

FAMPO Technical Committee Meeting Minutes Summary
January 7, 2019
<http://www.fampo.gwregion.org/technicalcommittee.html>
Adopted February 4, 2019

Members Present:

Dan Cole, Chair, Spotsylvania County
Erik Nelson, City Fredericksburg
Bassam Amin, City of Fredericksburg
Craig Pennington, Caroline County
Doug Morgan, Spotsylvania County
Joey Hess, Stafford County
Ciara Williams, DRPT
Rodney White, FRED
Leigh Anderson, GWRC
Chuck Steigerwald, PRTC (Via Go-To-Meeting Call-In)
Susan Gardner, VDOT
Stephen Haynes, VDOT
Sonali Soneji, VRE

Others Present:

Bryon Counsell, Stafford County
Alex Owsiak, Stafford County

Staff Members Present:

Paul Agnello, FAMPO
Briana Hairfield, FAMPO
Kari Barber, FAMPO
John Bentley, FAMPO
Colin Cate, FAMPO
JoAnna Roberson, GWRC

Call to Order

The FAMPO Technical Committee meeting was called to order at 9:33 a.m. by Chair, Mr. Dan Cole.

Approval of FAMPO Technical Committee Agenda

Upon request of Mr. Agnello, with all concurring, Discussion Item 7b was moved to occur prior to Discussion Item 7a.

Approval of FAMPO Technical Committee Meeting Minutes of December 3rd, 2018

Upon motion by Mr. Nelson & seconded by Ms. Soneji, with all concurring, the minutes from the December 3rd TAC meeting were approved as submitted.

Review of FAMPO Policy Committee Meeting of December 10, 2018

Mr. Agnello advised that copies of the Policy Committee meeting from December 10th are not included in today's agenda packet; however, the following are the meeting highlights:

Discussion occurred on the upcoming FAMPO federal certification review – this is scheduled to occur in Washington, DC in March of 2019 – Mr. Agnello advised that the Policy Committee requested FHWA to come to a meeting to explain the re-certification process in more detail – Mr. Agnello advised this presentation will occur from FHWA at the upcoming January 28th Policy Committee meeting & the meeting will begin at 7:15 p.m. Mr. Agnello advised that due to the large number of people expected to attend this meeting, the meeting place will be moved from the GWRC conference room to the VDOT Fredericksburg District Auditorium. Mr. Agnello relayed that GWRC will also be meeting this night at 6:00 p.m. in the same venue.

Discussion occurred on Smart Scale as a result of recent information provided from the State indicating that weekend data is already included within the analysis for project scoring – Mr. Agnello advised the weekend data is included in the K factor analysis & advised that Mr. Chad Tucker who is the VDOT Smart Scale expert from the Central Office will also be coming to provide a presentation at the upcoming January 28th Policy Committee meeting. Mr. Agnello advised that Round 3 Smart Scale application selections are expected to be received January 15th so Mr. Tucker will address any questions that may arise as a result of the projects that are selected.

Discussion occurred on FAMPO staffing issues – Mr. Agnello relayed that staff was given direction to interview & fill the vacant position from Mr. Nick Quint. Mr. Agnello stated the ad for this position has been posted & will end on January 11th. Direction was also given to FAMPO to hire an intern. Mr. Agnello relayed that 2 vacant & unfilled FAMPO positions still remain & these 2 positions will be discussed in greater detail at the upcoming January 28th meeting.

Public Comment – None

FAMPO Administrator Report

Mr. Agnello advised VDOT will be hosting a meeting on January 30th at James Monroe High School beginning at 5:00 p.m. for the purpose of discussing the northbound Rappahannock River Crossing project.

Mr. Agnello advised staff has amended the FY2019 UPWP & it is currently out now for public review & public comments. To date, no public comments have been received.

Discussion Items

a.) VRE Summer Intern Projects – Ms. Sonali Soneji, VRE

Ms. Soneji advised that in the summer of 2018 VRE had 2 interns who completed a 6-week project on 2 separate VRE issues in regard to multimodal access to the VRE stations. Ms. Soneji relayed the first project provided data on multimodal boarding counts to the VRE stations. Ms. Soneji stated the data detailed a better & enhanced mapping methodology that provided more clarity in what VRE was currently utilizing. The data was compiled to determine how commuters get to a VRE station if they do not drive. Ms. Soneji advised the data showed that approximately 87% of commuters utilizing a VRE station do in fact drive to these locations. For the Fredericksburg VRE station, 76% persons surveyed drive & at Brooke 92% drive. Ms. Soneji stated that for the Fredericksburg VRE station, more commuter bus usage was incurred; with more walking to stations at the Manassas VRE station. Ms. Soneji stated the survey consisted of data compiled for the following 3 stations: Fredericksburg, Lorton & Woodbridge. Ms. Soneji advised that even though bus service is available to both the Lorton & Woodbridge stations that the usage was not as high as in Fredericksburg. Ms. Soneji also relayed that there are more commuters who are bicycling to the Fredericksburg station than to either the Lorton or Woodbridge stations. Ms. Soneji stated that the data showed that those who walk to the VRE stations live within a half-mile to the stations.

