

**Fredericksburg Area Metropolitan Planning
Citizen's Transportation Advisory Group (CTAG)
Meeting Summary March 9, 2016**

Committee Members Present:

Mr. Guy Gormley, Chair, City of Fredericksburg
Mr. Jim Perkins, Spotsylvania County
Mr. Todd Rump, Spotsylvania County
Mr. Art Snyder, Spotsylvania County
Mr. William "Michael" Wood, Spotsylvania County (In at 7:07 p.m.)
Ms. Adela Bertoldi, Stafford County
Ms. Fran Larkins, Stafford County
Ms. Dawn McGarrity, Stafford County
Mr. David Swan, Stafford County
Mr. Rupert Farley, At-Large Member (Spotsylvania County)

George Washington Regional Commission (GWRC) 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 March 9th meeting was approved.

Approval of CTAG Meeting Summary of February 16, 2016

Upon motion by Mr. Farley and seconded by Ms. Larkins, with all in consensus, the minutes from the February 16th meeting were approved as submitted with one correction noted by Mr. Farley. Mr. Agnello advised that staff would make the correction requested by Mr. Farley.

Review of FAMPO Meeting of February 22, 2016

Mr. Agnello advised that the Policy Committee adopted 3 TIP amendments and they are as follows:

- 1.) Resolution No. 16-21 – Amending the FY2015-2018 TIP to include PE, PE AC, RW & CN for Project UPC #4632 for the Route 630 Courthouse Road Widening Improvements from 2 to 4 lanes

- 2.) Resolution No. 16-22 – Amending the FY2015-2018 TIP to include UPC #108315 for project of extension to the 95 Express Lanes Southern Extension South of Garrisonville Road
- 3.) Resolution No. 16-23 – Amending the FY2015-2018 TIP to include PE AC & CN AC for Project UPC # 13358 for the Construction of a 4th I95 southbound lane between Route 610 (Garrisonville Road) & Route 630 (Courthouse Road)

Mr. Agnello advised that in regard to SB742, which is pertaining to the gas tax floor that is set by the State, that currently the percentage is set at 2.1% per gallon of gasoline for all types of fuel (regular to premium) & the request that has been approved by the Senate and currently being debated by the House would increase the tax to 3% per gallon of gasoline; however, this 3% would only apply to regular gasoline prices so a request was made to have a tax floor rate set. Mr. Agnello stated that there was considerable discussion and the comments are included within tonight's agenda packet. Mr. Agnello stated that with the increase from 2.1% on all types of gasoline currently in place to an increase of 3% to just regular gasoline prices that this ends up being a wash and is not designed to be perceived as a tax increase.

Public Comment - None

New Business - None

Discussion Items

a. Update on 95 Express Lane Project – Paul Agnello

Mr. Agnello reviewed the handout that was included in tonight's agenda packet. The request was made by several CTAG members to have the information sent to them electronically as they wanted to make copies of the presentation to distribute to citizens, etc. Mr. Agnello stated that staff would comply with the request.

Mr. Agnello stated that there is approximately \$250 million for funding improvements planned along I-95 near the Garrisonville interchange and that currently 3 projects are moving forward and these are as follows:

- 1.) 95 Express Lanes – lane extension – project cost = \$54 million; VDOT paying \$34 million & Transurban paying \$20 million – this will be an approximately 2.2 mile extension and the project will begin construction later this year & be completed near year-end in December 2017
- 2.) Courthouse Road Interchange – project cost = \$149 million from south to North; if the bid options for this project come in less than estimated & there is an additional \$25 million remaining, then VDOT is also planning on constructing a 4th southbound lane on I-95

3.) Courthouse Road widening from 2 to 4 lanes – project cost = \$36 million

Mr. Agnello stated that the modeling data that has been run for comparison correctly reflects what has been said by this committee as well as the other FAMPO entities that the traffic congestion has increased; that further north of Garrisonville the Express lanes appear to be successful; & that clearly in this region more capacity is needed.

