

**RICHMOND REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION (RRTPO)
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TAC)**

**MINUTES OF MEETING
February 12, 2019**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Andrew Pompei (**Chairman**) Powhatan County
Barbara K. Smith (**Vice Chairman**)..... Chesterfield County
Nora D. Amos Town of Ashland
Myles Busching Charles City County
Dironna Moore Clarke City of Richmond
Thomas Coleman Goochland County
Tiffany Dubinsky DRPT
E. Todd Eure Henrico County
Kelli Le Duc..... New Kent County
John O’Keeffe (Alternate) RideFinders
Chet Parsons..... RRPDC
Mark Riblett..... VDOT
Joseph E. Vidunas Hanover County
Garland WilliamsGRTC Transit System

MEMBERS ABSENT

John B. Rutledge CRAC
Theresa SimmonsRMTA
Von S. Tisdale..... RideFinders

ALTERNATE MEMBER PRESENT – NOT VOTING

Sulabh Aryal (Alternate)..... RRPDC
Travis Bridewell (Alternate)..... City of Richmond

Andrew Pompei, TAC Chairman, called the February 12, 2019 TAC meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and Chet Parsons, RRTPO Secretary, certified that a quorum was present.

Chairman Pompei introduced Chet Parsons, the new Richmond Regional Planning District Commission Director of Transportation and newly appointed RRTPO Secretary. Mr. Parsons noted this is his second week on the job and said he is excited to get started and looks forward to meeting everyone and learning more about the planning efforts in their agency or jurisdiction.

1. Approval of Meeting Agenda

On motion of Mark Riblett, seconded by Tom Coleman, TAC unanimously approved the February 12, 2019 TAC meeting agenda as presented.

2. Public Comment Period

There were no requests to address TAC.

3. Approval of November 13, 2018 TAC Meeting Minutes

On motion of John O’Keeffe, seconded by Myles Busching, TAC unanimously approved the January 8 TAC meeting minutes as presented.

4. TAC Chairman’s Report

Chairman Pompei had nothing to report.

5. RRTPO Update

Chet Parsons, RRTPO Secretary, reported on the following items:

- a. Richmond/Tri-Cities MOU Status – The MOU is almost complete; staff is securing the last few signatures which should be done in the next couple of weeks.
- b. CTAC Update – RRTPO Chairman Pat O’Bannon and Mr. Parsons met with CTAC on January 17 and listened to concerns. The main takeaways are that we staff going to do a better job of sharing information up and down the chain between the RRTPO, Executive Committee, TAC and CTAC so that everyone is aware of what is going on with each group. Find ways to utilize the expertise on CTAC and to make sure that they are valued as part of the overall planning process. That discussion was very well received, and everyone is looking for new ways to work together as the RRTPO embarks on the upcoming year.
- c. Other – Mr. Parsons had no additional items to address.

6. Regional Complete Streets Development Update

Phil Riggan, RRTPO transportation planner, reviewed the development of this item noting that CTAC provided a recommendation on a regional Complete Streets policy to the RRTPO in September 2018 and after discussion, the RRTPO referred this matter to TAC for a recommendation for regional multimodal Complete Streets guidelines. After consideration of this matter, TAC determined that a Complete Streets toolbox for use by jurisdictions in the region would be a more effective approach than a regional policy. The RRTPO is working with the Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT), the Town of Ashland, Smart Growth America, and National Complete Streets Coalition to develop a complete streets strategy for the Town of Ashland. This pilot study meets the planning effort set forth in the FY19 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) work task 2.61 Bicycle and Pedestrian Connectivity using the methodology described in the DRPT Multimodal System Design Guidelines. Results of the pilot study will be used to guide the development of a toolbox for use by jurisdictions in the region.

There was brief TAC discussion. Mr. Parsons noted that the Ashland study will be a learning tool and can inform the development of a Complete Streets toolbox as a resource for the region. Having the study inform the toolbox development also prevents duplication of efforts. Tiffany Dubinsky, DRPT, noted that this is a multi-year work effort that would carry over into FY20 and should be included in the FY20 UPWP. She also expressed interest in knowing how this toolbox would be rolled out for use by other jurisdictions in terms of regional guidelines.

On motion of Tiffany Dubinsky, seconded by Mark Riblett, the RRTPO Technical Advisory Committee voted unanimously to provide the following recommendation for RRTPO review and consideration:

Recommendation: That the Richmond Regional Transportation Planning Organization affirm the FY19 UPWP task of 2.61 Bicycle and Pedestrian Connectivity to use the Complete Streets work efforts on the pilot community (Town of Ashland) to guide the final product of a regional Complete Streets toolbox for jurisdictions throughout the Richmond region.