Mr. Agnello asked where the data came from. Ms. Soneji stated the data is from the VRE data used and has proven to be very effective. Ms. Gardner asked how the data was obtained. Ms. Soneji stated that online surveys were administered & these too were successful as they had approximately 60% to 70% responses submitted.

Ms. Soneji advised the second project compiled data to determine what can be learned from the 3 stations – what works well; what may need improvements/enhancements, etc. Ms. Soneji stated the Lorton VRE station is the best-case scenario & with the Spotsylvania station being the newest station, data was gathered here to see if there is a chance to do something different.

Ms. Soneji stated the Lorton station is the most mature station and receives a lot of federal employees who utilize VRE. Ms. Soneji relayed that Lorton also is accessible to military sites such as Fort Belvoir. Ms. Soneji stated the Lorton VRE station has larger origination & destination stops whereas the Spotsylvania station have those utilizing the station that come from the furthest to begin their pick-up points at the Spotsylvania VRE station.

Ms. Soneji advised that the increase in ridership at the Lorton station has continued to rise. In 1990, there was no station at Lorton. In 1997 the Lorton station materialized. Growth & utilization rates

increased by 2002. Ms. Soneji stated that beginning in 2007, when this region had a surge of new marketplace commercial base; property was beginning to be re-developed after the closure of the Lorton Prison, etc. have all contributed to the Lorton VRE station being highly utilized & participation numbers continue to rise annually.

Ms. Soneji stated there were 4 goals set that VRE wants to achieve or continue achieving & these are as follows:

- Ensure that VRE creates & meets goals
- To have continued ridership increase as housing needs increase
- Counties encourage developments by station sites
- Demand for service continually to increase

Ms. Soneji stated that when the Spotsylvania station opened in 2017, there was an increase of usage at this station & a slight decrease at both the Fredericksburg & Brooke stations. Mr. Morgan concurred that Spotsylvania County does have the thought plan in place for more development to occur in close proximities to the VRE station & zoning applications have been approved at this location. However, at this time, there are no designated site plans in place and/or moving forward but this is where the growth area is expected to rise.

Ms. Soneji thanked the committee for allowing her to update them on the VRE survey results as this could be something the entire region could benefit from in either making enhancements to existing VRE stations and/or for future station & park & ride lot constructions.

b.) Upcoming Launch of I-395 Commuter Choice Program - Mr. Chuck Steigerwald, PRTC

Mr. Steigerwald provided presentation on the I-395/95 Commuter Choice program that will be administered by PRTC. Mr. Steigerwald stated this program is early in its conception with a meeting between PRTC & NVTC scheduled for Friday, January 11th. Mr. Steigerwald stated this is the third year of I-66 funding that has been generated from the toll lanes being implemented on I-66. Mr. Steigerwald stated the I395-95 corridor funding will be cloned to the I-66 successes. Mr. Steigerwald stated the expected revenues the I395/95 corridor allocations will be \$15m that will be paid from TransUrban with an expected annual 2.5% increase resulting in a \$40m total funding to become available.

Mr. Steigerwald stated that the Commuter Choice program and Smart Scale are similar; however, different as well. Mr. Steigerwald stated one main difference is that the Commuter Choice program will be jointly administered with emphasis placed on the plan of building a program of projects whereas Smart Scale bases project acceptance on individual projects. Mr. Steigerwald also advised that Smart Scale evaluates each project submitted on a scoring percentile to obtain accepted projects. Mr. Steigerwald stated the I395/95 projects would involve more horse-trading efforts being implemented and will allow the administrators to move forward or push backward regional priorities as needed.

Mr. Steigerwald stated the Meeks ruling states that any revenue spent that utilizes toll road funding needs to show benefit to the toll lanes. Mr. Steigerwald stated when the 37 miles of express lanes opens

on 395/95, projects need to reflect that they do impact travel & reduce congestion; however, do not necessarily need to have direct benefit to the corridor.

