

**Meeting Summary
Policy Committee Meeting
March 16, 2009**

Members Present:

Mr. Mark Dudenhefer, Stafford County, Chair
Mr. Matthew Kelly, City of Fredericksburg
Mr. Phil Rodenberg, City of Fredericksburg
Ms. Mary Katherine Greenlaw, City of Fredericksburg
Mr. Al Harf, Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission (PRTC)
Mr. Benjamin Pitts, Spotsylvania County
Mr. Hap Connors, Spotsylvania County
Mr. Douglas Barnes, Spotsylvania County
Mr. Anthony Romanello, Stafford County
Mr. Bob Woodson, Stafford County
Mr. Paul Milde, Stafford County
Mr. Maxie Rozell, Caroline County
Mr. Quintin Elliott, Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)
Ms. Jamie Brown-Porter, Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)
Ms. Unwanna Dabney, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
Mr. Daniel Rudge, Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT)

Others Present:

Mr. Mike Finchum, Caroline County
Mr. Eldon James, Rappahannock Regional Disability Service Board
Mr. Wayne Woodcock, Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)
Mr. Tom Rumora, BRAC Coordinator
Mr. David Whyte, Kimley-Horn and Associates
Mr. Matt Noonkester, Kimley-Horn and Associates
Ms. Kelly Hannon, *Free Lance Star*
Mr. Rupert Farley, FAMPO Transportation Advisory Group (TAG) Member

Staff Members Present:

Mr. Lloyd Robinson, FAMPO
Mr. Robert Wilson, George Washington Regional Commission (GWRC)
Ms. Diana Utz, George Washington Regional Commission (GWRC)
Mr. Andy Waple, FAMPO
Mr. Kevin Byrnes, George Washington Regional Commission (GWRC)
Mr. David J-H Lee, FAMPO
Mr. Daniel Reese, FAMPO
Ms. Marti Donley, FAMPO

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Mark Dudenhefer called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

A quorum was present.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

No comments from the public were made.

APPROVAL OF FAMPO AGENDA

Mr. Robinson recommended revising the FAMPO agenda by deferring for one month item 17b, FAMPO Resolution No. 09-07, Amending the FY2009-2012 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to reallocate unused CMAQ operating funds to a capital transit project, as requested by Fredericksburg Regional Transit (FRED). This deferral was requested by the Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) because the items in the TIP amendment are in the Stimulus Package that was submitted by FAMPO and the City of Fredericksburg to the State. This will give the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) and DRPT time to consider the items. Mr. Rodenberg asked that that item be kept on the Agenda for discussion. Mr. Robinson stated that FRED personnel were not present, as a deferral was expected. A motion was made by Mr. Kelly and seconded by Mr. Harf to accept the revised FAMPO Agenda by deferring action on FAMPO Resolution No. 09-07 but leaving the item on the agenda for discussion. The board voted unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA

a.) Approval of FAMPO Meeting Summary of February 23, 2008

A motion was made by Mr. Connors and seconded by Mr. Woodson to approve the FAMPO Meeting Summary of February 23, 2008. The board voted unanimously.

ACTION ITEMS

a.) Approval of FAMPO Resolution No. 09-06, Endorsing Previously-Funded Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) Signal Optimization and Coordination Projects

The staff from the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) Northern Operations gave a presentation on the Signal Optimization and Coordination Projects. The FAMPO Technical Committee and the FAMPO Transportation Advisory Group (TAG) recommended adoption of FAMPO Resolution 09-06. The presentation included a description of benefits for Traffic Signal Optimization and Traffic Signal Coordination. Old FAMPO Transportation Improvement Plans (TIPs) had previously allocated Regional Surface Transportation Program (RSTP) and CMAQ funding for this project, but it was delayed at VDOT for several years.

A VDOT presentation showed that the primary objectives of this project are to optimize signal timing and to therefore improve traffic progression and reduce adverse environmental impacts, measured as benefits derived from reductions in travel time, delay, stops, fuel consumption and vehicle emissions. The optimization process also makes it possible to create a digital library, a database of optimized networks that can serve as the basis for transportation planning, roadway design, and system operations enhancements. The signal projects under consideration for this project include the coordination and synchronization of traffic signals in Stafford, Spotsylvania and King George Counties along Virginia routes 1, 2/17, 3, 17, 208, 218, 301, 610 and 630. These projects will improve air quality and are consistent with the FAMPO 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP).

