

Richmond Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RRTPO) Community Transportation Advisory Committee (CTAC) Meeting Minutes

Thursday, May 21, 12:00 p.m.

PlanRVA James River Board Room, 424 Hull Street, Suite 300, Richmond, VA 23224
and via Zoom

Members and Alternates Present (X), Virtual (V):

17,

Town of Ashland	1	New Kent County	2	Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU)	1
Upton S. Martin	X	Bill Dismore	X	John D. Leonard	
Don Root	X	Powhatan County	2	Jordan Cole (A)	
Charles City County	1	Vacant		VA Conservation Network (VCN)	1
Bill Walton		City of Richmond	4	Fatima Kamara	
Chesterfield County	4	Andrew Bunn	X	Richard Hankins (A)	
Phillip Plymale		Alex Brackman		RVA Rapid Transit	1
Erin Phelan (A)		Sera Erickson		Chad Sanders	X
Goochland County	2	James Hutzler	X	NAACP, Richmond Branch	1
Robert L. Basham Jr.	V	Chamber RVA	1	James Minor	
Vacant		Demas Boudreaux	X	Charles Willis (A)	
Hanover County	3	League of Women Voters	1	Virginians for High-Speed Rail	1
Charlie Waddell		Sarah Weisiger	X	Michael Testerman	X
Henrico County	4	Karen Rosenblum (A)		RIC Area Bicycling Assoc.	1
Gordon Dixon, Chair	X	RVA Dept. of Transportation	1	Champe M. Burnley	X
Michael Wiebe	X	Ernest Moore, Jr.	X	John Hamilton (A)	
				SPAN Center	1
				Tony Williams (Missi Boyer)	

The technology used for the RRTPO CTAC meeting was a web-hosted service created by Zoom and YouTube Live Streaming and was open and accessible for participation by members of the public. A recording of this meeting is available on our [Plan RVA YouTube Channel](#).

A. ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

During the Pathways and Intersections lunch conversation, Andrew Bunn presented background material on transportation funding in response to a committee request from the previous meeting for additional discussion on the topic. He had provided information to Kristin, who assembled a Menti-based exercise to help frame the conversation. Members were advised that the presentation was not intended to be a comprehensive or technical deep dive, but rather a high-level overview supported by graphics designed to illustrate the complexity of transportation funding and the general flow of funds through the system.

As discussion continued, Andrew briefly explained that the funding graphics were primarily intended to show how complicated the transportation funding process is, noting that only a small number of people in the state could fully explain every aspect of the chart. He clarified that one graphic focused on allocations, while another addressed revenues flowing into the state and how those revenues are distributed. Committee members then asked questions about maintenance funding, including whether only a small percentage of transportation funds was reserved for maintenance. Staff clarified that maintenance receives a much larger share—approximately 51 percent of the total transportation funding amount at the top level of the flow chart—and that construction funds may also be used to address maintenance shortfalls. It was emphasized that, under the Code of Virginia, maintenance and operations are the state's first priority, with new construction or expansion funded only after those needs are met.

The conversation then shifted to federal transportation legislation and the implications of a newly released federal bill. Members observed that the proposal appeared to provide significantly less funding than the 2021 federal infrastructure legislation and included fewer grant and formula funding opportunities, though it would still shape national transportation policy for the next five years if enacted. Additional discussion focused on the uncertainty surrounding federal reauthorization, leadership changes in Congress, and the likelihood of a bill passing before upcoming elections. Staff noted that early summaries suggested the proposal included some positive developments, particularly for MPOs, such as improved opportunities for direct federal grant access and expanded planning dollars to advance projects further in design. At the same time, there was concern that the proposal did not maintain the same level of support for multimodal transportation priorities seen in prior legislation. Members agreed it would be helpful to circulate a recent briefing document summarizing the federal committee action, and Andrew concluded by noting that anyone seeking a more detailed explanation of the state transportation funding graphic could consult the March CTB presentation, which provides a much more extensive walkthrough.

After the discussion concluded, CTAC Chair Gordon Dixon called the meeting to order at 12:21pm and allowed members to introduce themselves. Afterwards, Sarah-Keel Crews certified a quorum.