Mr. Steigerwald advised the agreement between TransUrban & the Commonwealth is a 68-year agreement & the Toll Day One for I-395 express lanes is expected to occur in late October of 2019. Mr. Steigerwald stated that any jurisdiction within PRTC/NVTC are eligible applicants that includes transit agencies so VRE is eligible to submit projects for consideration. Mr. Steigerwald stated that eligible project types that would be considered are the following: new or enhanced local bus services; new or enhanced commuter bus services; park & ride lots/access; roadway improvements (corridor management & ITS); TSM (Transportation System Management) & TDM (Transportation Demand Management); etc.

MR. Steigerwald stated the program goals concur with those established by the Commonwealth & each year the administrators of the Commuter Choice program would define a set of regional priorities that would concur with the program goals. Mr. Steigerwald stated the program goals are as follows: to effectively move more people; to reduce congestion; to increase travel options; to enhance transportation connectivity options; & to improve transit service.

Mr. Steigerwald advised the current schedule is as follows: Initial applicant briefing at PRTC on January 11th at 10:00 a.m.; Call for projects in April of 2019; NVTC/PRTC Commission approval in October of 2019; CTB approval in October of 2019; & Projects then selected & approved by Toll Day One.

Mr. Steigerwald advised the initial briefing meeting on Friday will cover the following topics: an overview of the I395 Commuter Choice funding program; overview of the application & scoring processes; overview of working group roles/responsibilities; proposed schedule for initial round of projects; & overview of the program of projects & approval process.

Mr. Steigerwald reiterated that this program differs from Smart Scale in that the working group defines the projects & then seeks the political buy-in which then is submitted to the CTB. MR. Steigerwald stated that members of the working group will include PRTC, NVTC, jurisdictional representation, & representation from other transit agencies or entities.

Mr. Agnello thanked Mr. Steigerwald for the presentation made to the Technical Committee and advised that FAMPO looks forward to working with PRTC in moving forward with this new funding opportunity.

c.) Approval of Amended FY2019 Unified Planning Work Program – Paul Agnello

Mr. Agnello advised the FY2019 UPWP has been released for public comment & the public comment period runs from December 17th 2018 to January 17th 2019. Mr. Agnello stated that to date, no public comments have been received. Mr. Agnello asked for Technical Committee endorsement as it will be submitted to the Policy Committee at the upcoming January 28th meeting for action.

Upon motion by Mr. Nelson & seconded by Mr. Morgan, with all concurring, the draft FY2019 UPWP was endorsed by the FAMPO Technical Committee with a request that it be adopted by the Policy Committee at the upcoming January 28th meeting.

d.) Lafayette Boulevard Study, Phase 1 – Paul Agnello

Mr. Agnello stated the Phase 1 study purpose for Lafayette Boulevard will involve a study of potential transit improvements for the Lafayette Boulevard Corridor to Route 1 in Spotsylvania County. Mr. Agnello stated the study will include improved accessibility for the Fredericksburg Amtrak/VRE station & planned Lee Hill Transfer station. The study will develop a prioritized list of projects for future funding considerations in the Smart Scale, CMAQ, RSTP, etc. funding sources. Mr. Agnello stated that Phase 1 is part of a multimodal study effort with Phase 2 focusing on potential highway & bike/ped improvements within the study area.

Mr. Agnello advised the Phase 1 FY2019 study has approved funding from a Technical Assistance Grant from DRPT. Mr. Agnello stated the deadline to utilize this funding source will expire on September 30, 2019 & cannot be used for any other existing regional projects. Mr. Agnello stated that staff is going to request through DRPT that a 6-month extension be considered to ensure the study does not have to be rushed and inadequately completed.

In regard to the Phase 2 overview & study, the purpose will be to conduct a study of potential highway & bike/ped improvements for the Lafayette Boulevard Corridor in coordination with Phase 1 Transit efforts that will include potential improvements to access to VRE/Amtrak commuter lots & stations; highway improvements to Lafayette Boulevard between Route 1 & Route 3 & bike/ped crossings at Route 3. Mr. Agnello stated this is a City request for RSTP FAMPO funding for \$125k that was approved several years back for FY2020.

Mr. Agnello advised the study stakeholders will include the following: DRPT, City of Fredericksburg, FRED Transit, Spotsylvania County, VRE, GWRideConnect, & other interested FAMPO TAC members.

Mr. Agnello stated that recent & upcoming changes could impact the study efforts & these include the following: an interest in studying Fredericksburg VRE/Amtrak commuter parking needs; the results of the Round 3 Smart Scale selected projects by January 15th; etc.