**i. I-95 Express Lanes Southern Terminus Extension
Public Information Meeting**

Mr. Agnello reviewed the power point presentation that was presented by VDOT at the February 17th Public Informational meeting. The project location for the I-95 Express Lane Southern Terminus extension will occur on the south side of Garrisonville Road at approximately mile marker 142. This project is to be funded as a partnership between VDOT's Northern Virginia district and Transurban.

Mr. Agnello stated that the project background is that the 95 Express Lanes opened in December of 2014 and provided new travel options during the peak hours. The extension included both a northbound left slip ramp that allowed for traffic to enter on the 95 Express lanes north of Route 610 & a southbound flyover ramp for traffic exiting from the 95 Express Lanes north of Route 610. Mr. Agnello stated that per VDOT confirmation, a southbound diversion was never the intent of the original project.

Mr. Gormley stated that this is absolutely opposite of what this committee was told by both VDOT & Transurban back in 2012. Mr. Gormley stated that Phase 1 of the project was relayed as being built as a terminus that would begin at Garrisonville Road and ultimately end at Exit 126 at Massaponax in Spotsylvania County and that Phase 2 of the project would be constructed if Phase 1 proved to be financially profitable.

Mr. Agnello relayed that the southern terminus extension included construction of a 2.2-mile reversible lane; the creation of a new northbound and southbound ramp between the 95 Express Lanes and the general purpose lanes; & the installation of traffic devices (signage, cameras, gates, etc.) to allow for reversible operation on the 95 Express Lanes.

Mr. Snyder asked where the data originated from as in the past the region has received a lot of bad and inaccurate data. Mr. Agnello stated that this data is quality data and counts have come from zip codes associated with the EZ passes that use the 95 Express Lanes. Mr. Gormley asked if an answer was available yet from VDOT as to why a 2.2-mile project will take 2 years to complete.

Mr. Agnello stated that the project benefits will result in the following: a reduced delay for the northbound general purpose traffic lanes in the a.m. peak hours; a reduced delay for the southbound express lane traffic in the p.m. peak hours; safety improvements due to a reduced number of vehicles weaving to either enter or exit from the Express Lanes; & an overall increase in capacity while still staying within the existing VDOT right-of-way.

Both Mr. Gormley & Mr. Snyder stated that improvements northbound are needed more and are the most critical with the highest impacts so why is northbound being done last. Mr. Agnello stated that this is an immediate and temporary fix to relieve the traffic congestion that has occurred and that VDOT will continue to look for alternatives for relieving the traffic congestion northbound.

Mr. Agnello advised that the VDOT NOVA District office contact information is included in the power point presentation and comment forms are included on the website. Mr. Agnello stated that the VDOT NOVA District manages I-95 & that the Fredericksburg VDOT District office is not responsible for I-95. Mr. Agnello stated that the NOVA District's boundary covers Northern Virginia and goes south to the Spotsylvania/Caroline county lines.

ii. Resolution No. 16-23, Approving an Amendment to the FY2015-2018 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for Project UPC 13448: I-95 at Exit 140, Courthouse Road/Route 630 Interchange

Mr. Agnello stated that Resolution No. 16-23 was adopted by the Policy Committee at the February meeting; however, the request from VDOT was given to staff after both the Technical Committee & CTAG had met. Mr. Agnello stated that FAMPO staff has asked VDOT to eliminate these types of requests from occurring. Mr. Agnello relayed that per VDOT; unfortunately this was a last minute request as they were awaiting FHWA approval.

Mr. Agnello stated that this is the project that was discussed earlier – that should there be a surplus remaining on the monies allocated to the Route 630 Interchange project that VDOT will move forward with constructing a 4th general purpose southbound lane from the southern terminus of the 95 Express Lanes. Mr. Agnello stated that the 4th lane would extend approximately 3000' south of the new DDI at exit 140 and would then mitigate the traffic congestion at this southern terminus merge points between the 95 Express Lanes and the general purpose lanes.

