



**Citizens Transportation Advisory Group (CTAG) Meeting Minutes
February 8, 2017**

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Committee Members Present:

Mr. Todd Rump, Chair, Spotsylvania County
Mr. Guy Gormley, City of Fredericksburg
Mr. Rupert Farley, Spotsylvania County (At-Large)
Mr. Larry Gross, Spotsylvania County (At-Large)
Mr. Art Snyder, Spotsylvania County
Ms. Fran Larkins, Stafford County
Mr. David Swan, Stafford County

Others Present:

Ms. Michele Shropshire, Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)

Staff Present:

Mr. Paul Agnello, FAMPO
Mr. Nick Quint, FAMPO
Ms. Leigh Anderson, GWRC
Ms. JoAnna Roberson, GWRC

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Rump called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Upon motion made by Mr. Swan and seconded by Mr. Gormley, with all concurring, the February 8th CTAG agenda was approved as submitted.

APPROVAL OF CTAG MEETING SUMMARY OF NOVEMBER 9, 2016

Both Ms. Larkins and Mr. Farley requested edits to be made to page 8 of the minutes included in tonight's agenda packet. FAMPO staff advised these amendments would be made after the conclusion of tonight's meeting and that a revised copy of the minutes reflecting the revisions would be forwarded to the committee members.

Upon motion by Ms. Larkins and seconded by Mr. Farley, and all others concurring, the minutes from the January 11th meeting were approved as submitted with the following edits to be made to page 8 as requested.



REVIEW OF FAMPO POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING OF JANUARY 23, 2017

Mr. Agnello advised that the Policy Committee requested a special task force advisory committee to be formed. The purpose this committee is to provide feedback to Mr. Hap Connors, Commonwealth Transportation Board representative, for the upcoming CTB meeting on March 14th.

Mr. Agnello stated that the advisory task force committee is going to review the projects submitted for Smart Scale consideration that were either not selected or did not score well from Round 2 of the application process. Mr. Agnello relayed that the committee will comprise a list of facts, data, questions, etc. that will be presented to Mr. Connors so he will have the documentation to present to the CTB with the hope that the CTB will reconsider possible approval of some projects and/or enable the region to have a better understanding of how they could be more competitive in the Round 3 Smart Scale application process. Mr. Agnello advised that the first Task Force meeting will be held on Thursday, February 16th at 6:00 p.m. in the GWRC conference room.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

NEW BUSINESS

None

DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

- a.) I-95 SB Collector Distributor Lanes Design Public Hearing – Ms. Shropshire , Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)

Ms. Shropshire stated that the I-95 CD lanes/Rappahannock River Crossing Project scope includes the following:

- The building of two parallel lanes (called Collector/Distributor lanes) along the I-95 southbound corridor
- The CD lanes will run from Exit 133 on the Route 17 interchange in Stafford County to Exit 130 on the Route 3 interchange in Fredericksburg
- The CD lanes will allow the local traffic to travel southbound between Route 17 and Route 3 without having to enter the I-95 general purpose lanes
- The new bridge that will be built over the Rappahannock River will be designed to carry the CD lanes
- As a result of this project, there will be ramp and parking modifications made to the existing Virginia Welcome Center

Ms. Shropshire advised that VDOT is planning to hold a public informational meeting on the I-95 SB Collector Distributor lane design project in the mid-March time frame.

The CTAG committee members asked the following questions and/or made the following comments:

- The question was asked when the traffic counts in determining congestion were taken – Ms. Shropshire stated the modeling data was taken from a weekday a.m. peak morning commute traffic time. The committee asked that VDOT consider also including traffic counts for weekend modeling data as well.
 - Total number of new lanes will be two – the comment was made that with the continuous traffic congestion in this area that two lanes does not seem like it will even make a difference in reducing the traffic congestion problems.
 - The previous projects that included the right exit off of Route 17 and the Dumfries/Route 610 projects both have proven to be disasters so it is hoped that VDOT will continue to test and study options before implementing to ensure that the same back-ups do not occur just at different access points.
 - There is still concern with the truck traffic on Route 17 and thinks the weaving concept that is planned will not work – Ms. Shropshire stated that extensive signage will be implemented and that the planned project will add an additional two lanes, as well as widening the bridge so this should significantly help to reduce the congestion that is experienced there now on a daily basis.
- b.) 95 Express Lanes Fredericksburg Extension (Fred Ex) Update – Ms. Shropshire, Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)**

