (every two years)

A. CIP Budget Request Forms sent to Departments: late December 2016

B. CIP Budget Request Forms returned from Departments: late January 2017

C. Compiled in February 2017; distributed in March 2017 (Rating Workbook)

D. Department Head Presentations in mid-late March 2017 & early April 2017

E. Project Ratings from CIPAC and Staff due in April 2017

F. Combined Ranking Distribution reviewed by CIPAC in May 2017

G. Funding Recommendations made in May/June 2017

H. Staff Prepare Proposed CIP Budget Document in June and July 2017

I. County Manager Presents CIP Budget to County Board in July/Aug. 2017

J. Budget Hearings and Public Hearing in August/September 2017

K. County Board Adopts CIP Budget in December 2017

L. Bonds Issued in June/July of 2018

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RAMSEY COUNTY County Manager — CIPAC Schedule 2016—2017

CIPAC Schedule Overview 2016—2017

	First Quarter	Second Quarter	Third Quarter	Fourth Quarter
2016	• Elect CIPAC officers and orientation for CIPAC members • Projects status presentations by a Department(s) • Building Improvements presentation	• Update on Major Projects such as Library construction and Rice Creek Commons (TCAAP) • Technology Applications presentation	• Public Works-Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) presentation • Financial Position and Debt Service presentation • County Board holds 2017 supplemental budget hearings	• Tour of County's new facilities • County's buildings/facilities update • County Board holds 2017 supplemental budget and public hearings • County Board adopts 2017 supplemental budget
2017	• Elect CIPAC officers and orientation for CIPAC members • 2018-2023 CIP Projects Request forms returned by Departments • Rating Workbook compiled and distributed to CIPAC and Staff • Project request presentations by Department	• Project Ratings of 2018-2023 CIP projects due from CIPAC • Combined Ranking of 2018-2023 CIP projects reviewed and project recommendations by CIPAC • Staff prepares Proposed 2018-2023 CIP Budget document • Technology Applications presentation	• Public Works-Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) presentation • Financial Position and Debt Service presentation • County Manager proposes 2018-2019 CIP budget to County Board	• Tour of County's new facilities • County's buildings/facilities update • County Board holds 2018-2019 budget and public hearings • County Board adopts 2018-2019 budget (both CIP and operating budgets)

RAMSEY COUNTY County Manager — Terminology

Terminology

❖ **Building Improvements/Repairs** (formerly Comprehensive Capital Assets Management and Preservation Program - CCAMPP): Allocation of funding for buildings and grounds which are not currently in separate Internal Services Funds. Based on an inventory of the condition of each building or ground and its predictable life cycle maintenance.

❖ **Non-routine:** Projects not part of a Routine program that may have more risk or uncertainty. Projects which are new, replacement, major enhancement or major renovation with a useful life of 10 years or more and cost $50,000 or more.

❖ **Routine:** On-going, predictable maintenance and repair needs with a life of more than one year and up to 10 years.

❖ **Transportation Improvement and Deficient Bridge Programs** (TIP): Public Works program to monitor conditions of transportation network of County roads. Five-year schedule of department's proposed projects based on the technical analysis in the Pavement Management Report, prioritization, and funds available.

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RAMSEY COUNTY County Manager — Staff

Julie Kleinschmidt, County Manager   Julie.Kleinschmidt@co.ramsey.mn.us

Lee Mehrkens, Chief Financial Officer Lee.Mehrkens@co.ramsey.mn.us

Bruce Thompson, Director-Property Management
    Bruce.Thompson@co.ramsey.mn.us

Mark Thompson, Investment & Debt Manager   Mark.e.Thompson@co.ramsey.mn.us

Steve Kuhn, CIPAC Coordinator (Finance Analyst III)   Steve.Kuhn@co.ramsey.mn.us

Mary Karcz, Senior Policy Analyst   Mary.Karcz@co.ramsey.mn.us

Moua Lee-Yang, Staff Support (Finance Dept.) Moua.Lee-Yang@co.ramsey.mn.us

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Appendix F: Scope of Work

Project Understanding

Mecklenburg County (County) is the largest county in North Carolina, employing nearly 5,000 people to provide governmental services to over one million residents. The Mecklenburg County Office of Management and Budget (OMB), in collaboration with the County Financial Services Department (Financial Services), makes recommendations to the County Board of Commissioners related to the development and ongoing implementation of the County operating and capital budget, in furtherance of the County's overarching goals. One of the primary responsibilities of the Financial Services Department is to coordinate and develop the County's five-year capital improvement program (CIP).

The Citizen's Capital Budget Advisory Committee (CCBAC) has traditionally provided the OMB with citizen input on prioritizing County-wide objectives. The role of the CCBAC has been to comment on the County's capital budgeting process, review the County's priorities and assess capital projects in relation to those priorities, make recommendations to the County Manager and Board of County Commissioners, and facilitate the exchange of information between the County and City on capital needs planning.

