

FAMPO Advisory Committee Meeting
I-95 Corridor Study – Phase 1
February 1, 2016

ATTENDANCE: Members: Doug Fawcett, City of Fredericksburg; Ed Petrovitch, County of Spotsylvania; Christopher Rapp – Alternate, County of Stafford; CTAG – Alternates, Rupert Farley & Fran Larkins; Tim Roseboom, DRPT; Elliott Moore, FHWA; & Annette Adams, VDOT

ATTENDANCE: Others: Craig Eddy & Paul Prideaux, Michael Baker International; Cheng Yan, FHWA; & Allison Richter & Craig Van Dussen, VDOT

ATTENDANCE: Staff: Paul Agnello, Nick Quint, & Lloyd Robinson, FAMPO; Diana Utz & JoAnna Roberson, GWRC

I. WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

Mr. Agnello thanked everyone for attending the first advisory committee meeting for Phase I of the I-95 Corridor Study and introductions were made from all who were in attendance.

II. STUDY PROCESS & SCHEDULE

a.) Study Purpose

Mr. Agnello advised that the study has been endorsed by the FAMPO Policy Committee and staff and the consulting team will have the study completed by June of 2016. Mr. Agnello stated that the study request originated due to the following:

- 1.) the severe and reoccurring traffic congestion concerns along the I-95 Corridor from Quantico to Massaponax;
- 2.) the scarce transportation funding that will be allocated to the region outside of the funding allocated for HB2 projects;
- 3.) round 2 of HB2 projects need to be ready for submittal by July, 2016; &
- 4.) determination of which I-95 projects should be submitted for consideration of round 2 of HB2 project scoring & prioritization

Mr. Agnello relayed that the objectives of Phase I are to develop an improvement program that will address the needs on the I-95 corridor between Exit 145 in Stafford County to Exit 125 in Spotsylvania County. This improvement program will be completed by June, 2016 and will forecast traffic data for FY2040. Mr. Agnello stated that for Phase I of the objectives will not be a multimodal study but will be restricted to improvements limited to I-95 and to Park & Ride lots near the I-95 interchanges.

b.) Advisory Committee

Mr. Agnello advised that the Advisory Committee is comprised of FAMPO staff, locality representation, Chamber of Commerce representation, CTAG representation, and representation from the following agencies to include: DRPT, FHWA, PRTC, & VDOT. Mr. Agnello stated that the advisory committee member's roles will be to attend the 6 study meetings that will occur between February & June; to have the ability to represent your jurisdiction, agency, or group's position on the I-95 transportation corridor issues; to participate in meeting discussions; & to provide feedback on meeting materials, etc.

c.) MPO Briefings and

d.) Locality Briefings

Mr. Agnello advised that monthly briefings will be given to both the FAMPO Committee meetings to include the CTAG, Policy & Technical committees as well as updates to each of the locality City Council or County Supervisor meetings.

e.) Schedule

Mr. Agnello stated that the I-95 Corridor Study meetings are on a fairly aggressive schedule with the kick-off meeting occurring today and the study documentation report compiled by meeting #6 in the late June 2016 time frame. Meetings #2 to #5 will be focusing on the following topics: Reviews of existing & future no-build conditions; Draft Study alternatives; Finalization of Study Alternatives; Review of Draft Study results; & Review of Final Study results and draft documentation.

III. INITIAL REVIEW OF EXISTING CORRIDOR DEFICIENCIES

a.) Existing 2014 Traffic

Mr. Agnello stated that the current modeling data available from the 2014 average daily traffic counts for I-95 traffic shows that the highest traffic volume is 144,000 cars daily entering onto I-95 between exits 130 to 133; with the lowest volume occurring at the Spotsylvania/Caroline County lines (93,000 per day). The daily traffic counts from Route 17 in Stafford County to the Prince William County line range between 129,000 and 134,000 average vehicles.

b.) VTrans 2025 Needs Assessment

Mr. Agnello advised that the 2025 VTrans Needs Assessment is a study that was completed that covers the entire State of Virginia and the study looked at data that was derived from the 2014 INRIX data. This study looked at congestion, reliability, & safety.

Mr. Agnello stated that there are 2 major issues with this study and these are that most of the GWRC region gets grouped into the needs associated with the Northern Virginia region and does not primarily focus on the FAMPO region.

Mr. Agnello relayed that the second concern is that the congestion and reliability data is based on 2014 INRIX data which does not include the I-95 traffic congestion that developed after the opening of the 95 Express lanes in December, 2014.

