



FAMPO Technical Committee Meeting Minutes

October 13, 2015

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Members Present:

Erik Nelson, Vice-Chair, City of Fredericksburg
Angeline Crowder, County of Caroline
Doug Morgan, County of Spotsylvania
Joey Hess, County of Stafford
Brad Johnson, County of Stafford
Rodney White, Fredericksburg Regional Transit (FRED)
Cynthia Porter Johnson, Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission (PRTC)
Sonali Sonji, Virginia Railway Express (VRE)
Allison Richter, Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)
Craig Van Dussen, Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)

Others Present:

Ed Keasler, County of Stafford
Dan Grinnell, Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)
Victoria Sheil, University of Mary Washington (UMW)

Staff Members Present:

Paul Agnello, FAMPO
Lloyd Robinson, FAMPO
Marti Donley, FAMPO
Nicholas Quint, FAMPO
Fiona Curtis, FAMPO

CALL TO ORDER

The FAMPO Technical Committee meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m.

APPROVAL OF TECHNICAL COMMITTEE AGENDA

The FAMPO Technical Committee agenda was approved as submitted, with a request from Mr. Agnello to remove Item #6B under the Action Item category. Item #6B was approval of Resolution No. 16.11, endorsing the City of Fredericksburg's grant application to the Virginia Department of Transportation for FY2017 Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) Funding. Mr. Agnello advised that FAMPO staff had received notification from the City that this Resolution request needed to be pulled and not forwarded to the Policy Committee for approval at this time.

APPROVAL OF TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 14, 2015

The Technical Committee minutes from the September 14th meeting were approved as submitted.

REVIEW OF FAMPO POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 21, 2015

Mr. Agnello advised that the minutes are included in today's packet. Mr. Agnello provided the following three highlights:

- 1.) Policy Committee approved the HB2 project submissions which were a total of 5 projects submitted: 3 from GWRC & 2 from FAMPO
- 2.) Policy Committee approved Resolution of Support for the I95 Express Lane Southern Terminus fixes resulting from increased congestion at Exit 143. VDOT plans to provide an update to the Policy Committee at the Upcoming October 19th meeting and the updates will then be relayed to both the FAMPO Technical committee and to Citizen Transportation Advisory Group (CTAG) in November.
- 3.) Policy Committee is interested in pursuing an I95 Corridor Study and have directed staff to develop a draft scope for the Policy Committee to review at the October 19th meeting. If this request moves forward, this will also be brought to the Technical Committee and CTAG for review in November as well.

Mr. White inquired as to what the corridor study would include. Mr. Agnello relayed that it will be a multi-modal comprehensive corridor study beginning near the Hanover/Caroline county line and ending near the Stafford/Prince William county line. This study will focus on not just highway data but would also include transit, rail, etc. Ms. Sonji relayed that VRE is also conducting a study with MGA and their study area is also looking at the I-95 corridor as one of its state-wide corridors as well.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

ACTION ITEMS

- a.) **Resolution No. 16-10, To Amend the 2040 CLRP to Include the Brooke and Leeland Road Virginia Railway Express Rail Stations in Stafford County, the Virginia Railway Express Rail Station in Spotsylvania County, and the I-95 J-Ramp Project at Exit 126 in Spotsylvania County** – Paul Agnello

Mr. Agnello advised that Resolution No. 16-10 is a continuation of the HB2 process to initiate amendments to the CLRP for the three potential new projects listed above. Mr. Agnello stated

that the public comment period for this amendment is underway. The public comment period ends on October 21st and if there are no adverse comments and opposition expressed the CLRP would then be amended accordingly.

Mr. Nelson asked if there were any financial constraints involving any of the three projects. Mr. Robinson stated that the only one is the Brooke/Leeland VRE Rail Station improvements which are currently showing a \$10.5 million dollar deficit.

Mr. Agnello advised that there is an HB2 project submitted that if approved would allocate funding for the \$10.5 million dollar gap. The total project cost is \$28.5 million dollars and the project has \$18.5 million dollars in committed funds allocated.

Mr. Agnello stated that the Spotsylvania VRE Station is fully funded and this should have already been included within the CLRP but completion dates for the project have continued to change so it was not added to the CLRP.

Mr. Agnello relayed that the J-Ramp project in Spotsylvania County is to be funded with bond revenues and revenue sharing funding categories. There was unanimous consensus from the Technical Committee to endorse Resolution No. 16-10 and request that the Policy Committee adopt it at the upcoming meeting on October 19th.

b.) Resolution No. 16-11, Endorsing City of Fredericksburg Grant Application to the Virginia Department of Transportation for Fiscal Year 2017 Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) Funding – Paul Agnello

Mr. Agnello advised that Resolution No. 16-11 is endorsing the City of Fredericksburg's grant application request for FY2017 TAP funding. Mr. Nelson relayed that this grant application would be for grade separated trail crossings at Lafayette Boulevard and Route 3 and Kings Mill Drive and Route 1. Mr. Nelson stated that it is the City's intent to have a design phase ready to be eligible to seek funding from round 2 of the HB2 application process.

