

**RICHMOND REGIONAL
TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION**

**MINUTES OF MEETING
February 2, 2017**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Steve A. Elswick, **Chairman** Chesterfield County
Kathy Abbott..... Town of Ashland
Andreas D. Addison..... City of Richmond
Manuel Alvarez, Jr..... Goochland County
Nick Britton (Alternate)..... DRPT
Kimberly B. Gray..... City of Richmond
David Green..... GRTC Transit System
Angela Kelly-Wiecek..... Hanover County
Amber B. Lancaster (Alternate)..... CTAC
Kristen Nye Larson (Alternate) City of Richmond
Robert P. Morris (Nonvoting)..... CTAC
Cynthia I. Newbille City of Richmond
Larry J. Nordvig..... Powhatan County
Patricia S. O'Bannon Henrico County
Patricia A. Paige..... New Kent County
Mark Riblett (Alternate) Secretary of Transportation Designee, VDOT
Ivan Rucker (Nonvoting) FHWA
Von Tisdale (Nonvoting) RideFinders
Christopher Winslow Chesterfield County

MEMBERS ABSENT

Parker C. Agelasto City of Richmond
Cliff Burnette (Nonvoting) VDA
Robert H. Cary Secretary of Transportation Designee, VDOT
Angela L. Gray..... RMTA
James M. Holland Chesterfield County
Susan F. Lascolette Goochland County
Floyd H. Miles, Sr..... Charles City County
Brian Montgomery (Nonvoting)..... EDAC
W. Canova Peterson, IV..... Hanover County
Jitender Ramchandani (Nonvoting) DRPT
John B. Rutledge..... CRAC
Frank J. Thornton..... Henrico County
C. Thomas Tiller, Jr. New Kent County

ALTERNATE MEMBERS PRESENT, NOT VOTING

J. Michael Jones (Alternate)..... City of Richmond
Cherika N. Ruffin (Alternate)..... RideFinders

CALL TO ORDER

Richmond Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RRTPO) Chairman Steve A. Elswick called the February 2, 2017 RRTPO meeting to order at approximately 9:30 a.m. in the Richmond Regional Planning District Commission board room.

CERTIFICATION OF MEETING QUORUM

RRTPO Secretary Barbara S. Nelson reported that a quorum was present.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

At the request of Chairman Elswick, Christopher Winslow led the RRTPO in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

INTRODUCTIONS

Chairman Elswick welcomed all new RRTPO members and alternates. He recognized those in attendance, Dr. Cynthia I. Newbille, new member representing the City of Richmond who has served as an alternate RRTPO member since 2014; Kimberly B. Gray, new member from the City of Richmond; and Amber B. Lancaster, new alternate member from CTAC.

I. ADMINISTRATION

A. Approval of RRTPO Agenda

There were no requests to amend the agenda and on motion by Manuel Alvarez, Jr., seconded by Larry J. Nordvig, the RRTPO voted unanimously to approve the February 2, 2017 RRTPO meeting agenda as amended.

B. Approval of RRTPO Meeting Minutes

On motion by Larry J. Nordvig, seconded by Patricia S. O'Bannon, the RRTPO approved the minutes of the December 1, 2016 RRTPO meeting as presented, with all voting in favor except one vote in abstention.

C. Election of FY17 RRTPO Vice Chairman

On motion of Angela Kelly-Wiecek, seconded by Manuel Alvarez, Jr., the RRTPO voted unanimously to elect Cynthia I. Newbille as the RRTPO Vice Chair to serve the remainder of the FY17 term of office ending June 30, 2017.

D. Open Public Comment Period

There were no requests to address the RRTPO and Chairman Elswick closed the public comment period.

E. Consent Action Items

Barbara Nelson briefly noted each of the five consent action items included under tab 3 of the agenda package; there were no requests for additional discussion.

On motion of Patricia S. O'Bannon, seconded by Manuel Alvarez, Jr., the Richmond Regional Transportation Planning Organization unanimously approved the following resolutions:

1. FY15–FY18 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment Requests: Dundas Road and Short Pump Trail

RESOLVED, that the Richmond Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RRTPO) amends the *FY15 – FY18 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)* adding the following new projects:

- UPC 107085: Dundas Road Bridge Replacement obligating \$300,000 in revenue-sharing funding for the preliminary engineering phase; Chesterfield
- UPC 109084: Short Pump Park Trails obligating TAP funding for the preliminary engineering (\$35,000) and construction (\$279,215) phases; Henrico. Right-of-way is not necessary for this project.

