



**Citizens Transportation Advisory Group (CTAG) Meeting Minutes
February 16, 2016**

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Committee Members Present:

Mr. Guy Gormley, Chair, City of Fredericksburg
Mr. Bill Milligan, Spotsylvania County (Out at 7:05 p.m.)
Mr. Jim Perkins, Spotsylvania County
Mr. Art Snyder, Spotsylvania County (In at 7:10 p.m.)
Ms. Fran Larkins, Stafford County
Ms. Dawn McGarrity, Stafford County
Mr. Rupert Farley, At-Large Member
Mr. Larry Gross, At-Large Member

Staff:

Mr. Paul Agnello, FAMPO
Mr. Nick Quint, FAMPO
Mr. Daniel Reese, FAMPO
Ms. JoAnna Roberson, GWRC

Others Present:

None

CALL TO ORDER

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

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The CTAG agenda for the February 16th meeting was approved as submitted. Mr. Agnello did advise that under category 7 – Action/Discussion Items that Item 7iii would be discussed however no request for support would be asked for at tonight's meeting. Mr. Agnello stated that VDOT still wishes to proceed with Resolution No. 16-23; however, the resolution is pending endorsement from FHWA.

APPROVAL OF CTAG MEETING SUMMARY OF NOVEMBER 10, 2015 AND JANUARY 13, 2016

Upon motion by Mr. Farley and seconded by Ms. Larkins, with all in consensus, the minutes from the November 10th, 2015 meeting and the January 13th, 2016 meeting were approved as submitted.



PUBLIC COMMENT

None

BYPASS ALTERNATIVE DISCUSSION

Mr. Gormley advised that over the years there has been a lot of CTAG discussion on outer connector proposals, alternatives, etc. Mr. Milligan stated that CTAG had expressed interest in reviewing and brainstorming on the previous outer connector options that this region pursued previously but never saw materialize to see if previous or new alternatives may be explored for Policy Committee considerations. Mr. Milligan stated that he does not commute so he does not know first-hand the daily congestion issues that exist; however, he has associates/friends who do not live in Fredericksburg and have visited in the past that have adamantly stated that even though the region has a lot of history and worthwhile tourism sites that they will not re-visit the area due to the consistent traffic congestion that the region experiences. Mr. Gormley stated that at this time there is neither no money nor initiatives being taken from FAMPO, VDOT, or the State in regard to creating an outer connector alternative that would go around Fredericksburg, so this item is simply just discussion phase only. Ms. Larkins stated that in addition to relieving regular traffic congestions off of I-95, she too would like an outer connector alternative option that would provide some truck traffic relief off of Route 17.

Mr. Milligan stated that previous proposals included the Berea Parkway in Stafford County, and the “Ross Bypass” proposal would connect into both the counties of Culpeper and Orange. However, Mr. Milligan stated that neither Stafford County nor legislators were in support of the “Ross Bypass” as it would bypass Spotsylvania County and provide little congestion relief. Legislators stated that if they were heading to Richmond, they would not utilize an outer connector roadway that would result in them heading west and then back-tracking along Route 3 to head south on I95. Mr. Milligan stated that initially both Culpeper and Orange were in favor of this alternative; however, once they were made aware that the cost for the study would be the responsibility of the individual localities, the support lessened. Mr. Milligan stated that the previous outer connector alternatives focused on specifically a western or eastern bypass alternative. Mr. Milligan stated that even though the “Ross Bypass” proposal was not endorsed regionally that this alternative would have had resulted in no homes being taken; however, it did involve national park lands. Mr. Milligan stated that Spotsylvania County owns some land that could have been swapped out to the National Park service in exchange for park land that would have been taken with this proposal. Mr. Milligan stated that for this proposal to even become an alternative, it would still have to ultimately result into a tie into I-95 at some point and this may at some time in the future become a federal highway project instead of an individual locality project.

Ms. Larkins stated that if the Rappahannock River Crossing project comes and the 95 Express Lanes are extended southbound, this proposal would in fact relieve the commuting and traveling traffic; however, it would not relieve the truck traffic on Route 17. Ms. Larkins stated that a new eastern bypass and/or the Berea Parkway would be a longer distance for the truck traffic to endure. Ms. Larkins stated that possibly a new proposal for a bypass alternative to come in further down on Route 17 that would connect between

the 2 alternate points on Route 17 would allow for both vacationers and trucks to bypass with going just slightly out of their way; however, this alternative would not provide relief to the commuting traffic.

Ms. Larkins stated that she felt the best alternative is still an eastern bypass in some capacity – maybe even connecting to Rt. 301. Mr. Gormley stated that this proposal involves many traffic lights and a lot of 2-lane roadway that would need to be increased and also would involve the State of Maryland which could be a difficult challenge.