However, it should be noted that FAMPO has been informed that updated data was used in calculation of project scores during the HB2 prioritization process.

In regard to the reliability of the VTrans data, the good news is that the weekday peak traffic movement is reliable; however, the bad news is that it is reliably congested. The weekend data is not reliable particularly between Exit 133 (Rt. 17) and Exit 126 (Rt. 1) so this indicates that the weekends are sometimes very congested and are sometimes not congested.

Mr. Agnello stated that the new study is not going to be looking at congestion but will be checking to see if the traffic is consistent on both a weekday or weekend count. Mr. Agnello stated that overall, the previous data shows that weekday traffic is reliably congested and the I95 corridor is relatively reliable.

In regard to the safety data from VTrans, it was depicted that the primary safety issues are occurring between Quantico at mpt 148 to Stafford Courthouse at mpt 140. The second safety issue was noted as being from mpt 131 to 125 going from the Rappahannock River to the Massaponax exit.

c.) INRIX Data

Mr. Agnello advised that the I-95 INRIX data review compiled a comparison of the data collected in the spring of 2014 vs. the spring of 2015. However, what has been continually brought to FAMPO staff's attention is that the traffic congestion concerns are actually worse in the fall. Mr. Agnello stated that the new study underway will compare data from the fall of 2014 vs. the fall of 2015. The new study will also include weekday and weekend traffic comparisons. Mr. Agnello relayed that the study focus area will begin at mpt 148 at Quantico and concludes at mpt 126 at Massaponax so the study focus will be larger and will provide data for not just weekday traffic counts.

VI. REVIEW OF PAST STUDY EFFORTS

a.) I-95 Improvements

Mr. Agnello advised that since 1999 there have been at least 36 studies of I-95 improvements completed within the FAMPO region. Mr. Agnello relayed that highlights from these studies have shown that the Fredericksburg region experiences an on-going traffic congestion concern. These concerns have been presented to the CTB.

In December of 2013, VDOT conducted a Fredericksburg Area Congestion Relief Study. This study was an evaluation of conceptual alternatives that assumed that the

Rappahannock River Crossing projects would be funded. The study provided extensive study data of bypass and outer connector alternatives.

In 2005 VDOT also completed a Park & Ride lot study for the Fredericksburg region that was focusing on new potential park & ride lot location sites from Quantico to Thornburg. Mr. Agnello stated that a lot of the results from the Park & Ride lot study are projects that have now either been built and or completed and/or projects that will be funded as a result of the HB2 project prioritization scoring process. Mr. Agnello relayed that also GWRide Connect conducted an internal park & ride lot study in 2015.

Mr. Agnello advised that VDOT completed a Fredericksburg Area Congestion Relief Study that was based on 2040 traffic congestions and traffic forecasts. This study area was focused on Exit 136 in Stafford County to Exit 126 in Spotsylvania County. The study did not look at traffic congestion north of Exit 136 and its primary focus was for potential outer connector and bypass alternative options. Ms. Richter stated that this study could have easily been a 2-year study; however, was completed in 2 months due to time restraints.

In 2011, VDOT Fredericksburg District Planning completed an internal study to determine the potential to utilize hard shoulder running during peak hours to help reduce congestion. The study area was from MP145 to MP126. Mr. Van Dussen indicated the study was done in two phases, from MP145 to MP138.1 (Route 628-American Legion Road) and from MP138.1 to MP126. The phasing break was at the first restriction point where the shoulder lane was prevented from being extended. The planning study looked at bridge restrictions (pier spacing) and depth and width of shoulder pavement. Note that the inside shoulder was a driving lane in the original construction of I95 in the 1960's.

Beyond MP138.1 south, the width and depth of the shoulder pavement and/or bridge conditions varied significantly, thusly increasing costs. Also included in the increase are the costs of new bridges over the Rappahannock River.

Further engineering evaluation will be required to determine the full potential of any alternatives related to the Shoulder Study.

Mr. Van Dussen relayed that the shoulder study for a 4th lane widening from Exit 143 to Exit 136 is still being reviewed and also came as recommendation from the 2011 shoulder lane study. Ms. Richter stated that the current project cost estimate was received to be \$20 million dollars being inside shoulders; \$140 million dollars being outside lane extension. The second project evolved out of the shoulder study as an alternative to utilization of the inside shoulder and as a full time improvement vs. running on the shoulders only in the peak hours. This cost estimate increase resulted in the project not moving forward. Mr. Agnello stated that the project is still included within FAMPO's long-term plan; however, is a project that has no funding associated with it. Ms. Richter stated that if this is still a project that the FAMPO region wants to have considered for Round 2 of the HB2 process then a new application would need to be submitted.