2. FY15–FY18 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment Requests: Route 10 and I-64 GARVEE

RESOLVED, that the Richmond Regional Transportation Planning Organization amends the *FY 15 – FY 18 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)* adding the following new projects:

- UPC 110393: Route 10 Widening GARVEE Debt Service, adds this project to the TIP and obligates \$8.7M for debt service related to UPC 101020: Route 10 Widening
- UPC 110394: I-64 Widening GARVEE Debt Service, adds this project to the TIP and obligates \$20.6M for debt service related to UPC 107458: I-64 Widening; I-295 to Bottoms Bridge.

3. RSTP Funds Shift: Atlee Road Extended, Hanover County

RESOLVED, that the Richmond Regional Transportation Planning Organization authorizes the transfer of RSTP funds from the following projects to UPC 98236 – Atlee Road Extended in Hanover County:

- \$725,000 in close out RSTP from UPC 11273: Atlee Station Road reconstruction, Hanover;
- \$39,818 in close out RSTP from UPC 17861: Meadowbridge Road widening, Hanover;
- \$355,242 in close out RSTP from UPC 106215: I-95 and Route 54 Interchange Modification Report (IMR) study, Hanover; and
- \$455,000 from UPC 13551: Route 360 and Lee Davis Road widening, Hanover.

4. Draft FY18 – FY21 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP): Authorization for Public Review

RESOLVED, that the Richmond Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RRTPO) authorizes the FY18 – FY21 Transportation Improvement Program for public review from February 6, 2017 through March 24, 2017 including an ad in the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* and the *Richmond Free Press*; placement of the draft TIP document at central locations within each RRTPO jurisdiction; and hosting a regional public meeting on March 16, 2017 at the Richmond Regional Planning District Commission office providing information and receiving input about the draft FY18 – FY21 TIP.

5. plan2040 Amendment: Authorization for Public Review

RESOLVED, that the Richmond Regional Transportation Planning Organization authorizes *plan2040* proposed amendment for public review from February 6 to February 21, 2017. The proposed amendment will align the timebands in the revenue projections and allocation guidelines to the timebands in the constrained project list, resulting in two projects moving from the constrained project list to the unconstrained project list.

F. RRTPO Chairman’s Report

Chairman Elswick said he had nothing to report.

G. RRTPO Secretary’s Report

1. SMART SCALE Project Scoring Results

Barbara Nelson reported that there were 54 projects submitted for SMART SCALE funding within the RRTPO area with funding requests totaling \$822 million. Based

on a preliminary recommendation from the Office of Intermodal Planning and Investment, 24 of those projects are moving forward with estimated funding of \$139.5 million. Fewer than 50 percent of the requested projects are slated to receive funding and 20 percent of the total needed funds represented in SMART SCALE applications are expected to be received. There were significantly more applications and competition for funding for significantly fewer funds in the second round of SMART SCALE. Mark Riblett noted that while approximately \$139 million were identified for the region, the draft funding proposal has not been approved by the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB). Of all nine districts across the state, the Richmond District is tied for first in the number of projects identified for funding and in third place, behind Northern Virginia and Hampton Roads, for the amount of funds identified in the draft funding plan. Mr. Riblett noted types of projects and diversity of applicants selected for funding and noteworthy projects not selected. VDOT District staff is available to respond to questions regarding how specific projects fared and where they fall in the funding scenario. Angela Kelly Wiecek thanked Mr. Riblett for his assessment noting that Rt. 360 in the City of Richmond is included in the draft funding list while a fairly significant project for Rt. 360 in Hanover County, a major county corridor, was not included. Mr. Riblett noted ongoing discussions with Hanover staff on this project to review the scoring.

2. Work Program Highlights

The Work Program Highlights report being introduced this month is a new report, not to exceed one page front and back, that will condense and summarize the work being done and being reported on a significant number of pages in the monthly work status reports.

3. November and December Work Status Reports

These reports are included under tab four of the agenda package.

II. NEW BUSINESS

Chairman Elswick requested that presenters try to keep their presentations to the amount of time allotted on the agenda and that RRTPO members try to keep their questions succinct.

