

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Draft Meeting Minutes

Monday, August 2, 2021 - 9:30 am

406 Princess Anne Street, Fredericksburg, VA 22401

<https://www.fampo.gwregion.org/>

Committee Members Present:

Second Vice Chair Alex Owsiak, Stafford County
Mr. Brandon Brown, Stafford County
Chairman Paul Agnello, Spotsylvania County
Vice Chair Jamie Jackson, City of Fredericksburg (remote, personal reason given with notice)
Mr. Bassam Amin, City of Fredericksburg
Mr. Mike Craig, City of Fredericksburg
Mr. Nick Minor, King George County
Mr. Stephen Haynes, Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)
Dr. Bob Schneider, Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission (PRTC)
Ms. Christine Hoeffner, Virginia Railway Express (VRE)
Mr. Aidan Quirke, FREDericksburg Regional Transit (FRED)
Ms. Kate Gibson, GWRideConnect

Committee Members Present (remotely, without prior virtual participation request):

Mr. Rodney White, Spotsylvania County
Mr. Dan Grinnell, VDOT
Ms. Ciara Williams, Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT)

Committee Members Absent:

Mr. Bryon Counsell, Stafford County
Mr. Jacob Pastwik, Spotsylvania County
Mr. Leon Hughes, Spotsylvania County
Ms. Kimberly Wilson, King George County
Mr. Mike Finchum, Caroline County
Mr. Craig Pennington, Caroline County
Ms. Michelle Shropshire, VDOT
Mr. Jim Ponticello, VDOT
Mr. Todd Horsley, DRPT
Mr. Joe Stainsby, PRTC
Mr. Ivan Rucker, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
Mr. Craig Reed, FRED
Ms. Leigh Anderson, GWRideConnect

Others Present:

Ms. Susan Gardner, VDOT

Ms. Cathie Coffey, VDOT
Ms. Linda LaSut, VDOT
Ms. Katherine Youngbluth, DRPT
Ms. Jennifer Miranowicz

Staff Present:

Mr. Ian Ollis, FAMPO Administrator
Ms. Stacey Feindt, Public Involvement/Title VI Coordinator
Ms. Jordan Chandler, Transportation Planner
Mr. Adam Hager, Transportation Planner
Mr. Matthew Lehane, Transportation Planner

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:34am by Mr. Agnello.

2. Roll Call and Determination of Quorum

Ms. Feindt conducted roll call and determined that a quorum was present.

3. Approval of the August 2, 2021 Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Agenda (ACTION ITEM)

Motion was made to approve the August 2, 2021 TAC agenda.

Motion: Mr. Owsiak; Second: Mr. Quirke

Abstentions: none

Motion passed with unanimous consent.

4. Approval of June 7, 2021 TAC Meeting Minutes (ACTION ITEM)

Motion was made to approve the June 7, 2021 TAC meeting minutes.

Motion: Mr. Quirke; Second: Mr. Owsiak

Abstentions: none

Motion passed with unanimous consent.

5. Review of June 21, 2021 Policy Committee Meeting

Mr. Ollis presented a review of the June 21, 2021 Policy Committee meeting, mentioning key points such as independent Transportation Management Areas, the failed leased commuter parking spaces resolution, approval of the FAMPO Community Engagement and Equity Plan (CEEP) document, initiation of a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) public comment period, approval of a letter of support for Spotsylvania RAISE grant, and the change in slate of officers.

6. Public Comment

Ms. Feindt read a part of a comment from resident Jane E. Leeds who noted that the federal infrastructure bill provides a timely opportunity for FAMPO to plan federal monies to be set aside for the much needed and often overlooked portion of our communities that need equal access to public transportation. However, with the public comment period time allotment Ms. Feindt said the full letter would be sent to the committee in the meeting summary email and that this comment would be read in full at the August Policy Committee meeting.

7. Discussion/Action Items

a. FAMPO Transportation Improvements Survey

Mr. Ollis noted that the survey was extremely successful and that the presentation would be a small amount of the overall content. He noted the survey was conducted between May 25 and

June 18, 2021 and received 1,060 responses. He reviewed the survey goals, benefits to FAMPO, and community outreach efforts. Mr. Ollis mentioned two themes that were consistent when analyzing the results with the first being that individuals who work *outside* of the FAMPO region have difficulty accessing transit opportunities and the second being that individuals who work *inside* the FAMPO region find transit infrequent, unpredictable, unreliable, inconvenient, and that the trip takes too long.