In response to a question from Mr. Robinson, VDOT staff advised that the ongoing operations and maintenance costs of the project will be paid by VDOT. FAMPO and VDOT are currently conducting a TIP Clean-up and once this is completed, the Policy Committee may want to switch the previously allocated RSTP funds to Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) funds.

Mr. Rodenberg stated that the City of Fredericksburg received a grant a few years ago for Route 3 Signalization Program, and the City is coordinating with the VDOT Northern Operations and will not be a part of this program. A motion was made by Mr. Kelly and seconded by Mr. Connors to approve FAMPO Resolution No. 09-06, Endorsing Previously-Funded Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) Signal Optimization and Coordination Projects. The board voted unanimously.

b.) Approval of FAMPO Resolution No. 09-07, Amending the FY2009-2012 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) as Requested by Fredericksburg Regional Transit (FRED)

Action on this Resolution has been deferred for one month, and it is presented for discussion. \$1.4 million was authorized by FAMPO in FY05 for new transit services in North Stafford County. After the project was completed, \$147,063 of the funds remained.. A Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) amendment is needed to reallocate those remaining funds to another project within the next several months or they will be lost, owing to their lapsing. Fredericksburg Regional Transit (FRED) has requested the reprogramming of the \$147,063 for the purposes of purchasing Global Positioning System (GPS) equipment and software, on-board cameras and related security equipment for the fleet of buses. A concern was expressed by Stafford County that this money could be better utilized on other projects if this project is funded by the Stimulus Package.

Mr. Robinson responded to a query by stating his support for this TIP amendment. Mr. Harf stated that GPS is a necessary foundation for being able to communicate to customers where the bus is in reality, as opposed to where it should be on schedule. A motion was made by Mr. Kelly and seconded by Mr. Harp to defer FAMPO Resolution No. 09-07, amending the FY2009-2012 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) as Requested by Fredericksburg Regional Transit (FRED) for one month, as requested by DRPT. The board voted unanimously.

c.) Approval of FAMPO Resolution No. 09-08, Amending the FY2009-2012 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to Include Virginia Railway Express (VRE) Projects

The Virginia Railway Express (VRE) requests that FAMPO amend the FY09-FY12 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) to include a Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) Rail Enhancement Fund Grant in the amount of \$2.5 million for Preliminary Engineering (PE) on the Cherry Hill Station and Third Track Phase 2 Project as approved by the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) on February 15, 2005. An additional amount of \$3.7 million was allocated to this project by a DRPT Rail Enhancement Fund Grant in FY09, as approved by the CTB on September 18, 2008. A motion was made by Mr. Kelly and seconded by Mr. Harf to approve FAMPO Resolution No. 09-08, Amending the FY2009-2012 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to Include Virginia Railway Express (VRE) Projects. The board voted unanimously.

d.) Approval of FAMPO Resolution No. 09-08, Endorsing the FY2010 Rural Transportation Planning Program

Discussion showed that FAMPO recognizes the need to conduct transportation planning activities in the George Washington Region's rural areas and supports the Commonwealth of Virginia's initiative to develop regional multi-modal transportation plans for the rural areas of the Commonwealth. FAMPO has developed a Rural Transportation Planning Program for the benefit of the non-urbanized portion of Virginia Planning District 16. A motion was made by Mr. Kelly and seconded by Ms. Greenlaw to adopt FAMPO Resolution No. 09-08, Endorsing the FY2010 Rural Transportation Planning Program. The board voted unanimously.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

a.) State Legislative Update

Mr. Robinson reported that the Transportation Advisory Group (TAG) suggests to the Policy Committee that we should always push for the State to fully fund transit to its statutory limits.

Mr. Robinson and Mr. James reported the creation of a Regional Toll Road Authority in House Bill 2099, as well as support for a statewide Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) Association in House Resolution No. 756l. The question remains as to “what do we do looking forward?” Mr. James summarized the following:

The General Assembly has adjourned. The George Washington Toll Road Authority, House Bill 2099, passed the House, but waiting for the Governor to sign. It will be effective July 1, 2009. The founding members would be the City of Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania County. There is a letter to the Governor in the meeting packet urging the Governor to sign the Bill. House Resolution No. 756 will create a statewide MPO. The MPO’s will be talking among themselves, working with VDOT and making recommendations to General Assembly on how to improve the transportation system in Virginia.