A. CMAQ Program Status Reports

Barbara Nelson noted materials included under tab five of the agenda package. She said Laura Godbolt with the Port of Virginia, Amy Inman with the City of Richmond, and Von Tisdale with RideFinders would each provide a presentation, as requested by the RRTPO, on a Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) program funded through discretionary allocations by the RRTPO.

Ms. Godbolt thanked the RRTPO for their support of the Richmond Marine Terminal (RMT). One year ago, the City of Richmond signed a long-term lease agreement with the Port of Virginia to continue operations at the RMT until 2056. The RMT is serviced by a barge which makes three round trips weekly between RMT and the terminals in Hampton Roads transporting imports and exports which are fairly balanced. The barge service grew quickly from a 40 FEU (forty-foot equivalent unit) container capacity to 120 FEU container capacity and this week is now at 150 units and is able to handle refrigerated containers. This past fiscal year over 16,000 containers were taken off the highways and put onto the barge reducing air pollutants in all categories with a 73 percent reduction in carbon dioxide. The Port of Virginia and

RMT facilities are an important economic engine for the region attracting many new companies to the Richmond area and encouraging business expansions to utilize the marine highway. Ms. Godbolt responded to a question saying the barge is full many days in both directions offloading imports in Richmond and moving exports to the terminals in Hampton Roads, depending on the needs of customers.

Amy Inman presented details of the City of Richmond Employee Trip Reduction program funded with CMAQ funds from the RRTPO, with a local match from the Department of Rail and Public Transportation, since 2004. The program offers the opportunity for employees to use public transportation which reduces dependence on the automobile and parking needs, provides a health benefit, and improves air quality. City employees receive a GRTC swipe card for trips to and from work and may participate in subsidized carpools and vanpools for travel to work. Over 1,000 employees, 22 percent of the city's workforce, are enrolled in the program and about 45 percent of those enrolled use the program on a regular basis. The program has provided over 1.4 million bus and vanpool trips resulting in a reduction of 18 tons of hydrocarbons and 19 tons of nitrous oxide (NO_x) emissions over the 12-year period. Annually, two tons of hydrocarbons and two tons of NO_x are removed from the atmosphere. Ms. Inman thanked the RRTPO for its support. Questions brought forward the following major points:

- No data is available regarding why people choose to use or not to use the program.
- Information on this program is communicated through new employee orientation, and the city's human resources department will conduct an employee awareness campaign about this program.
- RideFinders staff is working with all swipecard and employee trip reduction programs and a survey is scheduled with one of the questions being why they choose to use the program; that data will be reported back to the city.
- Converting the environmental benefit to a financial savings for better air quality might be a compelling case for return on investment questions.

Chairman Elswick posed several questions regarding how other jurisdictions that have transit could obtain CMAQ funds to participate in this program. Ms. Inman said this type of program is eligible for CMAQ funds and any locality could work with RideFinders or with RRTPO staff to explore the possibility of receiving CMAQ funding. Larry Nordvig suggested that the region pursue this program more aggressively to take vehicles off the roads, reduce air pollution, and save transportation dollars. Chairman Elswick suggested having the Technical Advisory Committee review this issue to make recommendations. Ms. Nelson said the FY18 work program includes work efforts associated with transportation demand management and the congestion management planning process and this can be included as well.

On motion of Christopher Winslow, seconded by Cynthia I. Newbille, the RRTPO voted unanimously to request TAC consideration and recommendation on how the region might pursue encouragement of employee trip reduction programs.

Von Tisdale provided information on the history and governance of the RideFinders program and shared major statistics of the programs and services. The program serves from 400 to 600 clients per month in the commuter store and had 1,500 new registrants in FY16. Through their active work with Commuter Choice clients, human service agencies, and GRTC swipecard clients, RideFinders has almost 380,000 trips annually.

There are 143 vanpools on the road with almost 15,000 passengers, almost 30 million passenger miles and 361,000 passenger trips just from the vanpool program. Ms. Tisdale reviewed the program's funding and thanked the RRTPO for their investment in RideFinders over the years.