Chair Dixon then asked for a motion to approve the March 19th meeting minutes. On a motion by Mr. Upton Martin, seconded by Mr. Ernest Moore Jr., all voted in favor of approving the minutes.

Seeing there was no public commentary, Chair Dixon turned the floor over to Martha Shickle, PlanRVA, to address the FY27 UPWP.

B. PRESENTATIONS and COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

FY27 Unified Planning Work Program

Martha Shickle, PlanRVA, led a discussion on the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). She explained that the UPWP serves as the MPO's annual work plan for the upcoming fiscal year, outlining both the allocation of federal planning funds and the activities the MPO will undertake. Specifically, she noted that the MPO receives PL funds from the Federal Highway Administration and Section 5303 funds from the Federal Transit Administration, and the UPWP documents how those resources will be programmed. Ms. Shickle reported that the Policy Board approved the UPWP at its April 23 meeting and that staff successfully submitted it to state and federal partners by the required May 1 deadline. She also explained that, because the MPO underwent its triennial recertification review in February, staff worked to reflect verbal feedback from that process in the new UPWP, even though the formal report from FHWA and FTA had not yet been received. In addition, she noted that the document had been reformatted in recent years to make it more accessible and understandable to the public, including a section highlighting major accomplishments from the prior year.

The conversation then turned to how the CTAC might more actively engage with the work program and fulfill its advisory role. Referring to the bylaw's language describing CTAC's responsibility to advise on issues, plans, and matters appropriate for citizen input, Ms. Shickle invited members to identify the topics they would like to focus on over the coming year. Members responded by underscoring the need for greater public understanding of transportation planning and funding, noting that these processes are highly complex and often difficult for residents to follow. One member suggested that it would be useful for the committee to spend time learning how transportation funding works and how available dollars are leveraged at the state and regional levels. Another member, speaking from the Richmond perspective, emphasized that pedestrian and bicycle safety are pressing concerns in the city and expressed particular interest in learning more about the UPWP task related to selecting a high-injury network corridor. Members also reflected on the committee's advisory role and suggested that a brief standing update at each meeting on upcoming Policy Board topics and decisions would help CTAC members stay informed and better communicate with the communities they represent.

Ms. Shickle supported that suggestion and linked it to feedback received during the federal certification review, which encouraged the MPO to provide more specific timelines for work program deliverables. She proposed that staff could develop a document for CTAC showing anticipated Policy Board topics and actions over the course of the year so members would have greater visibility into what is coming and more time to prepare comments or raise issues. She explained that such a planning tool could help shape CTAC agendas and ensure the committee has opportunities to discuss matters before Policy Board action is taken. At the same time, she acknowledged that some items arise on short notice and cannot

always be forecasted well in advance. Even so, the group agreed that providing an evolving schedule of expected topics, along with regular reminders at CTAC meetings about what is upcoming, would strengthen the committee's advisory function, improve communication with the public, and better equip members to share timely information with their constituents

Ernest Moore Jr. left the meeting at approximately 12:40 p.m.

Community Engagement Update

Chair Dixon then gave the floor to Kristin Hott, who provided a brief update on current public engagement opportunities. She noted that members had the CTAC News in front of them and invited candid feedback on whether the format and content were useful, encouraging members to contact her directly if they would prefer different information or a different approach. She explained that the purpose of the CTAC News is to help members understand what engagement opportunities are currently open across a range of topics, not just transportation, so they can share that information more broadly in their communities.

Ms. Hott then highlighted several current and upcoming initiatives. First, she noted that there was an open public review and comment period for the air quality conformity assessment, which she explained is a required process tied to the region's history of nonattainment in the 1990s, even though the region has remained in attainment for many years. She said the draft plan was available for public review through June 14 and suggested that this provided a useful opportunity for community members to learn more about how regional transportation planning considers air quality impacts. She also reminded the group that the Engage site contains information from all three phases of long-range transportation plan outreach, including vision and values, regional goals, and investment package input, and said that members could refer community members there to better understand what has been heard so far. She noted that Kerry would provide a more detailed update on the latest developments related to that work.