Mr. Agnello stated that the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission (NVTC) recently sent out a survey related to micro transit and the first mile/last mile issue. He asked if micro transit was an opportunity for the FAMPO region to invest in connections to FRED Bus and VRE.

Mr. Ollis noted that micro transit is typically designed to serve less dense regions and one of the biggest cost factors is the driver's salary.

Mr. Quirke noted that micro transit has been continuously evolving but favors an option where the terminus of the micro transit line is a hub to other fixed route transit. He noted that other micro transit can consist of subsidizing Uber and micro transit designated areas where travel between the locations would be free. He noted that the city of Savannah, Georgia has a free micro transit service that provides rides to individuals looking to commute to work in the city.

Dr. Schneider reiterated that 85 percent of bus transit costs is "behind the wheel" meaning the driver salary and cost of gas adding that the costs are typically the opposite for rail transit being capital centric with low operating costs. He also mentioned that micro transit can be inefficient but cost effective per square mile and the major question to ask when considering the addition of a micro transit service is: "What are you trying to fix?"

Mr. Minor asked if transit was becoming more desirable in the region. Mr. Ollis respond that he does not have the prior data needed to make the appropriate comparisons.

b. SMART SCALE Round 5 Update

Mr. Lehane reviewed the pre-application conceptual ideas provided which include regional and local proposals. He mentioned that the first step after receiving candidate projects was to review Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)/Planning District Commission (PDC) eligibility on a Corridor of Statewide Significance (CoSS) or on a Regional Network (RN). Mr. Lehane said that staff are asking TAC members to submit a refined list of projects for regional consideration by August 13th. He also noted that once regional candidate projects were identified, the candidate projects would undergo scoring based on the FAMPO LRTP scoring measures and that draft scores would be reviewed in September. Lastly, looking ahead, he noted that FAMPO staff would contact VDOT/DRPT for preliminary pre-application assistance.

Mr. Craig asked to clarify what was needed by August 13, 2021. Mr. Lehane stated that the jurisdiction/agency candidate projects to be considered for the FAMPO and GWRC regional applications.

Ms. Hoeffner stated that providing projects by that date would be difficult for VRE since they were still looking at what improvements were needed for new rail. Mr. Hager understands the tight timeline but mentioned that staff is looking for conceptual ideas as a starting point for Round 5 applications.

Mr. Agnello asked if a full SMART SCALE schedule could be created including steps to final

application submission and the selection of applications from pre- to final application. Mr. Lehane noted that staff has a broader timeline that can be sent in the TAC summary email. Mr. Agnello noted that the top six candidate projects were for the regional applications and the bottom six were intended as local applications some of which were coming from ongoing studies. He asked for the timeframe of the studies. Mr. Haynes noted that once a kick-off meeting is established there would be a more detailed schedule and VDOT would work with the consultant to have results and suggested improvements as soon as possible.

Mr. Ollis reiterated that next week FAMPO staff needs conceptual ideas and Mr. Haynes noted that additional information such as a description could be helpful in this effort.

Ms. Hoeffner added that if any jurisdiction would like to provide ideas or collaborate application efforts to please reach out to her offline.

c. Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) and Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) Prioritization Methodology Update

Mr. Hager noted that FAMPO staff is beginning a comprehensive update to the methodology while previously a stop gap measure was put in place adding a measure to score “Benefit to the TMA” at the Policy Committee’s direction. He noted that staff is looking for TAC to highlight short comings and provide feedback to the existing methodology in August, develop a new methodology, seek feedback and review, and approve the new methodology prior to the FY23-28 call for projects.

Mr. Agnello asked if staff could provide a schedule for steps beyond January to include the call for projects and project scoring. He also noted that it might be fitting to have a December TAC meeting solely to discuss and review the methodology. Lastly, he mentioned that HIP funding comes to the region occasionally and if a separate methodology should be created for these funds. Mr. Ollis noted that staff takes guidance from the TAC and Policy Committee in the determination of how to distribute funds, although these funds were infrequent. Ms. Gardner noted that these funds act similarly to STBG and could be scored with the same methodology.