Note: The City of Fredericksburg informed FAMPO staff of their plans to withdraw this grant application on October 14, 2015 so this resolution did not go to the Policy Committee for adoption on October 19th as had been initially planned.

c.) Resolution No. 16-12, Endorsing Stafford County Grant Application to the Virginia Department of Transportation for Fiscal Year 2017 Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) – Paul Agnello

Mr. Agnello advised that Resolution No. 16-12 is endorsing Stafford County's grant application request for FY2017 TAP funding. Mr. Hess relayed that there were some unallocated FY15-16 funds applied to the project as the project falls into a TMA category. Mr. Hess stated that this request from Stafford County is to keep the project moving forward. Mr. Hess stated that the project is a sidewalk project that fills in gaps on Mine Road that currently does not have sidewalks. Mr. Hess relayed that a lot of the area on Mine Road has had sidewalks built as result of proffers from developers etc. This project will finalize the sidewalk construction and provide

connectivity. Mr. Agnello stated that the amount of TAP funding the MPO has for the northern Stafford area is approximately \$81,000 annually.

There was unanimous consensus from the Technical Committee to endorse Resolution No. 16-12 with a request that the Policy Committee adopt it at the upcoming October 19th meeting.

d.) Resolution No. 16-13, Endorsing District Grant Application Submission from City of Fredericksburg – Paul Agnello

e.) Resolution No. 16-14, Endorsing District Grant Applications from Spotsylvania County – Paul Agnello

f.) Resolution No. 16-15, Endorsing District Grant Applications from Stafford County – Paul Agnello

Mr. Agnello advised that Resolutions No. 16-13, 16-14, & 16-15 are all district grant application endorsements for projects submitted by individual localities. Mr. Agnello stated that HB2 allows an individual locality to submit a project application if the project is on a corridor of state-wide significance and if the application has MPO endorsement.

Ms. Crowder inquired as to why the project from Caroline County was not included for consideration. Mr. Agnello relayed that as GWRC does not have an equivalency of a Technical Committee so this Resolution of Support will come from GWRC directly at the upcoming October 19th meeting. Mr. Agnello advised that King George County also has a grant application project request that will be adopted at the October 19th meeting.

There was unanimous consensus from the Technical Committee to endorse all three Resolutions to include: Resolution No. 16-13, No. 16-14, & No. 16-15 with a request that the Policy Committee adopt at the upcoming October 19th meeting.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

a.) 95 Express lanes Update – Paul Agnello

Mr. Agnello advised that there have been 3 prior Express Lane studies completed in early to mid-2015. Mr. Agnello relayed that the studies completed show data from before and after the express lane project opening and reflects data from Exit 126 (Massaponax) to Exit 169 (Springfield).

Mr. Robinson clarified that the study completed by FAMPO staff only gathered data from Exit 126 to Exit 143. The Transurban study compiled data from Exit 143 to Exit 169 and the VDOT study entailed data from Exits 126 to Exit 169.

Mr. Nelson stated that he felt a technology clarification should be used when referring to the studies and that the region needs to be clear on exactly what we want to project as we move forward. Mr. Nelson stated that in regard to “Express Lane Implementation” this implies that the desire is still to have the express lane project go as far as to Exit 126 at Massaponax and that may

or may not any longer be the case. Mr. Nelson stated that he thinks this should be referred to as “partial” express lane implementation.

Mr. Robinson stated that FAMPO staff looked at the data back in the spring when Mr. Paul Milde was expressing pros and cons that yes traffic is more congested south-bound but has drastically improved north-bound. Mr. Robinson stated that the recent studies do demonstrate that point; however, our previous study did not because we did not look at that aspect. Our study did demonstrate that conditions have deteriorated south of Exit 143. Mr. Nelson stated that this theology is not one to be unexpected as we have just moved the re-integration of the travel lanes further south.

Mr. Robinson stated that the reason for doing this now is to prove or disprove that so much time is lost south of Exit 143 that you cannot make it up north of Exit 143 but the recent data affirms that you do in fact make up the time lost the further north you go.

Mr. Nelson asked so where do we go from here. Mr. Johnson asked if the study was done on both the general purpose lanes and the express lanes. Mr. Robinson relayed that the consultants looked at the express lanes and their findings were that the congestion north at Exit 169 and S of 143 that from time to time there is a back-up in the a.m. on the express lanes going north and in the p.m. going south. However, overall, the express lanes are functioning as they were expected to and traffic conditions are excellent.