Ms. Shropshire advised that as part of the Atlantic Gateway project, the I-95 Express Lanes Fredericksburg Extension (Fred Ex) project is being planned by VDOT. This project will extend the I-95 express lanes from Garrisonville Road to Route 17 in Stafford County. The project will provide direct connection with the Northbound and Southbound Rappahannock River Crossing projects. Ms. Shropshire stated that VDOT staff is currently analyzing the access points and studying the operational improvements associated with the project.

Ms. Shropshire stated that the tasks that are completed and underway are as follows:

- Preliminary framework agreement with TransUrban in defining the project scope and optimized scope was completed in August of 2016
- Data collection for the Environmental Assessment (EA) is underway
- Traffic data collection for the Interchange Justification Report (IJR) is underway
- Technical studies to include traffic and revenue analysis, wetlands, cultural resources, etc. is underway
- Preliminary legal analysis underway
- Initial traffic and revenue studies underway
- Scope optimization underway which include different operational points, potentially new access points, noise analysis, etc.

Ms. Shropshire stated that the risk assessment workshop meeting that was held internally for VDOT staff was held in February 2017; a public information meeting is scheduled for March 2017; with procurement to begin in July 2017.

Ms. Shropshire stated these would be followed with public hearings to be scheduled in September of 2017; a final National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) decision to be received by January of 2018; the issuance of the Request for Proposals (RFP) in the spring of 2018; the design/build contract to be awarded in the Fall of 2018; construction to begin in the spring of 2019; and construction completed in the fall of 2021.

Ms. Shropshire advised that the Fred Ex project is being proposed as a toll facility. Therefore, pursuant to state code, 33.2-1529, VDOT has requested \$12 million from the Toll Facilities Revolving Account to support the ongoing design work, environmental studies work and associated processes. Ms. Shropshire stated that the funding advanced is from the TFRA and will be repaid from funds that will be identified and made available from the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB).

c.) Resolution No. 17-21, Amending the FY2015-2018 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to add PE Funds for Fred Ex – Mr. Nick Quint

Mr. Quint advised that in response to Ms. Shropshire's presentation that as \$12 million is being allocated from the CTB for the design work, environmental studies and associated processes, that Resolution No. 17-21 is asking for support of the TIP to include the addition of the Fred Ex project that will extend the 95 express lanes to Exit 133 in Stafford County.

Upon motion by Mr. Swan and seconded by Mr. Gross, with Mr. Farley voting no, and all other concurring, Resolution No. 17-21 was supported by the FAMPO CTAG committee with a request that the FAMPO Policy Committee adopt it at the upcoming February 27th meeting.

d.) Smart Scale Update – Mr. Paul Agnello

Mr. Agnello advised that staff received the Smart Scale scores for Round 2 of the application process in January. Mr. Agnello stated that 3 of 28 projects submitted by the Fredericksburg VDOT district were screened out. The three projects screened out were: the Route 610 Direct Connect ramp to the 95 Express Lanes and 400 space Mine Road Park & Ride Lot expansion (\$32 m); the Beulah-Salisbury/Dixon Street intersection project in Fredericksburg (\$643k); and the Norris Bridge project that was submitted by the Northern Neck PDC (\$250 m).

Regarding the Route 610 project, Mr. Agnello the State cited concerns that this project did not have a letter of support from Transurban; however, Mr. Agnello stated that a letter of support from Transurban was not a requirement listed in the application process.

Mr. Agnello advised that on December 5th, the State ruled this project met a VTrans 2025 need but was ineligible for consideration because of "insufficient project development". Mr. Agnello stated that the Mine Road Expansion project would have been considered however as a stand-alone project. VDOT staff had requested FAMPO staff to combine the Park & Ride lot expansion project with the 95 Express Lane project as it was felt this would allow both projects to score better. Mr. Agnello relayed

that the Fredericksburg District appealed to State staff to still consider scoring the Mine Road Park & Ride lot expansion project; however, this appeal was denied for the Round 2 application process.