Mr. Maxie Rozell from Caroline County was appointed to the State Legislative Committee, while Members Connors, Kelly and Woodson were reconfirmed.

Mr. Harf brought to the Board’s attention that House Bill 1532 did get enacted and is awaiting the Governor’s signature. This Bill changes the method of tax collection and rate on a motor fuel’s tax. In 2009 approximately 1500 retailers are subject to the tax to a dozen distributors in 2010 that are subject to the tax. The tax rate is going from 2.0% to 2.1%, and will take effect on January 1, 2010.

b.) Regional Land-Use Scenario Planning

Mr. Whyte and Mr. Noonkester from Kimley-Horn gave a presentation on Regional Land-Use Scenario Planning. During the development of the 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) this notion was discussed in the Region, and this became the center of Option 3: Secure Additional Funding and Adopt the Regional Growth Strategy in the LRTP. Option 3 received approximately 99% support from the public comments received from the questionnaire and the public meetings. GWRC and FAMPO are not in the business of dictating land use to localities. Instead, GWRC and FAMPO will serve as a convener and facilitate forums for discussion on alternative growth strategies. There is a high level of Regional interest in Land-Use Scenario Planning, for example, The University of Mary Washington and the Regional Chamber of Commerce. The presentation included topics such as:

- What is Scenario Planning
- What do we want to achieve
- The planning process
- What is in the toolbox
- Overview of a case study

Community Viz was the recommended software used for the Scenario Planning in the presentation, and the licensing cost for this software is approximately \$750. This project would give the Region an opportunity to view different development scenarios to see what works best for our Region. The Board would be endorsing a process using a software application. Mr. Dudenhefer stated that he would like to see this deferred until May. The funding for this project would be supported by FAMPO. In the 2009 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), there was \$300,000 of Regional Surface Transportation Program (RSTP) funds to fund this effort. On a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) amendment, these funds were placed into reserve. This project was unanimously recommended by the FAMPO Technical Committee and the FAMPO Transportation Advisory Group (TAG).

Mr. Connors asked about the rural members of the GWRC, who do not vote on FAMPO. Mr. Robinson stated that this project will be fully coordinated with GWRC and will include the entire George Washington Region. At Mr. Connors' request, this presentation will be presented before the George Washington Regional Commission (GWRC) in April, and brought back to the FAMPO Policy Committee for action in May.

c.) Transportation Management Area (TMA) Presentation

Ms. Dabney of the Federal Highway Department (FHWA) gave a presentation on Transportation Management Area (TMA), which is an urbanized area exceeding 200,000 people. When the results of the 2010 census are available in 2012, any new MPO's and TMA's will be designated in Virginia, and the 2010 Population Census for the Region is expected to show that our Region will exceed 200,000. The question is whether or not FAMPO should pursue in making a special request along with the Governor to FWHA and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to be designated as a TMA in advance of the 2010 Census, or wait until the 2010 Census is published.

The following are four primary responsibilities of a TMA:

1. The MPO is responsible for developing a Congestion Management Process.
2. The MPO would have the responsibility for selecting all federally-funded projects with the exception of those on the National Highway System, the Bridge Replacement Program and the Interstate Maintenance Program.
3. TMA's that are designated based on population are eligible to receive a portion of the Surface Transportation Program (STP) fund that is sub-allocated.
4. There is a requirement to be certified by the U.S. Secretary of Transportation once every four years.

There was a discussion about the regulations regarding the Congestion Management Process which included the following:

1. The results of the Congestion Management Process should be used in the development of the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).
2. The MPO must hold at least one formal public meeting during the TIP development process.
3. The FHWA and the FTA shall jointly review and evaluate the transportation planning process for each TMA no less than once every four years to determine if the process meets the requirements of applicable provisions of Federal law and this subpart.

The primary purpose of a certification review is to formalize the continuing oversight and day-to-day evaluation of the planning process. It is a valuable opportunity to provide advice and guidance to a TMA for enhancing the planning process and improving the quality of transportation investment decisions. It ensures compliance with planning regulations, and ensures the planning process addresses the major issues facing the area. The review approach is every four years. Ms. Dabney reviewed the technical and administrative elements of a certification review. Some of the major differences between a non-TMA and a TMA are that a non-TMA does not have to a Congestion Management Process (CMP) in place or a self certification. A TMA is required to have a CMP in place; a formal certification by FHWA and FTA; a project selection authority; and may receive sub-allocated STP funds.

