

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Monday, October 4, 2021 – 9:30 a.m.
406 Princess Anne Street, Fredericksburg, VA 22401
www.fampo.gwregion.org

Committee Members Present:

Chairman Paul Agnello, Spotsylvania County
Second Vice Chair Alex Owsiak, Stafford County
Mr. Brandon Brown, Stafford County
Mr. Rodney White, Spotsylvania County
Mr. Bassam Amin, City of Fredericksburg
Mr. Nick Minor, King George County (arrived at 10:06am)
Mr. Stephen Haynes, Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)
Mr. Jim Ponticello, VDOT
Mr. Dan Grinnell, VDOT
Dr. Bob Schneider, Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission (PRTC)
Ms. Ciara Williams, Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT)
Mr. Nick Ruiz, Virginia Railway Express (VRE)
Ms. Kate Gibson, GWRideConnect

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

Mr. Joe Stainsby, PRTC

Committee Members Absent:

Mr. Bryon Counsell, Stafford County
Mr. Jacob Pastwik, Spotsylvania County
Mr. Leon Hughes, Spotsylvania County
Vice Chair Jamie Jackson, City of Fredericksburg
Mr. Mike Craig, City of Fredericksburg
Ms. Kimberly Wilson, King George County
Mr. Mike Finchum, Caroline County
Mr. Craig Pennington, Caroline County
Mr. Ivan Rucker, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
Ms. Michelle Shropshire, VDOT
Mr. Todd Horsley, DRPT
Ms. Christine Hoeffner, VRE
Mr. Aidan Quirke, FREDericksburg Regional Transit (FRED)
Mr. R. Craig Reed, FRED
Ms. Leigh Anderson, GWRideConnect

Others Present:

Mr. Richard Denbow, Cambridge Systematics (remote attendance)
Mr. Feng Liu, Cambridge Systematics (remote attendance)
Ms. Linda LaSut, VDOT (remote attendance)

Ms. Katherine Youngbluth, DRPT (remote attendance)
Ms. Susan Gardner, VDOT
Ms. Cathie Coffey, VDOT

Staff Present:

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

1. Call Technical Advisory Committee Meeting to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:35am.

2. Roll Call and Determination of Quorum

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

3. Approval of the October 4, 2021 Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Agenda (ACTION ITEM)

Motion was made to approve the October 4, 2021 TAC agenda.

Motion: Mr. Amin. Second: Mr. Agnello

Abstentions: None

Motion passed with unanimous consent.

4. Approval of the September 13, 2021 TAC Meeting Minutes (ACTION ITEM)

Motion was made to approve the September 13, 2021 TAC meeting minutes, as amended.

Motion: Mr. Owsiak. Second: Mr. Agnello

Abstentions: None

Motion passed with unanimous consent.

5. Review of the September 20, 2021 Policy Committee Meeting

Mr. Ollis reviewed the Policy Committee meeting. He reviewed the Lafayette Blvd Study, SMART SCALE Round 5 pre pre-applications, endorsement of the local Transportation Alternative Program (TAP) applications, approval of the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Fiscally Constrained Project List, endorsement of the 2050 LRTP Fiscally Constrained Project List for Air Quality Conformity Assessment, authorization given to the TAC to approve the draft Air Quality Conformity Report for public comment, and two resolutions to appoint Jane Leeds and TaMara Banks as at-large members of the Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee (CTAC).

6. Public Comment

No public comments were made.

7. Action/Discussion Items

a. 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Update

Mr. Denbow informed the committee that Cambridge Systematics (CS) is supporting the FAMPO LRTP process with travel demand modeling and performance-based planning and programming requirements. He noted that CS submitted a draft System Performance Report to FAMPO staff and that the report highlights current system performance and progress made to achieve targets. Lastly, he noted that FAMPO adopted targets set by the state.

Mr. Liu provided an update in relation to the progress made through modeling. He mentioned that CS has refined land use and socioeconomic forecast last approved in 2018 and is preparing the model to include the approved 2050 LRTP Fiscally Constrained Project List. Finally, Mr. Liu reviewed model outputs for the current system compared to the 2050 No-Build system scenario.