Ms. Hott also drew attention to the RVA Weaver Awards, describing them as an important regional opportunity and explaining that she had been traveling around localities such as Goochland, Powhatan, New Kent, and Charles City to raise awareness. She explained that these awards function as regional micro-grants and are part of a broader national community weaving initiative connected to the Aspen Institute's Weave: The Social Fabric Project. She reported that the region had been selected as one of a limited number of community hosts nationwide and that the initiative would result in at least 20 awards across the region, with grants ranging from \$2,500 to \$5,000 each. She noted that additional information was available in a handout and through a recorded informational session and encouraged members to help spread awareness. Finally, she mentioned an upcoming recycling barriers study being conducted in partnership with the Central Virginia Waste Management Authority, explaining that staff would be engaging the community over the summer to better understand barriers to recycling and identify areas for improvement as landfill capacity becomes a growing concern. She concluded by again inviting feedback on the CTAC News and briefly noting recent outreach efforts, including participation in a Speed Symposium the previous evening.

Completed Transportation Plan Engagements

After Kristin Hott concluded her update, Kerry Wagenhauser presented on recently completed transportation plan engagement efforts. She emphasized that public input is essential to regional planning because it connects decision-makers with residents, helps ensure policies reflect real community needs, builds trust, and strengthens shared ownership, particularly by elevating historically underrepresented voices. She also cautioned members that, although survey response totals were strong, the results likely reflect some self-selection bias because respondents were people motivated enough to complete the surveys. Kerry noted that safety remains a central theme across all planning work, with staff using crash data, trend analysis, performance targets, coordination with partner agencies, and attention to near misses and other warning signs to identify unsafe conditions before serious crashes occur.

Reviewing the safety survey results, Ms. Wagenhauser said respondents overwhelmingly opposed unsafe driving behaviors, especially speeding in school zones, residential areas, urban and suburban streets, and construction zones, as well as distracted driving. Average responses fell firmly between “disagree” and “strongly disagree,” indicating broad support for safer behavior on the road. She said respondents also strongly supported roadway design and policy changes that favor pedestrian and cyclist safety, including lower-speed street design, yielding requirements, additional crossing time for pedestrians, traffic calming, crosswalks, push-button crossings, and bike lanes. She summarized the findings as clear evidence that the public supports safety improvements that reduce harmful interactions between vehicles and other road users.

Turning to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Kerry described it as the region’s short-term funded action list and compared it to a grocery list of projects already “in the cart” because funding is in place. She reported that survey respondents generally felt too much funding is directed toward highway projects and not enough toward transit and other modes, though she noted that many highway projects also include pedestrian-supportive features such as sidewalks. Overall, respondents did not express especially strong feelings about current TIP projects, but they did report only modestly improved understanding of the TIP after engaging with the material, with average self-reported understanding at 63 out of 100.

Ms. Wagenhauser then discussed the Richmond Regional Transportation Planning Organization’s long-range transportation plan, describing it as the region’s fiscally constrained 20- to 25-year transportation blueprint. She said public response to this portion of engagement was especially strong and showed overwhelming support for “mode shift,” meaning less emphasis on highway expansion and greater investment in transit, walking, biking, safety, sustainability, and other alternatives. She also reviewed online engagement metrics, distinguishing among visitors, views, and contributors, and noted that the safety plan generated the highest number of contributors while the TIP generated the fewest.

Kristin Hott added an important clarification about those figures, explaining that paper survey responses entered by staff into the Engage site may not appear as separate contributors because the system can count multiple entries under a single IP address. She noted that this occurred frequently during both the safety and long-range transportation plan outreach processes, meaning the contributor totals likely understate actual participation. Members then asked whether the safety survey findings—particularly the roughly 1,050 responses—had been presented to the TPO or Policy Board. Kerry said she was unsure because her focus is the TIP, and Martha Shickle clarified that the safety input had not yet been presented due to timing and agenda constraints but was expected to come forward in the upcoming fiscal year. Members stressed that the volume and consistency of the safety input showed a clear trend that should be shared with decision-makers.