Regarding the Beulah-Salisbury/Dixon Street Intersection project, Mr. Agnello advised that the State ruled that the project was eligible; however, it did not meet a VTrans 2025 need. Mr. Agnello stated this ruling came despite the project appearing to meet the Smart Scale eligibility criteria for UDA, Regional Network and Corridor of Statewide significance. The State recommended that this project should be pursued for funding under the Economic Development Access funding category. Mr. Agnello stated that as the project met the requirements for the safety improvement criteria and met the VTrans need staff was surprised the project was not scored.

Mr. Agnello stated that the Norris Bridge project was ineligible as it was not a Capital improvement, TDM or safety project.

Mr. Agnello relayed that the observations from Round 2 of the Smart Scale application process were the following:

- The scoring process took significantly longer to complete than what had been planned
- The process used VTrans 2025 Needs Assessment criteria differently in the Round 2 process versus the Round 1 process. The 1st round used the VTrans criteria as a resource but did not use it as a method for identifying projects. The data used was based on “big data” which is best suited for identifying major improvement project needs and is not well suited for identifying all small improvement projects (such as the Beulah-Salisbury/Dixon Street Intersection project).
- The two FAMPO area projects that were screened out came in despite of them being developed with VDOT over a period of six months in the Round 2 application submission process.

Mr. Gross asked if the CTB articulate specifics of why the projects were screened out. Mr. Agnello stated that both FAMPO staff and VDOT district staff have asked for specifics but to date no answers have been provided. Mr. Agnello stated that previously the fourth step, which is politically based, was included; however, for Round 2 this step was omitted.

Ms. Larkins stated that the Smart Scale process was implemented to be transparent and since inconsistencies have arisen between Round I and Round II, she feels the State needs to be held accountable for answering questions, providing data, etc. to the regions.

Mr. Snyder stated that the scoring process utilized by the State in Round II is unheard of. He stated that you had projects submitted state-wide that resulted in a scoring range between 7 to 82.2. Mr. Snyder stated that the scoring criteria utilized were not consistent and he too feels the State should be providing answers and documentation on how projects could vary so significantly.

Mr. Snyder concurred with Ms. Larkins in that the scoring system utilized by the State for Round 2 of the Smart Scale process showed no transparency. Mr. Snyder stated that population density and per capita funding allocations depict what is actually occurring. Mr. Snyder stated that areas such as Northern Virginia and Hampton Roads who have automatic taxing authorities in place will

automatically receive a hands-up in the allocation process as they will always have more leveraged money available than the districts who do not have a taxing authority in place.

Mr. Agnello stated that the observations from Round 2 of the Smart Scale application process revealed the following things: the scoring process favors smaller projects; the scoring process favors projects that have significant leveraged funding associated with them; and the scoring process did not properly assess the regional benefits of the larger projects submitted for consideration.

Mr. Agnello also relayed that even though VTrans needs were met and documented; that the freight factors were considered, etc. that this still resulted in projects not being considered or selected to move forward. Mr. Farley asked if UDA's were considered. Mr. Agnello stated no not for the project selection process and was only considered during the screening process.

i. Smart Scale Dashboard

Mr. Agnello stated that the next steps are as follows:

- January 17th/18th – CTB meeting where release of project scores and the draft funding plan will be made public. Mr. Agnello stated that the CTB is not required to follow the scores given in the draft and can deviate with documentation provided.
- February-April – CTB will be considering the evaluated projects for inclusion in the SYIP
- April/May – release of the Draft SYIP
- June – CTB adopts final SYIP

Mr. Agnello stated that in the summer, staff will be debriefing with the State on projects that were submitted for Smart Scale but not selected so that potentially some of these could be re-considered for Round 3 of the Smart Scale application process. Mr. Agnello advised that Round 3 of the Smart Scale application process is scheduled for mid-2018.