Ms. Dabney stated that FAMPO is already fulfilling many of the TMA requirements.

Mr. Robinson recommended that FAMPO continue operating as a MPO until the 2010 Census is published.

d.) Federal Stimulus Package/Federal Legislative Action

The entire Multimodal list has been posted on the <http://www.stimulus.virginia.gov/projects/> website. A letter was sent to Secretary of Transportation, Mr. Pierce Homer, requesting the two cancelled highway projects in Spotsylvania County. A summary of the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) Legislative Conference was sent to all the members of the Policy Committee, and handouts are available of the full APTA Reauthorization Position. Mr. Robinson asked VDOT staff when FAMPO would be formally notified of its \$1.4 million in stimulus money. VDOT staff replied that the notification may be in process. The MPO has one year to obligate the money.

e.) GWRC/FAMPO Information Technology (IT) Deficiencies and Development of Corrective Plan

Mr. Wilson reported that there have been on-going issues with GWRC/FAMPO's IT infrastructure over the last few years. An IT Committee has been established to review the Agency's overall IT needs. A memo will be sent in early April or late March to the Commission members informing them of the hardware, software, installation, data migration, etc. needs within the Commission. This upgrade will maximize benefits and help facilitate the needs within each of individual localities.

Mr. Robinson stated that an important aspect of this upgrade will be to make GIS services more accurate and user friendly to all local governments and interested parties.

Mr. Rodenberg suggested that GWRC staff gather input on the IT needs from local governments. Mr. Wilson stated that it is the desire of the Commission to develop a robust system to meet current needs as well as future needs. This project will be funded from GWRC/FAMPO's transportation and other resources.

f.) I-95 Interchange Status Report

I-95 Rest Area Access - The Steering Committee is scheduled to meet on March 25, 2009 at 3:30 p.m. These meetings are now being advertised in the *Free Lance Star* and the FAMPO website. The notifications also are sent to an expanded mailing list. All of the alternatives, analysis and traffic data are posted on the FAMPO website at the following address: <http://www.fampo.gwregion.org/I-95AccessStudy.html>

Jackson Gateway – On March 18, 2009 at 10:30 p.m., Mr. Robinson is meeting with Mr. Rodney White and planning staff of Spotsylvania County to review the issues surrounding Jackson Gateway, the new arterials and the County's Thoroughfare Plan. The consultant Scope of Work has been approved, and the Notice-to-Proceed has been issued.

Route 630 Interchange - In reference to the Route 630 Interchange, Mr. Elliott has been receiving calls from interested parties regarding the Toll Road Authority. Mr. Robinson stated that these calls can be directed to him. The traffic counts have been finished on this project, and classifications, turning movements, and ramp movements are being reviewed, and the raw data should be available within a week. In approximately two weeks, VDOT's consultant should be authorized to provide a report on analyzing data in order to provide a footprint. This process should take approximately five months to complete.

g.) Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Update

The FAMPO staff and the VDOT staff have been reviewing the FY 2009-2012 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). An inventory is being conducted to track the balances and status on all partially-funded or fully-funded active FAMPO projects, and to identify any completed projects with unused funding. Projects with previous MPO TIP actions that are currently not on the TIP Project List dated on July 17, 2008 have been added to the TIP Project List. Once the inventory is complete, the TIP Project List will be brought back to the Policy Committee for a comprehensive TIP amendment.

h.) Technical Committee Restructuring

The Technical Committee Restructuring has been discussed during the Technical Committee meetings over the past two months. In the Policy Committee Bylaws, the following is the only definition of the Technical Committee:

ARTICLE VII – COMMITTEES

Section 1 – Transportation Technical Committee – The MPO shall create a Transportation Technical Committee composed of individuals with technical knowledge in transportation matters to provide technical review and comment. Non-voting members of the MPO may also be represented. The Technical Committee, if desired, may adopt its own bylaws.

Currently, the Technical Committee does not have any specific bylaws to follow. Included in the meeting packet is a paper which asks questions of interest. FAMPO may desire to formalize the Technical Committee by issuing Bylaws, defining the voting structure, tracking the attendance, and defining the Technical Committee to national standards of other MPO's across the country.