The Financial Services Department in partnership with OMB is currently in the development process of the fiscal year 2019-2023 CIP. The CCBAC has been inactive for approximately two years, while the previous CIP has been executed. In order to improve citizen engagement in defining and executing County capital priorities, the Financial Services Department in conjunction with OMB has tasked students from the Gerald G. Fox Master of Public Administration (MPA) program at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte (UNC Charlotte) with exploring opportunities to reengage and increase the effectiveness of the CCBAC, and to increase overall public engagement with the CIP.

Project Outcomes

The UNCC MPA Team will provide the Financial Services Department with a comprehensive assessment of short- and long-term strategies to increase citizen involvement in the capital improvement planning process. The MPA Team will evaluate opportunities to increase the effectiveness of the CCBAC, building on successful strategies utilized by other County advisory boards, as well as best practices from both within the State of North Carolina and across the country. The MPA Team will then recommend strategies designed to strengthen overall citizen participation in the County's capital planning process.

The Financial Services Department has expressed an interest in implementing recommendations quickly, so both parts of the assessment will include a ranking of strategies and recommendations, including factors such as likely impact, cost, timeline, ease of implementation, and any other criteria that the Financial Services Department may be interested in.

Scope of Work

The tasks below define the MPA Team's technical approach. It should be noted that while these tasks have been listed consecutively, some tasks will overlap and be conducted concurrently.

Task 1: Project Initiation and Literature Review

Task 1 will include the collection and review of the relevant data and documents necessary to conduct this study and an outline of the MPA Team's on-going project management approach for ensuring that project goals and milestones are met.

Task 1.1 – Data Collection and Review

The purpose of this task is to gather and review relevant information and documents from Financial Services and OMB that are necessary to conduct the assessment. This task will include collaborating with the Financial Services Department and OMB to finalize a list of stakeholders to interview, survey, or include in focus groups as part of this project. A detailed data request will be prepared and submitted to the Financial Services Department, as well as a list of proposed stakeholders to engage.

Task 1.2 – Literature Review

This task will explore academic and industry source material to determine effective strategies for increasing citizen involvement in community and values-based budgeting, as well as for encouraging an active and engaged advisory body.

Task 2: Stakeholder Engagement

Task 2 is focused on ensuring that the MPA Team has a solid understanding of the current level of participation in the County's capital improvement planning process, as well as a sense of a preferred future level of participation. Stakeholders will be asked to provide insight into the strengths of the current system, in addition to opportunities that they see for improvement. This task will be conducted through interviews, focus groups, and/or surveys.

While the list of stakeholders to engage in this process has not been finalized, it may include:
- Current or previous members of the CCBAC
- Representatives from the Mecklenburg County Board of Commissioners
- Representatives from other County advisory boards
- Financial Services Department and OMB Staff
- Representatives from the County Office of the Manager
- Representatives from other County departments (i.e. Charlotte-Mecklenburg School System)

Task 3: Develop Recommendations

Task 3 will entail the development of recommendations for both the CCBAC and wider stakeholder participation, based on the results and best practice identification from the literature review and the stakeholder engagement efforts.

In addition to developing and prioritizing recommendations based on other advisory committees in both the county and nationally, the MPA Team will focus on more formally defining the CCBAC. This will include development of a recommended charter for adoption, which will address at least the following categories:
- Goals of the Advisory Committee
- Participation Requirements
- Membership
- Terms and Term Limits
- Meeting Frequencies and Procedures

Task 4.1 – Preliminary Draft Report

The MPA Team will prepare and submit an electronic version of a preliminary assessment report to the Financial Services Department. This preliminary report will summarize and document the findings and recommendations of the assessment. In particular, the report will:

⇒ Describe and evaluate the current CIP planning process;

⇒ Evaluate opportunities to increase the effectiveness of, and citizen participation with, the CCBAC;

⇒ Recommend charter for adoption by the CCBAC; and

Recommend and prioritize approaches for communicating and engaging citizens around capital projects and prioritization.

The MPA Team will incorporate feedback from Financial Services and OMB into the preliminary report.

Task 4.2 – Final Report

After Financial Services staff has reviewed and commented on the preliminary report, the MPA Team will prepare a final report and deliver both hard copies and an electronic copy of the final report to the Financial Services Department.

Task 4.3 – Presentation of Final Results to OMB

The MPA Project Team will present the final results of the assessment to Financial Services staff in May, 2017.

Limitations

There are several limitations to consider as the MPA Team begins this assessment, as summarized below.

⇒ **Timeframe.** This assessment is limited to the Spring Semester (January-May) of 2017.
⇒ **Access to Information.** Currently, the level and quality of stakeholder input from current and/or previous members of the CCBAC is unknown, and may be a limiting factor in development of recommendations.

Timetable and Deliverables

The following schedule highlights when deliverables are expected to be completed.

⇒ **Finalized Scope of Work to Financial Services:** Monday, February 13, 2017
⇒ **Data Request:** Thursday, January 26, 2017
⇒ **Stakeholder List for Engagement:** Thursday, January 26, 2017
⇒ **Preliminary Report to Financial Services:** Friday, April 14, 2017
⇒ **Final Report to Financial Services:** Tuesday, May 9, 2017
⇒ **Final Presentation to Financial Services:** Tuesday, May 9, 2017

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