Mr. Agnello advised that some projects which could be selected that could affect the study will include the following: Lafayette Boulevard roundabouts at Charles Street & Kenmore Avenue which would also include a new bus pullout near the VRE station; the Route 3 STARS project that will include improvements to the intersection at Lafayette Boulevard & Route 3 for an extended double left turn lanes; installation of lane reduction arrows on northbound at Lafayette Boulevard; installation of new raised medians between the VCR Trail & Lafayette Boulevard; FRED Transit Shelter/Stop improvements; etc. Mr. Agnello stated that potentially the region could utilize the I395 Commuter Choice program as an additional funding source as these projects would be of benefit to both FRED & VRE.

Mr. Agnello advised the study schedule & process has been approved by the FAMPO Policy Committee at its December meeting; however, also gave direction for FAMPO to do more of the study work in house to the extent possible (Mr. Agnello stated this is the purpose of preparing to hire a new FAMPO intern for work on this study). Mr. Agnello stated that staff plans to begin the study process in February & will utilize any/all existing data to include the I-95 Phase 2 Transit/TDM results; VRE studies/data, etc. Mr. Agnello asked that if any other locality studies are already available to please forward these to staff for utilization as well.

Ms. Soneji stated that VRE can provide ridership data and asked if the study would also gage current & future demands as well. Mr. Agnello concurred this would be a focus point with the study. Mr. Agnello asked Mr. White the projected time frame for the Lee Hill Transfer Station project. Mr. White stated this is an approximate \$350,000 project and project construction is expected to begin in April of 2019. Mr. White advised once begun, the project is expected to take 4 months for completion. Ms. Anderson asked Mr. Nelson if the City is planning to also include designated cross walks along the corridor. Mr. Nelson concurred this would be a specific request from the City.

Ms. Gardner asked Mr. Agnello if we are looking at also making improvements at current/existing FRED stops. Ms. Gardner stated that she personally observes daily elderly & handicapped people who are waiting outside in unsheltered FRED bus stop areas in the Dollar General/Paul's Bakery areas & a blind man that walks from the Sheets area to the Olde Greenwich area. Ms. Gardner asked if considerations would be given within the study to include handicapped & ADA access areas. Mr. Agnello stated this would also be a focal point of the proposed study efforts.

- i. Lafayette Boulevard Study Map – Included in packet for review
- ii. Resolution 19-17, Approving the use of FAMPO consultants to complete the Lafayette Boulevard Phase 1 study – in packet for review of Resolution approved at December Policy meeting

e.) Smart Scale Update – Paul Agnello

Mr. Agnello reiterated that the Round 3 Smart Scale approved applications will be released to the public by January 15th. Mr. Agnello stated that state-wide there are a lot of projects competing for the district grant funding. Mr. Agnello advised the project needs state-wide still exceed the amount of money that will be available for allocation.

Mr. Agnello advised that for the Fredericksburg District, 35 individual projects were submitted for consideration with a total cost of \$493m with \$800m total being estimated for allocations from Smart Scale Route 3.

Mr. Agnello stated that to date, the Fredericksburg District had zero projects screened out in Round 1; 3 screened out in Round 2 & 1 screened out in Round 3 which was the Gateway Boulevard project. Mr. Agnello advised this project may be eligible for new or different funding sources so potentially this project will be approved regardless of the Smart Scale Round 3 screen-out. Mr. Agnello stated the project was screened-out for Round 3 consideration due to project readiness. Mr. Agnello stated the

project readiness category is more rigorous than the other scoring categories and this is the major factor for projects being screened-out state-wide.

Mr. Agnello stated the next steps in the Smart Scale Round 3 process are as follows: January 15th – release of project scores from the CTB; February-April, development of Draft SYIP; & adoption of SYIP at June meeting.

f.) I-95 Study Update – Paul Agnello

Mr. Agnello advised copies of a letter that will be submitted to the FY2019 General Assembly is included for review in today's agenda packet.

i. Chapter 741 Acts of the General Assembly Executive Summary

Mr. Agnello advised the letter to be submitted prior to January 9th of the opening of the FY2019 General Assembly is referring to Chapter 741 of the 2016 Acts of Assembly that directed VDOT & FAMPO to conduct a joint evaluation of traffic congestion between mile markers 145 (Stafford County) & 125 (Spotsylvania County) & to provide evaluation of alternative solutions that will address traffic congestion. Mr. Agnello stated these alternative solutions could include, but will not be limited too, extension of the I-95 Express Lanes further south.

Mr. Agnello stated that VDOT & FAMPO conducted a two-phased study that met the requirements of this legislation. Mr. Agnello stated the Phase 1 2016 study objective was to develop a 2040 master plan for I-95 that considered existing & future weekday & weekend travel concerns. Phase 1 relied on macroscopic analysis that utilized the region's travel forecasting model.