Mr. Gormley asked what the plan is now with the State for the Northbound Rappahannock River Crossing project since it was not selected in Round 2. Mr. Gormley stated that even though the Southbound River Crossing project has been selected and funded, that it cannot be effective if both projects do not work together.

Mr. Agnello stated that right now there is no plan for the Southbound Rappahannock River Crossing project and the only plan that was being implemented was the Smart Scale process. Mr. Gross asked if anything else can be done to get our messages submitted loudly and clearly to the State. Mr. Agnello stated that individual comments to the State are still being accepted and that FAMPO and other agencies/entities are submitting rebuttals to the State asking for unanswered questions to be answered, defend inconsistencies from Round I versus Round II, etc. Mr. Agnello stated that as the scoring process only included weekday data, both FAMPO and the VDOT District office are pushing for data to be done that also includes the weekends. Mr. Agnello stated that even submitting the rebuttals, etc. that it unfortunately will probably make no or limited difference in Round 2 but may at least have some consistencies established for the Round 3 process.

e.) FAMPO Committee Meetings Calendar – Mr. Nick Quint

Mr. Quint advised that for the January FAMPO committee meetings, an annual meeting calendar was distributed. Since that time, there have been two changes made to the calendar so a revised calendar is available for members.

Mr. Quint stated that the two changes are as follows:

- The July Technical Committee meeting was scheduled for Monday, July 3rd; however, staff has been advised that the 3rd is now a holiday for some of the localities so the Technical Committee meeting is re-scheduled to July 10th
- At the January GWRC/FAMPO meetings discussion was held regarding the month of August traditionally being one of two “off-meeting” months (the other month is December and there were no changes made to this month). However, there were conflicts expressed regarding the August schedule. There was a motion made and supported unanimously by both GWRC and the FAMPO Policy Committee that these two committees would in fact have an “off-month” in July and then meet in August.

Mr. Quint advised that the FAMPO Technical Committee meeting met in February and voted to keep the schedule as is so they will be meeting in July and will have the off-meeting month occur in August. There was discussion by CTAG and there was unanimous consent to adhere to the schedule as is with them too meeting in July and having the “off-meeting” month to occur in August and December.

CORRESPONDENCE

Included in packet and self-explanatory

STAFF REPORT

Mr. Agnello advised that Ms. Donley is out on sick leave recovering from extensive foot surgery. Mr. Agnello stated that Ms. Donley is expected to return to the office in April; however, within the next several weeks will be teleworking from home. Mr. Agnello stated that for the next several weeks if there is anything that arises that Ms. Donley would normally tend too, please make either himself or Mr. Quint aware of the need/request.

Mr. Agnello stated that FAMPO now has two interns on staff from the University of Mary Washington and they are assisting Mr. Quint on FAMPO duties.

MEMBER REPORTS

Ms. Larkins reminded the committee that tomorrow (February 9th) the 2045 LRTP advisory committee will be conducting its first meeting at GWRC and that even though she & Mr. Farley are the committee representatives from CTAG, the meeting is open to the public for any who wish to participate.

Mr. Farley stated that he has had correspondence with VDRPT and has been a third track rail champion. However, he said a study had been made for a rail by-pass of Washington through Dahlgren. Mr. Farley stated that at the next meeting he would like to receive feedback from CTAG.

Mr. Agnello stated that the Draft EIS is forthcoming and this would be the time to submit all questions and comments.

Mr. Gross stated that even though there were clearly inconsistencies from the Round 1 Smart Scale Application process to the Round 2 of the Smart Scale process, that this method is still better than what has been utilized before. Mr. Gross stated that for many years projects having been included within the region's Six-Year plan and never get funded nor removed from the plan & just keep getting re-added every 7th year. Mr. Gross stated that at least with the Smart Scale process that if a project is submitted and approved, that funding is guaranteed.

ADJOURN

The February 8th meeting concluded at 8:12 p.m. The next CTAG meeting will be held on March 8, 2017 at 6:00 p.m.

Meeting Minutes completed by Joanna Roberson