Mr. Robinson requested ideas from the Policy Committee on the Technical Committee Restructuring. Suggestions were made to first define the mission of the Technical Committee, and to review other MPO Technical Committee Bylaws around the state of Virginia. Mr. Robinson and Ms. Dabney suggested that other Technical Committee Bylaws from around the country be reviewed as well. The FAMPO Technical Committee consists of extremely hard-working and dedicated people, but "tradition" may not be an adequate basis to define its purpose. The current mission statement needs more definition in order to have a more effective Technical Committee. Mr. Robinson brought up the notion of expanding the Technical Committee to include other parts of the Region such as environmental groups, the Chamber of Commerce, etc. Mr. Robinson requested guidance from the Policy Committee.

The following concerns were raised by some members of the Policy Committee:

1. Why do changes need to be made to the restructuring of the Technical Committee?
2. Define the problem.
3. Why are we proceeding down this path?
4. How is the staff assigned to the Technical Committee?

Mr. Robinson responded to the last concern. The draft bylaws constructed by Mr. Robinson states that the elected or appointed bodies except for the State and Federal agencies assign members from functional areas to the Technical Committee. Mr. Rodenberg and Mr. Romanello expressed concern that they are being asked to solve a problem that they do not understand exists.

Mr. Harf suggested that each of the Policy Committee members ask themselves if they feel they are well-equipped to wrestle with the action items that are brought before the Policy Committee on the agenda. If not, each of the Policy Committee members has a contribution to make in terms of defining what the problem is.

The following observations were made by one of the members of the Policy Committee:

1. The Technical Committee is the planning commission of the Policy Committee. Their role is to work out problems of a technical nature for the Policy Committee, and the Policy Committee will probably endorse those types of actions submitted by the Technical Committee.
2. In reference to expanded membership, it sounds more like the Transportation Advisory Group (TAG).
3. In the past, the Technical Committee chairman participated more in the Policy Committee meetings.

The Technical Committee will review a first draft of bylaws at their next meeting. Ms. Dabney suggested that a Subcommittee be established to review the bylaws instead this being an agenda item during a Technical Committee meeting.

i.) High Occupancy Toll (HOT) Lanes Parking

Mr. Robinson reported that the Notice-to-Proceed for this task order was issued, and the Steering Committee met earlier today. The Fluor/Transurban team attended the meeting. In order to meet the Fluor/Transurban's deadlines for negotiating a final agreement on the High Occupancy Toll (HOT) lanes, they need the draft of where they are going to place the park and ride lots in three weeks or so, and it needs to be finalized within the next six weeks. The FAMPO task order is on a six-month schedule. Our Steering Committee and Fluor/Transurban team will meet again in about three weeks. In the end, we hope to have identical/similar sets of findings, but there is a potential for diversions in the findings and recommendations. Mr. Dudenhefer commented that such a diversion was not desired.

STAFF AND AGENCY REPORTS

The Staff and Agency Reports were not discussed.

FAMPO BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) – Public meetings will be taking place around the State on Service Levels in respect to transportation such as the maintenance program, whether to close rest areas, etc. The first meeting will be held in Caroline County on March 30, 2009 at the Community Center. The second meeting will be held in Lancaster County on March 31, 2009. The public is urged to attend and participate.

City of Fredericksburg – On March 19, 2009, there will be a public meeting on the Lafayette Boulevard Multimodal Corridor Study at Spotswood Baptist Church at 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. This meeting will be to present the preferred alternatives which have been approved by the Steering Committee. All the alternatives and meeting materials are posted on the FAMPO website at the following web address: <http://www.fampo.gwregion.org/lafayettestudymaterialsandpublications.html> Mr. Waple mentioned that the Existing Conditions have been received for this study, and will undertake an internal review before review by the Steering Committee.

Stafford County – Chairman Dudenhefer met with Secretary Homer to discuss the HOT Lanes and the military and the access to the military bases.

FAMPO CORRESPONDENCE

A letter from the HOT lanes general engineering contractor regarding the public hearing locations in regards to Stafford County.

FAMPO COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARIES

The FAMPO Committee Meeting Summaries are included in the meeting packet.

ADJOURN FAMPO MEETING/NEXT MEETING, April 20, 2009

The meeting was adjourned at 9:24 p.m.

Meeting Summary prepared by Marti Donley.