Ivan Rucker said Federal Highway (FHWA) Virginia Division appreciates the investment decision by the RRTPO in these well-run quality programs. He said where there is opportunity, FHWA promotes these programs noting that they have promoted the barge program nationwide. Total combined CMAQ allocation since 1992 for all three currently funded programs is \$18 million. He said this averages about \$720,000 a year for three regional programs which is extremely efficient and FHWA applauds this region for its efforts.

B. Greater RVA Transit Vision Plan

Barbara Nelson noted the brief report included in tab six of the agenda package saying the Transit Vision Plan is a work program task which began in FY16 and has continued into FY17. The plan presents exciting opportunities for mobility and accessibility throughout the region. The plan will return to the RRTPO for action following RRTPO Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) review and recommendation. Nick Britton with the Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) reviewed the plan goals, vision statement, planning process, and findings and recommendations. A map showing full 2040 build-out of plan recommendations was distributed. The BRT routes selected include extension of the Pulse line out to Short Pump, west-end south, Midlothian Turnpike, Hull Street Road and Mechanicsville Turnpike. Enhanced local service, which doesn't have dedicated lanes and runs more often, includes routes to the airport, Staples Mill Road, Ashland, Chester and possibly an express to Petersburg. Express routes include Ashland, Chester, Petersburg, western Henrico to Goochland and Powhatan and New Kent on I-64. Regional express routes would include the Rt. 288 connection between the Chesterfield County Courthouse area and the West Creek/Short Pump area. The vision plan would result in 400 percent more people having access to frequent transit and 200 percent more jobs being accessible by frequent transit. GRTC operating costs are \$47 to \$48 million annually and would increase to between \$123 to \$147 million annually at full build-out. That would put the region in about the 50th percentile for transit dollars when compared with other regions of the same size. Mr. Britton said that moving forward, the goal is to have jurisdictions champion the projects that they see as priorities and to work with the RRTPO to move them forward.

- VDOT and GRTC have developed park and ride lots. There is a region-wide park and ride study that will begin this spring to look at where the park and ride lots should be across the region to support transit and strategies for how to advance those park and rides lot.
- The Transit Vision Plan provides recommendations on park and ride locations; however, the goal is to time advancement of the regional park and ride study to coincide with the conclusion of the transit vision plan and completion of the transit network planning effort in the City or Richmond.
- There is a recommendation in the Transit Vision Plan for a park and ride lot in Powhatan which does not show up on the printed map.

- Ashland and Hanover County representatives are interested in having the conversation in those jurisdictions and expressed disappointment that public meetings were not held there to get input from their residents.
- Randolph Macon College should be added to the transit vision network map.
- There is the opportunity for the RRTPO to take the vision plan and work with each of the jurisdictions to refine what is in the documents to come up with specific recommendations and strategies that would align with the individual jurisdictions in the context of the regional plan and that can be added to the upcoming work program.
- Farebox recovery covers about 20 percent of the cost of operation and is not included in calculating operating costs.
- The plan does not include plans for significant interjurisdictional transit other than to the City of Richmond.

C. Equity Planning and Programming

Barbara Nelson noted a report under tab seven of the agenda package and introduced Catie Bray who is heading RRTPO equity planning and programming efforts. Ms. Bray noted foundations of law and policy that require consideration of race, ethnicity and income in federal programming. Equity is not a national goal mandated by specific regulations, but is a local priority defined by the RRTPO and its partners. While there has been progress in using new processes that are impartial, transparent and goal directed to evaluate the distribution of transportation system benefits to protected populations, there are plans to do more. The RRTPO is defining and measuring how transportation system benefits are distributed across jurisdictions so everyone has access to its benefits and no group disproportionately bears its burdens. The RRTPO is developing an equity analysis process with new tools and metrics, and examining how transportation planning can facilitate equitable access to necessities and opportunities – jobs, food, education, health services, recreation and retail.

Ms. Bray described the process by which equity was evaluated in *plan2040* and presented the results of that evaluation. Low-income areas and communities of color taken together are identified as environmental justice (EJ) communities which account for about 36 percent of the region's population and which is slated to receive about 22 percent of the transportation investment. Ms. Bray reviewed a map illustrating that there are fewer projects and dollars in transportation investments in EJ communities. A similar map illustrated that only five of the region's 15 activity centers are in EJ communities and the remaining 10 are in the suburban ring and separated from EJ communities by significant distances. Investment in vulnerable areas will be a cross-disciplinary effort to connect EJ communities by transit and increase activity in central communities through public investment. Ms. Bray reviewed first steps in developing an equity program including developing technical approaches to integrate EJ considerations into the front end of assessment and planning efforts; continuing public conversations about transit; identifying partners that represent a spectrum of human service sector and advocacy groups; and working to identify new public participation opportunities. The end goal is to turn visions into investment strategies and fund projects that the region needs to improve equal access. Questions clarified the following points:

- This effort encompasses minority communities and low-income communities of any color.