Mr. Agnello stated that the narrow I-95 medians south of Exit 130 could make it costly for a 2-lane extension of the I-95 Express Lanes to a southern terminus around mpt 123 in Spotsylvania County. However, a 1-lane extension could be a more feasible and cost-effective option.

b.) Park & Ride Improvements

Mr. Agnello relayed that as a result of VDOT's PNR lot study that was completed in 2005; several new park & ride lot locations near I-95 interchanges throughout the FAMPO region have been built and/or likely will be built with HB2 funds. However, 2 lots from within the scenario options and alternatives are currently not moving forward (Exit 136 Centreport Parkway & Exit 118 (Rt. 606/Thornburg)).

Mr. Agnello advised that GWRideConnect staff conducted an internal commuter lot survey for the FAMPO region. This study revealed the following data: there are currently 7 existing VDOT PNR lots with a total of 6,690 spaces; with a current utilization at 76%; and 1,632 vacant spaces.

Mr. Agnello relayed that 2 new PNR lot projects have been scored under this year's Draft HB2 prioritization process. These are for a new lot at Massaponax and an expanded lot at Route 630 Courthouse Rd. Combined, these projects will create 1,215 new spaces.

Mr. Agnello stated that 3 potential new PNR projects could possibly be submitted for round 2 of HB2 project selections and these would be an expansion of the lot at Route 610 in Stafford County at Exit 143; a new lot being built at the Centreport Parkway at Exit 136 in Stafford County; and a new lot being built off of Route 606 in Thornburg at Exit 118.

Mr. Agnello advised that the current usage within the 7 lots is as follows:

- Rt. 610 – Mine Road – 740 spaces – 99% utilization
- Rt 610 – Staffordboro – 1,863 spaces – 80% utilization
- *Rt. 630 – Courthouse Road – 534 spaces – 86% utilization
- *(expansion project in HB2 allocations for an increase of 500 spaces)
- Centreport Parkway – new proposed lot location – however, to date no potential sites have been identified
- Rt. 17 – 1,024 spaces – 54% utilization

- Rt. 3 West – Gordon Road – recent project expansion completed - 1,052 spaces – 60% utilization
- Rt 3 – Salem Church – 672 spaces – 96% utilization
- Rt. 208 Houser Drive – 805 spaces – 68% utilization

- Rt. 1at Commonwealth Drive – new lot construction – in Draft

HB2 allocations – 715 spaces
Rt. 606 – Thornburg – new lot – no location site currently identified
Exit 110 – Ladysmith – lease of 25 spaces – 80% utilization
Exit 104 – Carmel Church – 40 spaces – 25% utilization

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Mr. Agnello advised that FAMPO staff is planning to complete an updated PNR lot analysis as the most recent year available is from 2013. This study will forecast future demands bases on the region’s demographic growths and will evaluate existing and proposed lot locations.

Mr. Agnello stated that data has shown that people do not live where they work. There are a small percentage of workers coming into Fredericksburg and most commuters are commuting from at least 10-50 miles one way per day.

IV. NEXT STEPS

a.) Alternative Development

Mr. Agnello advised that the next steps in the alternative development process could include the following improvements and/or construction on the I-95 mainline: widening of the general purpose lanes; extensions to the express lanes; collector & distributor lanes; & new interchanges.

Mr. Agnello relayed that the existing build-out for I-95 from mpt 145 to mpt 125 generally assumes a total of 10 lanes of traffic capacity. Should this occur, the following could become a reality: construction of 4 south bound general purpose lanes; construction of 2 reversible express lanes; & construction of 4 northbound general purpose lanes.

Mr. Agnello advised that the next steps with the alternative development concepts for the existing project assumptions are as follows:

Assumption that all existing and committed SYIP projects will materialize

Assumption that all projects included in the draft HB2 funding plan that includes the south-bound Rappahannock River Crossing project and the 2 PNR projects for Massaponax & Courthouse Road will materialize

Assumption that the 2-mile express lane extension will occur in Stafford

Assumption that the preferred alternative for I-95 north-bound between Exit 130 and Exit 133 is the Rappahannock River Crossing. Even though it is currently unfunded, it is still the preferred project to be submitted for the 2nd round of HB2 consideration

Mr. Robinson stated that the south bound problems are more urgent; however, the north bound project is still ongoing. Ms. Richter advised that initially both the north bound and

south bound Rappahannock River Crossing projects were in fact 1 project; however, they have now been split into 2 separate projects.