iii. FAMPO Letter to the Secretary

Mr. Agnello stated that in conjunction with Resolution No. 16-23 being adopted, there was also a request for a letter to be submitted from the Policy Committee to the Secretary of Transportation. The purpose of the letter was to request that VDOT perform modeling analysis that would show the impacts of extending the 95 Express Lanes to Route 630 and to develop a cost estimate for the improvements. The letter also requested that the modeling analysis used be similar in nature to that used by VDOT in modeling the 2.2- mile extension of the 95 Express Lanes to the south side of Garrisonville that was presented to FAMPO in October of 2015.

b. Update on I-95 Corridor Study Phase 1 – Paul Agnello

Mr. Agnello stated that Phase 1 of the I-95 Corridor Study will focus on the section of I-95 from mile marker 145, which is north of Garrisonville Road, to mile marker 125, which is south of

Massaponax. Mr. Agnello stated that the next round of HB2 project submissions begins on August 1st and will conclude on September 30th. Mr. Agnello relayed that the State has recommended that MPO's, PDC's, localities, etc. have projects ready for submittal on July 1st. Mr. Agnello stated that to be in compliance with the second round of HB2 projects, that the I-95 Corridor Study Phase 1 will be completed in June of 2016, even though it began only in January of 2016.

Mr. Agnello stated that the likelihood of a Phase 2 I-95 Corridor Study is highly anticipated. The Phase 2 study would be multi-modal in nature and extend further south to the Hanover County line.

Mr. Agnello relayed that Phase 2 would not only focus on the I-95 corridor but would also study additional roads that could also alleviate the traffic congestion on roads that run parallel to I-95 such as Route 1, Route 301, Route 207, etc. Mr. Agnello stated that the focus of Phase 2 would be for submitting project applications for round 3 of HB2 project selections in August of 2018.

Mr. Agnello stated that to date, candidate alternative projects from the on-going I-95 Corridor Study have been provided to FAMPO staff. The alternatives have been received from VDOT; from Spotsylvania & Stafford Counties; & from CTAG. Mr. Agnello stated that a meeting is scheduled soon with staff from the City of Fredericksburg to see if they have any alternatives to be submitted as well for consideration.

Mr. Agnello relayed that the upcoming I-95 Corridor Study schedule is as follows: from now until March 28th – finalization of project alternatives; March 14th meeting with City of Fredericksburg staff; March 28th – 3rd Advisory Committee meeting; April – modeling analysis performed on project alternatives submitted; May – presentation given to all FAMPO committees on the draft study results and the 2nd round of locality outreach; & June – final study results distributed and HB2 project applications and documentations ready for submittal for consideration by the CTB for approval.

c. Update on Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail Planning Effort – Nick Quint

Mr. Quint advised that Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail (PHNST) planning efforts are ongoing. Mr. Quint relayed that the trail runs for 721 miles, from Pittsburgh to the mouth of the Potomac River. The trail is designed for hiking, bicycling, horseback riding & paddling. Within the George Washington region, two trails are designated as part of the PHNST: Government Island & the Belmont-Ferry Farms Trail. There is a 60-mile gap from Prince William County to Colonial Beach, the largest gap in the entire trail system.

Mr. Quint stated that the next steps in the process will be to work with each locality to assist in amending their current comprehensive plans to include the PHNST as a component. Mr. Quint stated that this will likely be the most difficult part of the process. After the local comprehensive plans have been amended, then an MOU will need to be drafted and signed by each jurisdiction and the National Park Service. Ms. Larkins stated that as work progresses on this project, it would be nice if commuting options were considered for residents living in Stafford County who may wish to utilize the trails to get to Quantico. Mr. Gormley stated that this would also be

appropriate for residents in the Idlewild subdivision who also could walk or bicycle to the VRE station. Mr. Gormley asked what the MOU with the National park Service would consist of as he stated that many times the National Park Service becomes very restrictive. Mr. Quint state that the purpose of an MOU would be to state who would be responsible for upkeep, signage, trail construction, etc. Mr. Quint relayed that as more information is obtained, that it will be relayed to the FAMPO committees accordingly.