Staff responded that the Policy Board has already shown strong interest in safety, having approved annual regional safety targets in February and treated safety as one of its top priorities in recent years. Staff explained that implementation of the safety plan is somewhat contingent on future funding and that the recent public input was collected in part to help shape recommendations on next steps. Those recommendations are expected to return to the Policy Board later in the summer or, if necessary, in September. Members were encouraged to consider what role CTAC might play in helping advance that conversation.

Discussion then shifted to the long-range transportation plan and the public's strong preference for mode shift. Members asked what opportunities remain for advocacy if the final project mix does not fully reflect that preference. Staff explained that public engagement on the long-range plan is still ongoing, but also noted that the project list approved by the Policy Board in April was a necessary procedural step for completing the required air quality conformity analysis. Because the region has remained under conformity requirements due to its former nonattainment status, any major change to the approved list at this stage would require restarting conformity analysis, delaying adoption of the plan and potentially putting all projects at risk. Staff emphasized, however, that the long-range plan remains a living document that can be amended during its five-year life cycle, creating future opportunities to continue advancing mode shift priorities.

Members also discussed the challenge of explaining project categories to the public. Several noted that projects labeled as “highway” projects may still contain meaningful bicycle, pedestrian, or transit elements, but those multimodal features are not always evident in project descriptions. A member asked whether staff could provide a breakdown showing what percentage of projects include sidewalks, shared-use paths, or other active transportation components. Staff said that type of breakdown is likely possible, though defining project “purpose” can become complicated depending on whether the measure is based on dollars, usage, or other factors. Staff agreed that federal labels often obscure multimodal elements and said this was helpful feedback on how to make transportation information more understandable and transparent.

The committee also discussed Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funding and its relationship to conformity and mode shift. Staff confirmed that the region still receives CMAQ funds, but explained that those funds are tied to the region's conformity status and are expected to go away once conformity reviews are no longer required. Members observed that this is somewhat counterintuitive given that multimodal investments also support congestion mitigation goals, and they asked whether those funds could be used more intentionally to support transit, bicycling, and walking. Staff explained that the region does have a flexible funding process, using a scorecard similar to Smart Scale to allocate funding and help localities leverage additional dollars, though that process may not always favor smaller or alternative transportation projects. Members recalled that CMAQ funding is roughly \$30 million annually and expressed interest in learning more about how it has been used and what may replace it when it ends.

As the discussion continued, members suggested that conformity, CMAQ, funding flexibility, and mode shift would make a valuable topic for a future CTAC meeting. Staff agreed and indicated that a deeper briefing could help the committee better understand the tradeoffs, procedural constraints, and policy choices shaping the region's transportation decisions. Kerry said she would note members' interest in both how CMAQ funds have been used in recent years and what future funding options may exist once that source is no longer available.

PQuad Engagement Plan Preview

With no further immediate questions, the meeting transitioned to Martha Shickle, who returned to the Unified Planning Work Program and Task 14, the prioritization process pilot previously referred to as the PEQUOD grant. Martha explained that the pilot is directly tied to the committee's broader discussion about transparency, tradeoffs, and how transportation decisions are made. She said the project is still in its early stages and that, from last fall through this coming September, staff are essentially "planning to plan" by completing a literature review and refining the project framework.

Martha explained that the effort is intended to strengthen the region's prioritization process by building on the transportation demand model already used to evaluate investments in highways, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and transit. That model currently helps estimate effects on congestion, air quality, and other transportation measures. The goal of the pilot, however, is to broaden that analysis to better capture wider impacts on the built environment, economic conditions, and community pressures such as housing affordability. She cited investments like the Pulse and the planned east-west line as examples of projects that can create both positive outcomes and unintended consequences, and said the long-term aim is to move toward a more holistic, outcome-based way of evaluating transportation investments.

She added that the pilot is also intended to make the decision-making process more transparent and understandable to the public. Martha noted that the transportation model can feel abstract and inaccessible, and that elected officials often hear from residents who do not understand how projects are prioritized or why one advances over

another. She explained that Congress funded this program to help a select group of MPOs improve transparency in decision-making and noted that PlanRVA's MPO is the only MPO in Virginia to receive this funding. The concept under development is a revised scoring system that incorporates stronger measures of economic return on investment and other impacts aligned with the region's scenario planning framework. In practice, the tool is expected to support Policy Board decisions for funding programs such as CMAQ, RSTBG, Smart Scale recommendations, and CBTA-related investments, while potentially evolving into a broader framework for federal and state transportation funding decisions over time.