Mr. Perkins asked if alternatives have been explored like those in use around the Woodrow Wilson Bridge. Mr. Perkins asked if the Rappahannock River Crossing project would also include collector-distributor and thru-lanes. Mr. Perkins stated that he does not feel that the HOT lanes have been successful and does not necessarily think that extending these southbound would be of benefit to the region.

Mr. Gormley stated that as a daily commuter, he can attest to the fact that the HOT lanes have improved the north bound traffic flow and congestion but has caused more congestion and backups south bound.

Ms. Larkins stated that the outer connector alternatives were initially explored over 20 years ago and if they had been implemented then, the majority of today's congestion issues would have been eliminated.

Mr. Farley stated that of all of the original alternatives explored 20 years ago, Corridor 5 provided the most congestion relief. Mr. Farley stated though that politically the City of Fredericksburg was initially opposed to an outer connector or bypass alternative being moved forward and he thinks even today they still are resistant. Initially Spotsylvania County also opposed; however, Stafford County was receptive. M. Farley stated that congestion pricing is the solution and he has asked the FAMPO committees consistently to lobby for this with the legislators as this is not currently permissible per federal regulations. Mr. Farley stated that congestion pricing would encourage people to utilize transit; would encourage people to live closer to their job sites; and would encourage people to live closer to transit stations.

Ms. McGarrity stated that she felt today's congestion issues on I95 are 2 separate issues – one is generated from the local commuters who work outside of the region that results in traffic congestion Monday through Friday. The second issue is for the vacation travelers who utilize I95 on the weekends that causes horrendous traffic congestion and back-ups and results in the residents of the region being captive in their own homes as they cannot easily maneuver in the traffic. Ms. McGarrity stated that she felt a bypass alternative would help with the weekend traffic but didn't think it would alleviate truck traffic or commuting traffic.

Mr. Perkins stated that because this region is strategically placed between 2 capitals, that the residents of this region will always be victims of traffic congestion, and as the population in the region continues to increase, the region will always be facing congestion issues.

It was the consensus from CTAG that should an outer connector or bypass alternative become a reality, it would need to be an eastern bypass connection. Ms. Larkins asked Mr. Agnello if this is a project that could be recommended for consideration under Round 2 of HB2. Mr. Agnello relayed that

recommendations could be endorsed by CTAG and presented to the Policy Committee for their review & consideration and the recommendations would need to be presented by July of this year. Mr. Milligan stated that he would like to see CTAG go on record with a resolution of support for an eastern bypass option. Mr. Agnello stated that HB2 screenings do not favor large projects within a specific region; however, show more favorable support for smaller portions of an ultimately larger project. Mr. Agnello also stated that for urban areas the size of Fredericksburg, that most have more than 1 main arterial road that helps to provide alternative roads to travel for at least the residents; however, Fredericksburg region only has Route 1.

Mr. Gormley asked that the CTAG members review the maps, documents, & data available and provide recommendations for consideration at the March meeting so that if consensus is evident that a proposal could be submitted to the Policy Committee for their review prior to round 2 of HB2 project selections.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Agnello advised that the VDOT public forum meeting regarding the I-95 Express Lanes is being held tomorrow night at HH Poole Middle School from 6-8:00 p.m. Mr. Agnello relayed that FAMPO will be at the meeting and will have a display table that will give an overview of what the MPO is; have information explaining what the CTAG is; have a sign-up sheet for citizens who may be interested in serving on CTAG so these names could be forwarded accordingly to the respective Board of Supervisors/City Council for their action; & a sign-up sheet to forward transportation related issues, concerns, meetings, etc. to citizens within the region who want to become more informed and more involved.

ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

- a. **Update on 95 Express Lanes and Projects near Southern Terminus – Approval of Three TIP Amendments for Major Projects along the I-95 Corridor in the Vicinity of Garrisonville and Courthouse Road – Paul Agnello**

Mr. Agnello stated that there are three separate projects in northern Stafford County intended to address congestion. Mr. Agnello advised that the projects would be discussed individually as follows:

- i. **Resolution No. 16-21 – Amending the FY2015-2018 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to include PE, PE AC, RW, and CN for Project UPC 4632 for the Rte. 630 Courthouse Road Widening Improvements from 2 to 4 lanes**

Mr. Agnello stated that Resolution No. 16-21 is a request to widen Rte. 630 at Courthouse Road from 2 to 4 lanes. This project is estimated to cost \$36 million dollars and, as a revenue sharing project, will be funded with a 50/50 match from Stafford County and VDOT.