7. FY19 UPWP Amendment: Transit Vision Plan – Phase II

Barbara Jacocks, RRPDC planner, provided a presentation on the need for a Phase II analysis of the Greater RVA Transit Vision Plan which would identify a range of short-and medium-term actions to implement the long-term goals of the plan, *transit2040*.

The FY19 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) work task 2.31 calls for the RRTPO's focus in transit planning to support the Greater RVA Transit Vision Plan, *transit2040* and identify opportunities to enhance and increase connectivity to transit, and to advance critical first steps from the plan. Representatives of the Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT), GRTC Transit System (GRTC), the City of Richmond, Henrico County, and the RRTPO have identified significant progress on several critical first steps already accomplished. Ms. Jacocks reviewed a number of these first steps and reported that the review committee has recommended the Phase II planning effort. TAC was requested to consider recommending that the RRTPO take action to undertake a Phase II analysis which would lead to implementation of the long-term goals of the Transit Vision Plan.

TAC discussion brought forward the following major points:

- Some TAC members discerned from previous conversations with Ms. Jacocks that the plan was to be updated and the current effort is for implementation; however, the plan will be revisited, and jurisdictions reengaged as plans for implementation are developed over the next six months.
- Consultant assistance will be secured to conduct this Phase II analysis for implementation of *transit2040*.
- Details on funding are still be worked out; some funding will be provided by the Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT). When the scope is completed, there may be additional funds available beyond what has already been committed by DRPT for this planning effort.
- The project scope with budget and deliverables would be helpful in evaluating the project before it goes to the RRTPO in March.

The TAC will take action at this meeting to recommend RRTPO approval of the UPWP amendment at the March meeting; the scope would not need to go to the RRTPO. TAC directed staff to provide the scope for TAC review and approval at the March 12 TAC meeting.

On motion of Dironna Moore Clarke, seconded by E. Todd Eure, the RRTPO Technical Advisory Committee voted unanimously to recommend the following resolution for RRTPO consideration and approval:

RESOLVED, that the Richmond Regional Transportation Planning Organization amends the FY19 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) description of 2.31 Transit 2040 Implementation and Transit Oriented Development, item a. "Advancing Critical First Steps from the *Greater RVA Transit Vision Plan (transit2040)*" to add "Phase II Implementation, analysis of *transit2040* to define and assess strategic priorities for short- and medium-term actions that can fully set in motion the long-term vision of *transit2040*."

8. FY20 – FY25 RSTP and CMAQ Recommendation: Cost Estimate Review

Chet Parsons, RRTPO Secretary, said he has jumped into the middle of this process and expressed appreciation for the strong partnership with VDOT and for their significant assistance in this process. He said Mark Riblett and Jasmine Amanin will report on this and the next agenda item on RSTP and CMAQ.

Mark Riblett reported as an information item that VDOT is taking a similar approach for both the RRTPO and Tri-Cities MPO due to staff turnover, but the decisions belong to the MPOs. VDOT is just developing a strawman for consideration. He said the VDOT recommendation reflects the RRTPO's request for projects for the FYH20- FY25 RSTP and

CMAQ project selection and allocation process. A total of 27 projects were reviewed, some of which had been previously reviewed in the SMART SCALE process. VDOT completed project cost estimate reviews on January 22, 2019. Fourteen projects were identified with cost estimates that differed from what the applicant provided with an average 29 percent change. A chart is included in the agenda package which shows the original cost estimates by the applicant as well as the VDOT review. Mr. Riblett said if the applicant feels that another estimate should be used, they should get in touch with him, Jasmine or Jason to make changes. If a project is not included on the list provided, it could be because the applicant estimate agreed with the VDOT estimate or there was no request for additional funds. Chet requested that he be included on any e-mail communications to VDOT. VDOT will build the allocation tables and hopes to have that completed to go out in the next agenda package.

9. FY20 – FY25 RSTP and CMAQ Recommendation: Existing Projects

Mark Riblett, VDOT, said once the cost estimates are finalized, VDOT will identify which available resources will go on which projects. He said VDOT's approach will be very similar to what has been done in the past. The first priority for VDOT will be to fully fund existing projects. Next will be to make sure all year one funds are allocated so that there are no regionwide or balance entry balances in year one or previous. Then, consistent with past MPO policies, VDOT will build in a regionwide allocation that would be available for contingencies such as cost estimate increases in future years. The number of new projects to be added to the program based on the scoring completed by Sarah Rhodes, would be based on the dollars available in any years that have extra money. Mr. Riblett requested TAC concurrence on past methodology for putting the allocation tables together for this round of RSTP and CMAQ allocations. The table included on page 13 of the agenda package is included to illustrate that there are two projects flagged as particularly needing more money. There was additional TAC discussion and clarification of how the allocation tables will be built.

On motion of Nora Amos, seconded by Tom Coleman, TAC voted unanimously to allocate to fully fund existing projects and then to review any leftover money for allocation to new projects.

