

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Monday, October 2, 2023 – 9:30 a.m.

406 Princess Anne Street, Fredericksburg, VA 22401

www.fampo.gwregion.org Video URL: <https://youtu.be/JtQsb2Gg09s>

Committee Members Present:

Chair Matthew Lehane, Stafford County
First Vice Chair Paul Agnello, Spotsylvania County
Second Vice Chair, Jamie Jackson, City of Fredericksburg
Bassam Amin, City of Fredericksburg
Adam Derrick, Stafford County
Melody Fowler, FXBGO!
Amy Garbarini, DRPT
Susan Gardner, VDOT
Kate Gibson, GWRideConnect
Casandra Lord, VDOT
Nick Ruiz, VRE
Rodney White, Spotsylvania County

Committee Members Present (remotely):

Mohamed Benomar, Spotsylvania County
Stephen Haynes, VDOT
Robert Schneider, PRTC

Committee Members Absent:

Nick Minor, King George County
Khapel Akbari, Stafford County
Leigh Anderson, GWRideConnect
Chelsea Beytas, FTA
Kimberly Cook, King George County
Bryon Counsell, Stafford County
Mike Craig, City of Fredericksburg
Christine Hoeffner, VRE
Todd Horsley, DRPT
Leon Hughes, Caroline County
Daniel Koenig, FTA
Steven Minor, FHWA
Jacob Pastwik, Spotsylvania County
Craig Pennington, Caroline County
Craig Reed, FXBGO!
Michelle Shropshire, VDOT
Joe Stainsby, PRTC

Others Present

Paul Prideaux, Michael Baker International (remote attendance)
Alan Watkins, Stafford County Resident

Staff Present:

Ian Ollis, FAMPO Administrator
Kari Eaves, Transportation Planner III and Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator
Becky Golden, Transportation Planning Manager
John S. Ridout, Transportation Planner II
Connor Anderson, GIS Technician/Transportation Planner

1. Call Technical Advisory Committee Meeting to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 am by Chair Lehane.

2. Roll Call and Determination of Quorum

Connor Anderson conducted roll call and determined that a quorum was present.

3. Approval of the October 2, 2023, Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Agenda (ACTION ITEM)

Paul Agnello requested that item 6.b be removed from the Consent Agenda and placed under item 7.b.

Motion was made to approve the October 2nd Agenda as amended.

Motion: Paul Agnello; Second: Rodney White

Abstentions: None

Motion passed with unanimous consent.

4. Review of the September Policy Committee Meeting

Ian Ollis covered items that were not also on the October TAC agenda. Approval of the CMAQ/STBG Project Selection Processes, the TIP amendments, and approval to open a public comment period for amendments to the CEEP were all approved or adopted as submitted. The PL funding scenario that includes the \$75,000 base amount for all MPOs and the two-year blending in period was authorized by the Policy Committee to be FAMPO's recommendation to VAMPO of the options presented.

5. Public Comment

No public comments were received.

6. Consent Agenda

a. Approval of the September 11, 2023, TAC Meeting Minutes

Motion to Approve the September 11, 2023, Consent Agenda, as amended.

Motion: Paul Agnello; Second: Bassam Amin

Abstentions: None

Motion passed with unanimous consent.

7. Action / Discussion Items

a. SMART SCALE Round 6 CTB Update & Regional Project Ideas

Kari Eaves and Ian Ollis provided a summary of changes proposed for the SMART SCALE application and scoring process. It appears that the recommendation to reduce the application cap to 2 (final) and 5 (pre-application) is based on concerns with some small MPOs submitting poor applications in past rounds, affecting all MPOs. However, the CTB is considering a middle tier based on size and application strength in preceding rounds, as recommended by FAMPO's Policy Committee. Another change from previous rounds is that applications will be "screened out" instead of "conditionally screened in".

Chair Lehane assisted with the summary of the impact of these changes. Ms. Eaves provided an accurate and concise explanation of the refined definition of eligible High Priority Projects (HPP) and indicated that most of the regional projects submitted in the past would not meet the refined definition of HPP. No stand-alone bicycle / pedestrian projects meet this refined definition.