Martha also described a public-facing element of the pilot: an interactive web-based platform that would allow staff, advisory groups, decision-makers, and the public to explore different investment scenarios and better understand the tradeoffs associated with them. She emphasized that the tool is not intended to dictate decisions, but to provide a more robust and transparent analytical basis for them. It would also help explain why regional decision-makers might sometimes depart from a technical ranking or an adopted plan.

Continuing the discussion, Martha emphasized that a clearer scoring and ranking system would not eliminate exceptions but would help explain them. She said there are valid reasons a project might advance even if it does not rank highest technically, including public input, geographic balance, regional consensus-building, partnership opportunities, or a desire to invest more intentionally in historically underinvested communities. She also noted that the grant requires staff to assess the public's current understanding of how transportation decisions are made and then repeat that assessment later to see whether the pilot improves public understanding. Staff are still considering how best to design that pre- and post-assessment so that it produces meaningful results. Martha suggested that CTAC could serve as a useful group for that testing because members are engaged enough to provide thoughtful feedback while still reflecting the perspective of nontechnical community representatives. A member noted that CTAC itself is a relatively uncommon feature among MPOs and suggested that the committee could function well as the pilot's test group. Martha agreed that staff were interested in that possibility. Another member observed that, while transportation planning is complex, most residents are focused primarily on outcomes such as safety, mobility, and congestion rather than technical details, and encouraged staff to continue learning from peer regions and national best practices. Martha responded that the Richmond region is itself viewed as a leader in scenario planning, while also agreeing that there is still value in learning from others.

Other members voiced strong support for the pilot's transparency goals, particularly the idea of creating a tool that clearly shows what projects are being selected, where funding comes from, and what factors shaped those choices. One member noted that existing state funding portals can be difficult to interpret because they often use vague funding labels and said a clearer local tool would be very valuable. Another specifically supported involving CTAC in the pilot because it would both help educate the committee and help

staff refine how they communicate a highly technical process to the public. As discussion concluded, members and staff agreed that the themes raised throughout the meeting—including transportation funding, conformity and CMAQ, mode shift, and the prioritization pilot—are closely connected and would make strong topics for future meetings. The chair observed that a useful stream of future agenda items was beginning to emerge and noted that, as the meeting had reached its usual adjournment time, anyone needing to leave could do so while the group continued informally.

Michael Wiebe left the meeting at 1:29 p.m.

Member Share: ChamberRVA

Demas Boudreaux and Chet Parsons offered reflections on the recent ChamberRVA Intercity Visit and the value of the program for the region's ongoing collaboration across jurisdictions. Mr. Boudreaux, speaking on behalf of ChamberRVA, thanked Mr. Parsons for participating and noted that ChamberRVA serves the broader region across nine jurisdictions. He said one of the strengths of the program was that the speakers and organizers presented ideas from the host region in a way that made them relevant and adaptable to the Richmond region's circumstances, rather than simply showcasing examples that would be difficult to translate locally. Mr. Parsons and others were credited with helping shape a program that acknowledged local realities and made it easier for participants to think constructively about how outside examples could inform regional practice here.

The discussion also highlighted one of the major themes that emerged from the visit: the challenge of working across a fragmented local government structure. Mr. Parsons noted that this remains one of the region's recurring obstacles, particularly in Virginia, where local governments often operate in highly separate ways. In response to a question about whether the comparison region had a similar governance framework, he explained that it is also located in a Dillon Rule state, which made the comparison especially useful, even though its local government structure differs somewhat because several key cities are organized within a county context. Even so, Mr. Parsons said the region shared enough similarities—in both state-local tensions and regional coordination challenges—that the exchange felt more applicable than abstract. He noted that participants also heard pointed commentary there about relationships between the legislature and local governments, which sounded familiar in important ways.