Nora Amos asked for clarification of what is expected of RideFinders in order to receive their off-the-top funding. There was clarification that RideFinders needed to provide their annual report which was presented to the RRTPO in February. The document is available on the RideFinders website.

10. Park and Ride Update

Barbara Jacocks, RRPDC planner, reported the study is at the half-way point. The work group kicked off on October 25 with a second meeting on January 29, both with very good attendance. The work group reviewed the baseline census tract data that Kimley Horn put together showing the highest need areas. That sets the foundation for further discussion on value-add adjustments, environmental justice factors, auto ownership, travel to work by single occupancy vehicles, specific priority transit locations for park and ride opportunities for Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) termini and edge city locations, unofficial park and ride lots and van pool meeting locations that may need to become official and more permanent. The work group will meet again in April to begin to narrow recommendations down to the top ten with a report to TAC in June.

11. TAC Open Comment –

No comments were offered.

12. Future Meeting Topics

Chairman Pompei deferred to Mr. Parsons who referenced the list on page 15 of the agenda package. Mr. Parsons noted the items on the list and added the East Coast Greenway and the Strategic Highway Safety Plan as well as updates on consultant projects. Mr. Parsons invited TAC members to let him know about other topics they would like to see included and said he would start to build a list to refer to as future agendas are set up.

Barb Smith suggested that TAC draft comments for the RRTPO to consider submitting on SMART SCALE. There is concern about how the Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel skewed the scoring and some other issues. It is difficult for localities to comment on SMART SCALE and is more effective for a region to comment. Mark Riblett said there would need to be a fast timeline on comments to the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) and it may be a good idea to circulate comments for consensus prior to the next RRTPO meeting. Comments could go to Richmond District CTB member Carlos Brown or to the CTB. Mr. Riblett said it would be good for Mr. Brown to hear from the RRTPO a laundry list of comments. He will be meeting with Mr. Brown on March 4 and could convey to Mr. Brown a list of comments to be considered by TAC and the RRTPO prior to those meetings.

Mr. Riblett reviewed how the HRBT project impacted scores. There are 14 factors that are scored. The project that scores the best is given 100 and every other project is a percentage of their relative benefit compared to that number one project. The HRBT scored best in eight of the 14 factors. On one factor the HRBT project got 100 and the second-best project got a score of slightly over 12 with all other projects scoring below that. If the HRBT project were not in the mix, the number two project would have gotten 100 with the other project scores distributed a little more evenly. The scoring made factors that applied to the HRBT less important and artificially reduced the scores for other projects. The question is whether outlier projects such as HRBT be removed to renormalize the scores and see how the other project scores fall out in terms of relative ranking without that factor skewing the scores.

Other observations of the scoring results were as follows:

- Projects with added funds didn't appear to improve the project score.
- Looking at the highest scoring projects for the Richmond District, there were no traditional intersection improvement, widening, or turn-lane improvement projects but rather, roundabout, streetscape, complete streets, bike/ped, and other non-traditional types of projects.
- Step three introduces politics into the data. The first cut should be data driven and then if the CTB wants to make another choice, they can do that because the process and the data are transparent.

Mr. Riblett shared three typical comments received:

- the projects recommended for funding are not necessarily the kinds of projects that would be considered the most important projects the district would like to have funded;
- concern about the HRBT impact on suppressing the funding; and
- step three in the process was not based on cost benefit with no benefit due to leveraging; project recommendations were based on total project benefit scores.

This raises a question of whether that is the way the state wants to approach SMART SCALE funding distribution. The majority of the high priority money was distributed in Step 3. Step one distributed all District Grant money across each district based on the SMART SCALE score and its relative district ranking based on cost/benefit. Projects not eligible for district grant funds were skipped in that process and so were funded in step two with leftover high

priority funds. Step three leftover high priority funds were distributed based on based on total project benefit scores so the fact that the HRBT project was a \$3.6 billion project with leveraging asking for \$200 million, the leveraging had no impact on the project score for ranking. Though the process was the same in SMART SCALE Round 2, the result is much more skewed with only one percent of the high priority money statewide coming to the Richmond District.

Richmond District CTB member Carlos Brown has emphasized several years in a row at the transportation forum the need for the Richmond Region to establish a transportation authority or other mechanism for providing transportation funding for the region. If the cost/benefit is not going to make a difference in the process, then the RRTPO needs to speak up about that.

Mr. Parsons said TAC comments on the SMART SCALE process should be submitted to him by Thursday, February 28.

13. Next TAC Meeting: March 12

Chairman Pompei noted the next TAC meeting is scheduled for March 12, 2019 at 9:00 a.m.

14. Adjournment: Scheduled for 10:35 a.m.

Chairman Pompei adjourned the meeting at 10:20 a.m.