- The data used for the equity evaluation of *plan2040* represented the entire planning district 15 and not just the RRTPO study area.

Larry Nordvig shared a personal experience learning that there are people who grow up never having been outside their own county and saying that the RRTPO has a big humanitarian responsibility. New growth taking place in the outer ring is going to be more expensive than maintaining a built-out structure in the core and the question Mr. Nordvig posed is how to tell when there is true inequity in transportation investments. Ms. Nelson responded that the representation of investments shown on the map is a reflection of the projects requested as part of the long-range transportation plan process and it is appropriate for the RRTPO to target transportation investments in planned growth areas. What has been so revealing in the equity evaluation and the data being presented is that it gives us another quantitative lens to engage in the planning process to say what are the needs in EJ communities and are we making sure that those accessibility and mobility needs are being met and making sure projects to meet the needs of the EJ communities across the region are being identified and requested. Ms. Nelson noted that in the Commerce Corridor, staff engaged the communities on the front end of the planning process to talk with them about the environmental and social equity impacts of this planning effort. Ms. Nelson said the RRTPO has always met a minimum equity standard, but the programmatic resources being deployed are to make a significant impact across all planning efforts. She noted this research is available to member jurisdictions in working to meet the needs of vulnerable populations in the delivery of transportation services.

D. FY18 Unified Planning Work Program Priorities

Barbara Nelson noted the staff report under tab eight of the agenda package regarding efforts on the FY18 UPWP. She noted three core areas of work program priorities: 1) focusing on assuring that the work program addresses all outstanding items from the 2013 federal certification review; all aspects of the implementation of the FAST Act, MAP-21 and all other USDOT priorities; 2) focusing on continuation of existing work efforts; and 3) new initiatives which focus on the following themes: transportation investments to capitalize on regional commerce, work force mobility and accessibility; and expanding access to transit through multimodal connectivity and park and ride facilities. Ms. Nelson requested discussion and concurrence on this approach to work program priorities as guidance to inform the work tasks that move forward for review by TAC and for approval in May. There were no comments and Ms. Nelson said she would move forward with the work program as described.

III. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. VDOT Richmond District Update

Mark Riblett, alternate to the Secretary of Transportation designee to the RRTPO, added to the SMART SCALE discussion earlier in the meeting to keep an eye on the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) meetings and discussions over the next several months which will address SMART SCALE. The next meetings are scheduled for February 15 and 16 in the VDOT central office auditorium.

B. Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee (CTAC) Meeting Report

Robert Morris, CTAC Chairman, reported that CTAC met on January 19 and elected a new Vice Chairman, Amber Lancaster, who was present at the RRTPO meeting as a new

alternate member. He noted the meeting report which addresses three of the four meeting topics included under tab nine in the agenda package. He said the next CTAC meeting would be held on March 16, 2017.

Chairman Elswick noted that Mr. Addison and Ms. Larsen, new City of Richmond RRTPO member and alternate, respectively. [Mr. Jones, new City of Richmond alternate member, attended the meeting, but departed prior to this introduction.]

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

A. Future Meeting Topics

Chairman Elswick noted meeting topics included in tab 10 and noted that a future transportation white paper being developed to look at future long-term funding issues and transportation issues in the region. This will come to the Executive Committee and to the full board at some point in the future.

Angela Kelly Wiecek noted that the legislature is still in session and requested that RRTPO member consider, as they engage their legislators, that local funding for secondary roads has been cut by 90 percent over the last decade. The region needs these roads for people to get to work, for economic development purposes and a whole range of other purposes. The 90 percent cut must be made up somewhere.

B. Next RRTPO Meeting

Chairman Elswick said the next meeting is scheduled for March 2, 2017.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Elswick adjourned the meeting at 10:40 a.m.