Both Mr. Boudreaux and Mr. Parsons underscored the broader value of the trip as a regional convening opportunity. Mr. Boudreaux remarked that one of ChamberRVA's key contributions is its ability to bring together jurisdictions that do not always naturally operate in alignment, helping foster the relationships needed for regional collaboration. He also noted that this year's trip drew especially strong participation from local government, with 205 attendees overall and approximately 25 percent of them being local elected or appointed officials. He said eight of the region's nine member jurisdictions were represented, making it one of the strongest showings in recent years. The discussion emphasized that the benefits of the trip extended beyond formal programming, as it also

created space for local officials, business leaders, and nonprofit representatives to build social capital, exchange ideas across jurisdictional lines, and work through regional issues in a setting somewhat removed from the day-to-day scrutiny of home.

Partner Meeting Updates

The meeting then moved into partner updates, with Ken Lantz, PlanRVA, providing a brief report on recent developments at GRTC. He shared that at its April meeting, the GRTC board approved a contract for architectural and engineering services for the western extension of the Pulse bus rapid transit line from Willow Lawn to Parham Road. He said the current schedule anticipates completion of design by August 2027, followed by construction from April 2028 through September 2029, with service expected to begin later in 2029. Mr. Lantz also reported that GRTC approved a contract for construction management, engineering, and inspection services related to the installation of additional passenger amenities, including 44 shelters and 28 benches, with that work expected to be completed by the end of the year. He further noted that GRTC had recently approved its FY27 operating budget, which totals a little over \$100 million and assumes continuation of fare-free service. In addition, he explained that GRTC had completed its required regional public transportation plan in order to remain eligible for Central Virginia Transportation Authority funding, with the plan anticipating approximately \$35 million in funding, about \$33 million of which would be programmed and roughly \$2 million placed in reserve. Finally, he announced an upcoming “Tap into Transit” community fundraising event scheduled for July 14 from 4:30 to 7:30 p.m. at Main Street Station, which will include a silent auction and celebrate the impact of open-access transit.

C. LOOKING FORWARD and NEXT STEPS

1. CTAC Member Congrats

The chair closed the meeting with a brief set of recognitions for CTAC members, offering congratulations to several individuals for recent accomplishments. He first acknowledged Andrew Bunn and former CTAC chair Sera Erickson, noting that both had recently completed their master’s degrees in Urban and Regional Planning. He then highlighted Mr. Bunn’s additional achievement of winning a planning competition event and invited him to briefly describe his capstone project. Mr. Bunn explained that his project focused on proposing a resilience microhub network for Richmond and on planning and beginning implementation of the first such hub in the Hillside Court area of Southside. The chair and members responded positively, recognizing the relevance and value of that work.

Chair Dixon also acknowledged James Hutzler for recently receiving an IDEAL Award from Rappahannock Community College. He noted that Mr. Hutzler serves there as an adjunct faculty member teaching political science and described the award as recognizing employees who exemplify the college’s values of integrity, diversity and inclusion, excellence, access, and lifelong learning through their performance, service, and broader contributions to the institution’s mission. The recognition was presented as another example of the impressive professional accomplishments represented within the committee.

2. Next Member Share Volunteers

Chair Dixon then asked members to volunteer for the next meeting's member share. He himself said that he'd be happy to present Henrico County's traffic calming initiatives. James Hutzler agreed to give an update on the state budget, and RVA Rapid Transit representative, Chad Sanders, volunteered to share as well.

3. FY27 Leadership & Meeting Schedule

Sarah-Keel Crews, PlanRVA provided an update on planning for the FY27 CTAC leadership rotation and meeting schedule. She explained that the committee typically meets on a regular cadence, but before sending out dates for the upcoming fiscal year, staff wanted to check with members to confirm that the proposed schedule would work—particularly because July can be a difficult month for attendance due to vacations and other summer travel. During the discussion, July 16 was identified as the likely date under the committee's regular third-Thursday pattern, and members confirmed that the timing would work.

C. ADJOURNMENT

With no further comment, the meeting was adjourned at 1:40pm by Chair Dixon, who noted that the next meeting will be July 16, 2026 at 12:00 p.m.