Mr. Robinson asked as Assumption #4 currently is completed unfunded, how are we treating this project. Mr. Robinson stated that as the south bound project with CD lanes both north bound and south bound and interchange improvements seems to be moving forward it appears that the assumption is that the north bound project segment will remain a priority for the region. Ms. Richter stated that a TIP amendment will be submitted by VDOT at the upcoming February FAMPO meeting on the Express Lane extension.

b.) Requests of Advisory Committee Members

Mr. Agnello asked that the Advisory Committee members review the information included in today's agenda packet and provide comments to FAMPO staff by close of business on February 12th on any items of concern; any comments; recommendations, etc. The request was made that all of the comments received be submitted to all members. Mr. Agnello stated that comments received would not be shared as they are received but by the close of business on February 12th then all comments received will be compiled and made available to all members.

c.) Next Meeting

Mr. Agnello stated that the 2nd meeting will need to occur between the February 29th and March 4th time frame. Mr. Agnello asked that all members check calendars for conflicts already committed to so that the best date available that would accommodate the majority of the members would be scheduled. Mr. Agnello asked that committee members reply to staff with calendar availability by close of business on Monday, February 8th.

Mr. Agnello advised that the schedule from March through June will entail the following agenda items:

March – finalization of alternatives for the modeling evaluation

Mr. Agnello relayed that the budget approved allows for a maximum of 5 alternative scenarios of modeling data available as well as a no-build option for consideration

April – evaluation of the effectiveness of the alternatives; development of draft study results; & outreach to stakeholders on the draft study data

May – stakeholder outreach finalized on the draft study results; any revisions need on modeling scenarios that would be based on feedback that was received & final screening of 5 alternative scenarios into 1 preferred alternative

June – study documentation report finalized; compile 1-page document that lists each preferred alternative; recaps total project cost; project descriptions; etc. Also by month end, will be a complete report that will list all projects & scenarios considered, endorsed, or discarded; all alternatives screened; all alternatives accepted; pros/cons of each scenario; project costs for each; etc.

Committee Member Comments, Questions, & Feedback

Baker Consulting Team:

Re: the questions rose at today's meeting for origin and destination data – with the modeling data used for Phase I of the study these are questions that can be answered.

Fran Larkins – CTAG:

Ms. Larkins asked if the Phase I study was also going to compile data for options and alternatives that would defer the current truck traffic off of Route 17 to I-95; to another outer connector option, etc.

Mr. Robinson advised that the previous studies completed that were done for the Stafford Parkway compiled total traffic data and this was not separated between truck and car traffic.

Ms. Larkins stated that even though improvements will be made to I-95 that this does not resolve the daily traffic congestion issues heading east bound on Route 17 to I-95 – there now are 6 traffic lights on that stretch of road and you have the on-going truck traffic now mixing in with the residential and commercial traffic.

Ms. Larkins asked if there is any truck data available – i.e. where the trucks are coming from; where they are going to; where they get on at I-95, etc. Mr. Van Dussen with VDOT advised that this is an issue that has been previously addressed and studied but the result showed that the trucks would not utilize an alternative roadway as this would result in them having to re-direct causing more travel times for the drivers. Mr. Robinson stated that the Stafford Parkway proved to be the project with the least path of resistance.

Ms. Adams with VDOT stated that VDOT should have data that depicts the local traffic counts once getting off of I-95 that could determine if one is exiting in the City or the Counties. If this data is in fact available, she will forward it to FAMPO staff.

Mr. Fawcett – City of Fredericksburg:

Mr. Fawcett inquired of VDOT if the safety improvements at Exit 130 & 133 are still on target. Ms. Richter stated that they are and that VDOT can provide the committee with an updated safety fund project status for their review.

Mr. Farley – CTAG:

Mr. Farley requested that all comments submitted from anyone on the advisory committee be forwarded to each member. Mr. Agnello stated that unfortunately individual comments could not be forwarded; however, after the February 12th date when all comments are due that a summary of all comments submitted can be compiled.

Mr. Agnello:

Meeting Summary minutes will be completed and forwarded to Advisory Committee members by February 8th.

Advisory Committee comments will be compiled and forward to Advisory Committee members after February 12th.

Request for Advisory Committee members to contact FAMPO staff by Monday, February 8th in regard to meeting date availability for meeting #2 to occur between February 29th and March 4th.