As a resident of this area in Stafford County, Ms. McGarrity expressed her support for endorsement of Resolution No. 16-21. Ms. McGarrity stated that if possible, she would like to see the project extended

slightly further to Walpole Street; however, feels the improvements recommended would definitely help to ease the traffic congestion within this area. Upon motion by Ms. McGarrity and seconded by Ms. Larkins, with Mr. Farley voting no and requesting a no build option be considered, and all others in consensus, Resolution No. 16-21 was endorsed by the CTAG with a request that the Policy Committee adopt it at their upcoming February meeting.

ii. Resolution No. 16-22, Amending the FY2015-2018 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to Include PE, AC and CN AC for Project UPC 108315 for the Extension of the 95 Express Lanes to about 1.5 miles South of Garrisonville Road

Mr. Agnello advised that Resolution No. 16-22 is for an extension of the 95 Express Lanes for approximately 1.5 miles south of Garrisonville Road. Mr. Agnello stated that this project has materialized as a result of the daily traffic congestion and back-ups that have occurred since the opening of the 95 Express Lanes last December. Mr. Agnello stated that this project is estimated to cost \$54 million and will be paid for by both VDOT (\$20m) & Transurban (\$34 m).

There were committee concerns on this Resolution that included the following points: where is the money that VDOT will be providing for the project coming from; why will it take 2 years to complete a 2.5 mile project when the entire 29 mile project was completed in a year's time period; etc.

Upon motion by Ms. Larkins and seconded by Ms. McGarrity, with all in consensus, Resolution No. 16-22 was not endorsed by the CTAG as the committee wanted to postpone recommendations until after tomorrow night's public meeting is held and after VDOT forwards FAMPO staff replies to questions as to where funding came from; etc.

iii. Resolution No. 16-23, Amending the FY2015-2018 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to Include PE AC and CN AC for Project UPC 13558 for the Construction of a 4th I-95 SB Lane between Rte. 610 (Garrisonville Road) and Rte. 630 (Courthouse Road)

Mr. Agnello stated that Resolution No. 16-23 has been submitted by VDOT. VDOT still desires to move forward with this project; however, FHWA endorsement is needed which at this time has not been given to VDOT.

There were considerable questions and comments made by CTAG and before any endorsement of the above Resolution would be given it was consensus that additional information would need to be provided by VDOT. This additional information would include how the project came to be; what are the funding sources allocated; where did the funding sources come from; why was the funding removed that had been previously fully funded to the project; why did this project come up for approval by VDOT after Stafford County had endorsed paying for the project on their own; etc.

Upon motion by Ms. Larkins and seconded by Ms. McGarrity, with all in consensus, Resolution No. 16-23 was tabled from being endorsed until specific questions addressed at tonight's meeting have been answered.

b. Resolution No. 16-24, Endorsing the Allocation Transfer of Fiscal Year 2017 Northern Stafford County TMA Transportation Alternatives Program Funding to the Mine Road Sidewalk Project in Northern Stafford County – Paul Agnello

Mr. Agnello advised that Resolution No. 16-24 is the second step in the process for project funding for MAP-21 Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) projects. Mr. Agnello stated that this is the only project in northern Stafford County that is eligible to receive the funds. This is the sidewalk improvement project on Mine Road in Stafford County. Mr. Agnello advised that Stafford submitted their grant application last October which was endorsed by FAMPO. Resolution no. 16-24 is the second step in the process whereby the actual moving of funding occurs.

Upon motion by Mr. Farley and seconded by Ms. McGarrity, with all in consensus, Resolution No. 16-24 was endorsed by CTAG with a request that the Policy Committee adopt at the upcoming February meeting.

c. House Bill 2 Updates and Draft Funding Plan – Paul Agnello

Mr. Agnello reviewed a handout in regard to HB2 updates. Mr. Agnello relayed that the actual statewide funding allocations increased from \$1.2 billion to \$1.7 billion. Mr. Agnello relayed that the CTB was meeting today and as of close of business today he has not gotten any meeting feedback. Mr. Agnello stated that the HB2 project scores are finalized; however the funding allocations are still subject to change. Mr. Agnello stated that the CTB is allowed to deviate from the scores assigned but would need to formally explain in writing any changes. Mr. Agnello stated that projects for Round 2 of HB2 will need to be decided by July of 2016.

Even though subject to change by the CTB, Mr. Agnello did reiterate that all projects approved will be fully funded and that no partial funding towards new projects will be authorized.

Mr. Agnello stated that overall FAMPO & GWRC projects did well as 3 of the 5 projects submitted were selected; all 8 of the district grant projects were selected; & 11 of 13 projects total submitted by this region were accepted.