Mr. Agnello asked if CS had incorporated projects from the 2045 Rural LRTP, which was approved in 2020, since these projects could impact FAMPO jurisdictions. Mr. Hager said that no new rural projects were included in the model due to task order restrictions. Mr. Ollis added that there is federal guidance to separate urban and rural transportation planning in the region.

b. Approving the Draft Air Quality Conformity Report for Public Comment (ACTION ITEM)

Mr. Ponticello reviewed the Interagency Consultation Group (ICG) meeting that took place prior to TAC, noting that the South Coast II court ruling is the reason that FAMPO must complete the conformity assessment process. He turned the presentation over to Chairman Agnello to seek a motion for approval of the schedule and to allow the draft Air Quality Conformity Report to be released for public comment.

Motion was made to approve the Draft Air Quality Conformity Report for Public Comment.
Motion: Mr. Agnello. Second: Mr. Owsiak
Abstentions: None
Motion passed with unanimous consent.

c. Fall Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) Meeting

Mr. Ollis reviewed the list of comments received from the jurisdictions, state partners, and FAMPO staff. He asked if the committee could narrow down the list to two or three regional concerns. These options would be included in a meeting with the Secretary of Transportation, presented at the Fall CTB meeting by Mr. Ollis and Policy Committee members, and sent in a written letter to Secretary of Transportation.

Mr. Agnello asked VDOT when the Fall CTB meeting would occur and if it would be virtual or in person. Ms. Gardner said that the date was not decided and the number of COVID cases would likely determine the meeting format.

Mr. Agnello added to the first regional concern noting that GWRC, FAMPO, and local jurisdictions should receive more than four SMART SCALE applications each noting that other areas in the Commonwealth received ten applications. Mr. Agnello also noted that combining concern #1 and #2 could shorten the list since both items relate to SMART SCALE.

Mr. Agnello said the Spotsylvania County agrees with widening I-95 and the construction of the VCR Trail. He then questioned the intent of concern #4 relating to Route 1. Mr. Ollis

said that when an emergency occurs on I-95 and the roadway is completely shut down the FAMPO jurisdictions are severely affected, and this concern would look into the options of using Route 1 as an alternative during emergency situations. Mr. Amin noted that there had been issues with signal coordination. Mr. Haynes said that VDOT has the capability for signal coordination at this time, but this type of modification would require coordination with jurisdictions, but it would be worthwhile to look at daily traffic vs incident management.

Mr. Agnello asked if the last concern on the list was already being addressed with the Transforming Rail in Virginia initiative. Mr. Ruiz noted that the Transforming Rail in Virginia Phase II, planned for the year 2030, would include reverse commuting and weekend trains. Mr. Ollis noted that VRE operations board is looking to provide service before that date by reviewing capacity agreements with CSX and is looking for a way to expose more people to the VRE services.

Dr. Schneider said weekend travel and traffic are not the same as the weekday. He mentioned that looking at the behavior and economic decision making of weekend travel, specifically looking at fare policy, travel destinations that could be outside of FAMPO region, through vs local traffic, HOV rather than SOV.

Mr. Ruiz mentioned that Amtrak runs on the weekend and is working to create a fare policy; he also noted that WMATA has a two-dollar fee on the weekends.

Mr. Owsiak said that this concern could be removed from the list if it was already being studied though the Transforming Rail in Virginia initiative. Mr. Ruiz said that the Transforming Rail in Virginia initiative will be studying this but is unsure to what extent. Dr. Schneider and Mr. Ruiz rephrased the last concern to request the CTB to direct DRPT to investigate support for weekend trains and reverse commuting sooner rather than later to promote local economic development, reduce I-95 traffic, and evaluate the fare policy in the Statewide Rail Plan update.

d. SMART SCALE Round 5 Update

Mr. Lehane reviewed the SMART SCALE timeline, went into detail as to how the Round 5 pre pre-applications were scored using the quantitative measures from the LRTP Project Prioritization Methodology (approved by the Policy Committee in May 2021), explaining the different sub-category percentage breakdowns between Roadway and Active Transportation, and lastly, he reviewed the GWRC and FAMPO pre pre-application list with details about each specific project.

Mr. Agnello asked what was included in the Statewide Coordination (SC) and Project Benefit (PB) percentages. Mr. Lehane noted the SC contained measures related to VTrans needs and that PB were the qualitative measures that were given a neutral benefit as not influence the score.