Mr. Johnson asked if the data utilized is available to be easily re-reviewed as he wonders why Exit 143 is the break point and why we do not look at a third segment between Exit 143 and 152. This review may give an entirely different set of numbers and data. Mr. Robinson stated that he felt this request was doable. Mr. Nelson asked exactly what this review would tell us. Mr. Johnson stated that the gap between Exits 152 & 143 may give a different picture, just as an entirely new scenario may be presented from going from Exits 152 to 126.

Mr. Robinson stated that both Mr. Ross and Mr. McLaughlin have stressed at Policy Committee meetings that the express lanes have broken I95 thusly resulting in I95 being completely ruined. Mr. Robinson stated that Mr. Ross cited his own personal commute from Exit 130 to Exit 152 at Quantico. Mr. Ross has stated that he cannot use the express lanes to get where he needs to go and therefore he has to rely on the general purpose lanes. Mr. Robinson stated that Mr. Ross’ overall concept concurs with Mr. Johnson’s comments in that traffic congestion overall between Exits 152 and 126 has worsened as a result of the 95 express lane projects opening last December.

Mr. Hess also inquired as to whether the data computes the average speed. If the posted speed limit is 65 but due to congestion and back-ups you are not adhering to the 65 mph speed limit then what speed are you actually driving at? Mr. Robinson stated that in the previous study this data was captured and he thinks was included within the narrative portion of the study.

Ms. Richter asked if data is available on where the commuters leaving Fredericksburg for Northern Virginia get on and get off because she thinks hardly anyone commuting from this region gets on at Exit 126 and then gets off at Exit 143.

Mr. Robinson stated that it is the feeling from the Policy Committee that they want clarification on whether the express lane project should be completed all the way south to Exit 126 or if an additional general purpose lane would be more beneficial. Mr. Robinson stated that both the CTB representative and the VDOT Commissioner had expressed support for a corridor study being completed from Caroline to Prince William that will include data from the entire corridor.

b.) HB2 Update and Debriefing on Submittal Process – Paul Agnello

Mr. Agnello stated that all HB2 project applications were submitted prior to the September 30th deadline. Mr. Agnello relayed that in late October HB2 applications are expected to be released to the CTB and to the public. Mr. Agnello advised that the CTB has the right to submit an additional 1-2 other projects and if there are any for consideration these would be submitted in November/December. Mr. Agnello stated that the HB2 scores are expected to be released by January 15th. In May of 2016, CTB FY17-22 SYIP allocations based on the HB2 projects scored will be allocated. In June, 2016 the final SYIP for FY17-22 will be released and in August of 2016 we begin round 2 for the next year's HB2 project considerations.

Mr. Agnello advised that 256 agencies were eligible to submit projects but only 88 projects were submitted. Ms. Richter advised that the Fall VDOT Transportation meeting is scheduled for November 12th and this meeting will be designed to obtain citizen comments regarding the Six-Year Plan.

Ms. Richter stated that the district grant program applications for the Fredericksburg District equaled \$65 million dollars and the region will be competing for approximately \$41 million dollars in available funding. However, Ms. Richter also stated that some of the district grant projects were also projects submitted to the statewide high priority program, so some of these projects could end up being funded from that program thus providing for a greater chance of the remaining projects to receive district grant funding.

CORRESPONDENCE

In packet and self-explanatory

STAFF REPORT

Mr. Agnello advised that DRPT is planning to provide updates to both the Technical Committee and the Policy Committee at the upcoming November meetings on the high-speed rail projects and those public meetings will begin occurring in December.

Mr. Agnello also relayed that at the upcoming November meetings updates will be provided on the following topics; Southern Terminus fix to Exit 143 as a result of the 95 express lanes congestion problems; updates on the I-95 corridor; & updates on CMAQ/RSTP funding allocations.

MEMBER REPORTS

Fredericksburg Regional Transit (FRED): Mr. Rodney White advised that an internal investigation is underway at FRED as the result of a FRED bus catching fire. Mr. White stated that there were 7 passengers on the bus at the time of the fire and all were escorted from the bus without any injuries. Mr. White stated that the bus that burned and all of the buses that were purchased in the same time frame, 2010, are also being inspected as the bus caught fire without any factors contributing – i.e. no accident; not weather related; etc. Mr. White stated that once the inspections have been completed he will update the committee on the results.

Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission (PRTC): Ms. Cynthia Porter-Johnson advised that PRTC just completed its survey process and this time 6,000 surveys were received. Ms. Porter-Johnson thanked Erik Nelson and the City for their assistance in distributing surveys to the commuters.

Virginia Railway Express (VRE): Ms. Sonji advised that VRE has kicked off its Gainesville-Haymarket project and committee and public meetings will begin occurring in early November.

NEXT TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING, November 9th, 2015/ADJOURN

The next Technical Committee meeting will be held on Monday November 9th at 9:00. The Technical Committee meeting for October 13th was adjourned at 10:24 a.m.