d. Preparing for the Next Round of HB2 – Paul Agnello

Mr. Agnello advised that in preparing for round 2 of HB2 project submissions, that in order to maximize project eligibility and project scores that the candidate projects need to be in a jurisdiction's local comprehensive plan; it needs to be in the GWRC/FAMPO Economic Development Plan; & for projects of statewide high priority they need to be included within FAMPO's CLRP. Mr. Agnello stated that projects from the City of Fredericksburg and the Counties of Spotsylvania & Stafford are subject to fiscal constraints; however, projects from the counties of Caroline & King George are not. Mr. Agnello stated that the goal for FAMPO staff is to have the preparations completed by June/July. Mr. Agnello relayed that after round 2 is completed, the State is planning on having projects submitted on a 2-year cycle rather than annually. Mr. Agnello stated that more information will be available and shared at the April FAMPO meetings.

Mr. Gormley stated that at the May CTAG meeting that he would like to have a presentation given on "lessons learned" from round 1 of the HB2 process to include topics such as: what went right; what went wrong; why/how projects were scored; what types of projects scored the best overall; what could have been done differently; etc.

i. CTB HB2 Update

Mr. Agnello advised that included in tonight's agenda packet is an HB2 update from the Secretary of Transportation's office; however, due to the lateness of tonight's meeting, this document can be reviewed by the CTAG members at their leisure. Mr. Agnello stated that if there were comments and feedback accordingly for the CTAG members to forward these to staff.

e. Federal Transportation Funding Opportunities – Paul Agnello

Mr. Agnello stated that three new funding opportunities have recently come available. These programs are: FASTLANE; TIGER; & Unused Federal Earmark funding from pre-2004. Mr. Agnello stated that the TIGER grant program has been around for some time, but the FASTLANE program & Federal Earmark funds are new potential money revenue resources. Mr. Agnello stated that staff is working to see how we as a region can take advantage of some these revenue resources. Mr. Agnello stated that this information would be relayed to the Policy Committee at the upcoming March 21st meeting.

In regard to the FASTLANE program, Mr. Agnello stated that this category includes freight initiatives. This program was newly announced on February 26th and details of the program and requirements are still emerging. There is currently \$800 million for the FY2017 funding year

allocated. The candidate projects need to support an increased truck freight mobility route. Mr. Agnello stated that a project that could apply within this region to this category would be the I-95 Northbound Rappahannock River crossing. Mr. Agnello stated that the project application deadline is April 14th.

The TIGER funding availability was announced on February 23rd and the funding for the FY2017 is \$500 million. For projects to qualify under this category, some NEPA work needs to already be complete. The TIGER program appears to favor projects that have leveraged other funds and projects that have multimodal aspects. Mr. Agnello stated that a project that could be applicable to this category within the region would be the I-95 southbound widening project in Stafford County previously mentioned as the bid option for the Courthouse Road Interchange project. The application deadline for these projects is April 29th.

Lastly, details on the unused Pre-2004 Federal Earmark funding was released yesterday. In December of 2015, it was announced that there was approximately \$60 million of estimated funds available in Virginia; however, Mr. Agnello stated that the figure is now actually \$138 million. Mr. Agnello stated that there are more restrictions on this funding; new projects have to be located within 50 miles of the old project. Mr. Agnello stated that early estimates indicate that this region could potentially reap the benefits of approximately \$12 million. Money allocated in this category will come to Virginia through VDOT for potential use statewide. The time frame for project applications in this category is later this year.

Correspondence - None

Staff Report

Mr. Agnello stated that Ms. Donley continues to improve and she hopes to potentially be back to work for the upcoming April FAMPO meetings. Mr. Quint also relayed that in regard to a request made by CTAG on trying to avoid conflicts that occur on regularly scheduled CTAG meetings, that the remainder of the meeting dates have been checked for this year and there are no additional conflicts that would require the CTAG meetings to be held on a different night.

Mr. Gormley also asked that for the July meeting that a review of the entire year of upcoming CTAG meeting dates be provided so that members can review the dates; conflicts can be discussed; & everyone can have all of the meeting dates available at least a year in advance.

Member Report - None

Adjourn The March 9th meeting concluded at 8:25 p.m. The next CTAG meeting will be held on April 13th at 6:00 p.m. *Meeting Minutes completed by JoAnna Roberson*