Mr. Amin asked for clarification about the sub measures under the SMART SCALE header and asked if the PB section had the same scoring factors. Mr. Lehane noted that the PB measures received a neutral score, as to remove qualitative measures, but would have looked at things such as project studies and how the application aligns with regional goals.

Mr. Agnello asked about the 60 percent designation for the SMART SCALE heading and that the weighting presented does not align with SMART SCALE. Mr. Hager noted that the

respective percentages for the sub measures under the SMART SCALE header align with Category B designation.

Mr. Owsiak asked if the project cost will be evaluated in the scoring during the pre-application. Mr. Lehane said that no determination has been made and it is up for discussion.

Mr. Agnello asked if about the proposal for Route 3 in the Virginia Central Railway (VCR) application. Mr. Lehane mentioned that he had sent an email requesting more information but had not heard back. Mr. Agnello also noted that an update has been made to the Route 1 Massaponax Corridor application at Route 606 area mentioning a U-Turn.

Mr. Ollis added that FAMPO staff has sent out specific data requests to the jurisdiction and comments are needed for the pre pre-application submission on October 15th.

Mr. Agnello asked if the committee would need to approve the pre-application list of projects in November based on the presented schedule. Mr. Haynes said that there was no approval needed in November and that the presented date was a temporary placeholder.

8. CMAQ/STBG Subcommittee Meeting Materials

Mr. Ollis notified the committee that the TAC agenda link had all of the materials that would be presented at the subcommittee meeting. He noted that the materials were provided early for ample time to review and to allow productive discussion and action items to follow-up with after the subcommittee meeting. He noted the meeting would be held on October 14th at 10:30am with virtual attendance.

Mr. Agnello asked if the CMAQ and STBG documents would be separated by fund. Mr. Hager noted that the processes for CMAQ and STBG run concurrently and that in the draft outline, the content is separated. He noted the content provided for the subcommittee meeting is a framework, which can be edited, in addition to comments FAMPO staff received from the jurisdictions and VRE.

9. Correspondence

Mr. Hager noted that Resolution 22-09 was include in the packet for everyone's awareness stating that that the Policy Committee voted to allow TAC to approve the draft Air Quality Conformity Report for public comment.

10. Staff Reports

Mr. Ollis reminded the committee about the CMAQ/STBG sub-committee meeting occurring on October 14th at 10:30am that will be held virtually and the East-West Mobility Stakeholder meeting that will occur on October 12th at 2:00pm in the GWRC office. He introduced Lana Bizeau, the new FAMPO transportation planning intern. He also noted that FAMPO had successfully signed all on-call consultant contracts. Lastly, he mentioned that three of the FAMPO staff will be out of the office this week attending the Associations of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (AMPO) Annual Conference in Arizona.

11. Member Reports

Mr. Owsiak noted that Stafford submitted their TAP applications with the exclusion of Belmont Ferry Farm trail since the county Board did not approve the project.

Mr. Haynes noted that Saturday, October 9th there will be a ribbon cutting ceremony at the Chatham Bridge and in the next month there will be major changes occurring with the opening of the I-95 Southbound River Crossing project.

Mr. Minor noted that King George County is working to submit Revenue Sharing applications and submit information for the intake forms for Round 5 SMART SCALE.

Dr. Schneider noted that OmniRide received the Statewide Exceptional Safety Award at Virginia Transit Association (VTA) conference. He also mentioned that services are being brought back at an increased level and that traffic volume for truck is above pre-pandemic levels whereas vehicle traffic is at or above pre-pandemic levels. He noted that portions of I-95 and I-66 are consistently overloaded throughout the day due to extended peak travel times whereas pre-pandemic the peak overload would occur, and the congestion would go back to free-flow for a large portion of the day.

Mr. Agnello noted that Spotsylvania County would be hosting a second meeting about the Bond Referendum on October 21st at 6:30pm at the Marshall Center. He also noted that the County submitted three TAP applications and is working to submit one Revenue Sharing application.

Ms. Gibson announced that GWRideConnect has a new staff member who will be working with the Vanpools. She also noted that GWRideConnect has hired a marketing consultant and is also working with DRPT to launch a new ridesharing application.

12. Adjourn, Next TAC Meeting: Wednesday November 3, 2021 at 9:30 a.m.

Motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 11:54am.

Motion: Mr. Agnello. Second: Mr. Owsiak

Abstentions: None

Motion passed with unanimous consent.