Mr. Agnello relayed the Phase 2 2018 efforts were undertaken to provide detailed microscopic (VISSIM) operational analysis along the I-95 corridor to reveal potential choke points & operational problem areas not known at the macroscopic level. This study resulted in analysis for both near-term actions & long-term planning processes.

ii. INRIX Congestion Hotspot summary

Mr. Agnello stated the recent INRIX data confirms that the Washington, DC area is the worst hot spot in the county for traffic congestion. Mr. Agnello further stated the data also focused on Exit 133 in Stafford County has the worst travel conditions along the I-95 corridor.

g.) Joint GWRC/FAMPO Title VI Non-discrimination Plan Discussion – Briana Hairfield

Ms. Hairfield advised she is updating the joint GWRC/FAMPO Title VI Non-Discrimination Plan and this will be submitted by the end of February to the Technical Committee for review and comments. Ms. Hairfield advised FAMPO will be having a federal certification review in Washington, DC in March so she is just making sure all necessary updates have been made before the federal certification review. Ms. Hairfield advised the last Title VI plan was adopted in FY2016. Ms. Hairfield stated she regularly meets with stakeholders, residents, businesses, etc. to ensure that there is communication

between FAMPO and the community it serves. Ms. Hairfield advised that the 2045 LRTP update will include more detailed demographics than what was included in the FY2016 plan. Ms. Hairfield reiterated that the region is not expecting anything negative to come from the March re-certification process but just wants to ensure that FAMPO remains in compliance.

h.) Federal Certification Review – Paul Agnello

Mr. Agnello advised that FAMPO will be under-going federal certification review in March. Mr. Agnello stated staff will be in Washington, DC for 1-3 days answering questions, providing documentations, etc. Mr. Agnello stated that due to the northern most portion of Stafford County, FAMPO is required to be in compliance with the Washington, DC certification process. Mr. Agnello stated that more information will be forthcoming & at this time, no specific date has been set for when the certification process will occur so at this time both the FAMPO Technical Committee & Transportation Advisory Committee meetings for the month of March will be cancelled.

Mr. Agnello stated the last certification review process occurred in FY2015 & there were no significant negative FAMPO ratings. Mr. Agnello advised this upcoming review process will involve a new risk based process & no other MPO has gone through the new review process to date. Mr. Agnello stated the FAMPO region will be the guinea pig for certification reviews with the new regulations included. Ms. Gardner asked if staff could ask questions prior to the re-certification date for specific documents/questions that will need to be answered so staff can have advance preparation time prior to attending the March session. Mr. Agnello advised that staff will be providing CLRP, TIP, LRTP, MOU's, Title VI Plan, etc. for review & is hopeful to receive some preliminary guidance on what to expect.

i.) Resolution 19-22, HIP Funding Allocation Transfer to UPC 111753: Rte 1 at Potomac Creek Drive – Paul Agnello

Mr. Agnello advised that Resolution 19-22 is a request from VDOT to utilize \$234,353 in FY2019 Highway Infrastructure Program (HIP) funding to be applied to the existing project at US Route 1/Potomac Creek in Stafford County. Ms. Garner advised this funding source was an unexpected surprise to the District and can only be used to fund National Highway System (NHS) highway projects. Ms. Gardner advised the current project has an estimated \$238k funding deficit & this unexpected surplus brings the total project cost needed within \$4,000. Ms. Gardner relayed that approval of funds being allocated accordingly would also preserve \$234,353 in CMAQ/RSTP funds which would allow FAMPO to utilize for other projects.

Mr. Agnello asked Ms. Gardner if this is a one-time allocation. Ms. Gardner stated this is unknown at this time but the funding source is coming from the FAST Act & are funds that need to be used quickly.

Upon motion by Mr. Nelson and seconded by Mr. Hess, with all concurring, Resolution 19-22 was endorsed by the FAMPO Technical Committee with a request that it be approved by the Policy Committee at the upcoming January 28th meeting.

Staff Report: None

Member Report:

City of Fredericksburg:

Mr. Nelson advised the City is looking forward to moving ahead with the upcoming Lafayette Boulevard Study as this corridor will complete the city's major corridor network program.

DRPT:

Ms. Williams advised that DRPT is in the process of updating its TDP & that they have received the letter & documentation from FRED & the application process ends on February 1st. Ms. Williams advised the deadline for updates outside of transit updates is May 1st.

Adjourn

The January 7, 2019 FAMPO Technical Advisory Committee meeting was adjourned at 11:02 a.m. and the next meeting will be held on February 4, 2019.