Both Mr. Snyder and Mr. Gormley had questions and concerns on how the Rappahannock River Crossing project became fully funded when it scored a very low number overall and should not have even made the scoring criteria cuts.

Mr. Snyder stated that HB2 projects submitted for consideration and approval should be based on cost benefit and not on total project cost. Mr. Snyder stated that the problem with the chart that discloses the HB2 projects selected state-wide is the priority ranking system that was assigned. Mr. Snyder stated that you need to draw a line and either a project falls above or below the line. Out of the 8 projects selected

for this region, Mr. Snyder stated that he would like to see how many scored above and below the line and how those that were below the line were ultimately still picked, selected, and approved.

Mr. Agnello acknowledged that the scoring process was not done in the fashion that FAMPO had expected and stated that the first projects recommended for funding were district grant projects. The second group of projects scored were projects that would qualify for either state or district funding. The third group of projects scored were the larger statewide projects.

Mr. Agnello concurred that the scoring process utilized in the HB2 project selections and/or the potential CTB discretionary changes are still somewhat unsettling for staff. Based on District Grant Program funding totals, the Fredericksburg District should have placed 8th out of 9 districts; however, we actually ended up at number 3 in terms of money allocated to the district and had a total of 19 of 22 projects selected that equate to \$204.6 million.

Mr. Snyder stated that a different approach to why this region scored the 3rd highest instead of next to last is that the top 4 areas which were NOVA, Hampton Roads, Fredericksburg, & Richmond are labeled as the “Golden Crescent” areas in Virginia. These 4 areas determine where tax money is generated and ultimately provides funding that covers the entire state.

Due to the transparency that appears to have occurred within the HB2 scoring process, both Mr. Gormley and Mr. Snyder asked if FAMPO staff can actually receive the scores and scoring process utilized by the CTB. Mr. Gormley stated that for 2 years in a row the Rappahannock River Crossing project has had indication that it would score tremendously high; however, it actually scored very low and still made the cut. Mr. Agnello relayed that even though it scored a number 1, that there were only 3 state-wide projects selected from the FAMPO region and the Rappahannock River Crossing project was 1 of the 3.

Mr. Gormley asked if staff could provide feedback at the next meeting on a step-by-step process on how projects were scored. Mr. Snyder asked if the criteria in doing the study and selection process could be provided for review as well. Mr. Snyder stated that he travels I66 regularly for his job and I66 does not have the traffic congestion that this region experiences; however, it scored better than the Rappahannock River Crossing project.

Mr. Perkins asked why the higher-priced projects did not score as well. Mr. Agnello stated that even though specific reasons were not provided; state-wide it appears that smaller priced projects that were also multi-modal in nature and highway projects scored much better.

d. Update on I-95 Corridor Study Phase I – Paul Agnello

Mr. Agnello advised that I-95 Advisory Committee members (one of which includes a CTAG representative) can submit 3 potential concepts for review and consideration, and the concept proposals are due to staff by February 23rd. Mr. Gormley, the Advisory Committee member for CTAG, asked that the CTAG members review the handout in tonight’s agenda packet and submit recommendations to him

by close of business on Friday. This will allow him time to review the list of proposals, consolidate the recommendations, etc. and pick the top 3 to be submitted from CTAG.

CORRESPONDENCE

Mr. Agnello stated that a letter drafted by FAMPO staff on behalf of CTAG and to be signed by Mr. Gormley is included for review by CTAG. The purpose of the letter from CTAG to the Policy Committee is for request that the Policy Committee consider sending a letter to the State requesting that VDOT perform modeling analysis that shows the impact of extending the 95 Express Lanes from the planned terminus at Mpt 142 to Exit 140 was also requested. The letter also asked that VDOT use a similar approach with the modeling analysis to that used for the 2.2 mile extension of the 95 Express Lanes to the south side of Garrisonville Road.

Upon minor editing, the letter was endorsed by CTAG and will be modified accordingly for Mr. Gormley's signature at tomorrow's public VDOT meeting.

STAFF REPORT

Mr. Agnello advised that the grant program has been re-opened for UDA's and that the region is eligible for applying for some of these opportunities. Mr. Agnello stated that if a grant application is submitted that they would need to be included within FAMPO's CLRTP.

MEMBER REPORTS

Ms. Larkins asked if staff could provide name badges for CTAG members to wear at public meetings, at special events, etc. so that they can be readily identified to other citizens. Mr. Agnello advised that staff would follow up with this request.

ADJOURN

The February 16, 2016 meeting concluded at 8:42 p.m. The next CTAG meeting will be held on March 9, 2016 at 6:00 p.m.

Meeting Minutes completed by JoAnna Roberson