Mr. Agnello asked if the HIP funds were given to the Northern Stafford TMA and the FAMPO urbanized area. Ms. Gardner said she would have to double check if the process was similar to Transportation Alternatives Program.

d. 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Update

Ms. Chandler reviewed the processes used to create the 2050 draft constrained project list. She began by reviewing the revenue projections that FAMPO staff received from each jurisdiction/agency and how the funds were separated into three timeframes. She summarized how each funding source was distributed to various transportation modes. She highlighted that these percentages were not allocations of dollars but rather showing the likely breakdown of how the funds would be used in the next 29 years. She noted that the existing 2045 CLRP projects were adapted into the funding projections and Six Year Improvement Program (SYIP) year projects were included in the CLRP, if not previously done. Year of Expenditure (YOE) was assigned, and inflation rates assumed for projects after FY27.

Moving on to the new 2050 Candidate projects she noted that FAMPO staff receive 149 new applications mentioning their mode and jurisdiction/agency breakdown. She noted that the new 2050 candidate applications totaled \$748 million and reviewed the available funding, by mode, for these projects. She noted that 54 out of 56 highway projects, 20 out of 76 active

transportation projects, 11 out of 11 transit/TDM projects, and all PE-Studies were selected for the Draft 2050 CLRP list. Lastly, she reviewed a summary of the complete 2050 CLRP draft for projects by mode, by agency, and cost by mode.

Mr. Agnello asked how roadway projects that were selected that had linked active transportation that were not selected would be evaluated, for example Harrison Road. Mr. Hager said that it is important not to double count the revenues and that one solution would be to look at the highway project first and, if it had an accompanying active transportation element, to increase the highway cost and add the active transportation elements in to include within the packaged project. He noted that staff wants to review the congruency between the two lists.

Ms. Hoeffner noted that VRE was not include as an agency on the list. Ms. Chandler stated that VRE projects would be listed as multi-jurisdictional or region-wide.

Mr. Agnello asked what the anticipated schedule for approval of the draft list would be. Ms. Chandler responded that FAMPO staff is seeking approval of the list in September in order to provide an approved list to our consultants for modeling, which is another part of the planned LRTP process.

Mr. Agnello noted for projects that cannot be modeled, such as active transportation, whether there be more time to work out those details. Mr. Ollis said that we would have to approve everything that needs to be modeled and selected for conformity analysis and should approve a complete list rather than parts of the list.

Ms. Hoeffner asked how VRE would be included in the modeling and revenues since they were a part of the Metropolitan Washington Transportation Planning Board (TPB), and conformity analysis is needed in their conformity process. Mr. Ollis stated that we can handle this offline in order to not duplicate any work.

i. Candidate Project Scoring

Mr. Hager called everyone's attention to the project scoring which used the scoring and prioritization methodology approved by all committees in May 2021, mentioning that projects highlighted in yellow have been selected for the 2050 CLRP list and those highlighted in gray would be included in the 2050 Needs list. He noted pages 1-3 reflect highway projects, 4-7 reflect active transportation projects, and the last page is transit/TDM projects. Next, he summarized the qualitative justification, broken down by mode, and that each measure was scored out of ten points. He pointed out that a few technical corrections were made, but these adjustments did not affect the project scores nor selection.

ii. Draft 2050 LRTP Project List

Mr. Hager reviewed the draft constrained list broken down by functional classification, for highway, active transportation, transit/TDM, and PE-Studies. He noted that the right-most column contains comments of how that specific project made it to the list.

Mr. Craig asked how he could provide questions and comments based on scores. Mr. Hager noted that we could discuss during the meeting but said that scores could be reviewed and a meeting could be set up at a later date.

Mr. Agnello asked if FAMPO staff could provide a spreadsheet in order to review and provide comments in a digital manner. Mr. Hager stated that a spreadsheet would be attached in the TAC summary email.

Mr. Ollis added that staff has provide a lot of information and encourages each jurisdiction/agency to review and provide comment. He also thanked the staff for the work they put in on this effort. Mr. Craig noted how he could see the level of effort staff put into this work effort and thanked them for providing the opportunity to provide comments and feedback.

Mr. Hager noted that an Interagency Consultation Group (ICG) meeting would be held prior to the next TAC meeting, 9:00am. Mr. Agnello asked about the specifics regarding the quorum requirements. Mr. Hager said he would follow up with VDOT and send out a separate calendar reminder.

8. Correspondence

Mr. Hager mentioned that the packet included the approval letter from FHWA and FTA for FAMPO's FY22 UPWP.

Mr. Agnello asked if any follow-up was needed. Mr. Hager stated that there was a request to provide the VDOT Title VI audit materials and staff would send over a copy of that information.

9. Staff Reports

Mr. Hager noted that the UPWP Quarter 4 report is included in the packet and covers April to June 2021.

Mr. Agnello asked about a comment in the document which stated that there were not significant over or underruns in funding, but only 56 percent of the funds were used. He asked if staff could speak to the surplus. Mr. Hager responded that FAMPO was largely understaffed at the beginning of the fiscal year and some percentages do not reflect expenditures of the Lafayette Boulevard and Route 610 Studies.

Mr. Agnello asked about any significant carryover of PL and 5303. Mr. Hager noted staff worked with VDOT to cancel the deprogramming request for FY20 funds which would have gone directly to FY21. He noted that roughly \$130,000 is being carried over to FY22. Overall, he mentioned that there would be carryover funds for both PL and 5303.

Mr. Agnello asked about the transportation reauthorization bill and any indications that funding would increase. Mr. Hager noted that nothing is set in stone but that staff is hoping to see an increase in formula funding for MPOs.

10. Member Reports

Mr. Haynes reviewed several upcoming VDOT and FAMPO study meetings including:

Wednesday, August 4, 2021 at 3:00pm

Route 3 (City of Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania County) from Carl D. Sliver Parkway to Andora Drive & Route 1 (City of Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania County) from Lassen Lane, four-mile fork area, to Route 3

Monday, August 9, 2021 at 3:00pm

FAMPO East-West Mobility Study

Tuesday, August 10, 2021 at 9:30am

Route 1 (Stafford County) from Woodstock Lane/Telegraph Road to Corporate Drive & Centerport Parkway Area

Thursday, August 12, 2021 at 3:00pm

Lafayette Boulevard Study, with an expected presentation at the FAMPO Policy Committee meeting in September

Ms. Hoeffner indicated that VRE ridership continues to increase from the lows seen during the pandemic. Also, VRE is planning to initiate an update for the System Plan.

Mr. Quirke told the committee that FRED plans to rollout extended service around September 7, 2021.

Mr. Agnello stated that the County will likely hold a Bond Referendum meeting in September to discuss the \$101.7 million available, which would be used for new VA Clinic projects, Route 2/17 corridor widening, Harrison Road widening, and other small projects.

Ms. Gardner notified committee members that Revenue Sharing (RS) reviews have been completed and emails have been sent out to respective jurisdictions. She also notes that October 1st is the deadline for completed applications. Ms. Coffey added that Transportation Alternative Program (TAP) and RS applications require significantly more information than in prior rounds of funding.

Dr. Schneider noted that the Pentagon, the primary commuting destination for workers utilizing Omniride services, has recently gone from 90 percent capacity to 50 percent and some companies, like Capital One, have continue to push their return-to-office date. OmniRide has opened a \$42 million facility for operations on the I-66 corridor. Lastly, OmniRide has begun a Zero Emissions Study noting that the American and European markets were vastly different and electric buses would not be similar to an electric car, for example Tesla.

Ms. Gibson reminded the TAC that the George Washington Regional Commission (GWRC) has an employment opportunity with the main responsibilities of the roll focusing around Vanpool Operations.

11. **Adjourn Technical Advisory Committee Meeting/Next Meeting September 13, 2021 at 9:30 am**
Interagency Consultation Group (ICG) meeting prior to September TAC meeting at 9:00am
Motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 11:13am.
Motion: Mr. Agnello; Second: Mr. Owsiak
Abstentions: none
Motion passed with unanimous consent.

Staff note: After the meeting, notice was provided to TAC members that the ICG meeting will actually take place prior to the October TAC meeting.