Mr. Ollis and Cassy Lord discussed the VTrans needs interpretation and connection to the HPP definition. Another significant change is the recommended change to eliminate funding step #2 that will affect regional projects but not local projects. Ms. Eaves explained the proposed modification to the Land Use metric, driven by an increasing bias toward bicycle and pedestrian projects from Rounds 1 to 5. Although the link between transportation and land use is not part of the SMART SCALE legislation, it is an important component of the IJJA, and Mr. Ollis pointed out this incongruity between the Virginia Code and the Code of Federal Regulations for this important planning factor.

Paul Agnello, Chair Lehane, and others explained more fully the scoring impact of the aforementioned changes by using Round 5 as examples. Ms. Eaves explained the proposed major changes to the economic development scoring criteria. The goal of the recommended changes is to make the process more automated, relying on the *VirginiaScan* website. The site may not be updated to include all eligible project locations, and Mr. Ollis and Mr. Agnello pointed out the impact of this potentially limited database.

TAC members and FAMPO staff discussed next steps to help select the best regional project candidates.

b. Regional Transportation Authority Update

Consent Agenda Item 6.b. Endorse Resolution 24-10 Directing a Public Comment Period for an Amendment to the Fiscal Year 2024 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

Mr. Ollis described the major points shared with the Policy Committee that support a sustainable additional revenue source for the region, and the juxtaposition of the GWRC region among the current authorities; as well as last year's efforts to create an authority in our region without communication with local elected officials. Model options were presented and explained including the current distribution of local sources of taxation.

Robert Schneider explained the process by which the VRE motor fuels tax flows from suppliers through PRTC to local jurisdictions. Mr. Agnello and Mr. Ollis discussed the need to normalize the impact of this revenue source with the potential model outputs to ensure consumer comparison of options is accurate.

The following points are to be considered: membership of the board, name of the authority, taxes and fees to be included, distribution of funds, and an initial set of projects to be funded. Pros and cons of the existing authorities' membership were shared, including the idea of non-voting subject matter experts to act as advisors. The impact of weighted voting was discussed by attendees, as well as potential names. The following taxes and fees are under consideration: grantor's tax, transient occupancy tax, retail tax, gas and diesel tax, and highway user fees for alternative fuel and electric vehicles. The goal is to design the new authority to have a lesser impact on regional consumers than the other RTA's in the Commonwealth.

Although identifying an initial set of projects by way of a Memorandum of Understanding between participating jurisdictions is not a requirement, such a list gives jurisdictions a level of comfort that their needs are considered and allows jurisdictions the opportunity to fund projects using their own prioritization methods.

Next steps include sending a survey to TAC to provide input on the above options and ideas, as well as composing draft legislation. Localities are encouraged to develop a preliminary list of projects that would reflect their priorities.

Mr. Agnello proposed revised language for Resolution 24-10: replace "draft legislation" with "documents" in the second Whereas clause.

Motion to Endorse Resolution 24-10 as amended.

Motion: Paul Agnello; Second: Rodney White

Abstentions: None

Motion passed with unanimous consent.

c. Proposal to Add Primary Route 3 to VDOT's Corridor of Statewide Significance (CoSS)

Mr. Ollis and John Ridout explained the benefits of generating a Memorandum with the research of freight traffic and eligibility criteria for Route 3 along its entire length to be added to the current list of CoSS Routes. A consensus was reached supporting this work plan effort.

d. Vision 2075 – Draft Vision Statement

Mr. Ollis presented a draft vision statement, and Nick Ruiz pointed out the need to add an additional item regarding fostering regional cooperation and collaboration. The Draft Vision Statement was endorsed by TAC with the recommended addition.

e. CMAQ / STBG Call for Projects Timeline & Reminder

Dr. Ridout provided the timeline and reminded attendees of milestones to meet the schedule. Chair Lehane requested that scoring spreadsheets be provided to applicants and staff agreed.

f. STBG Project Selection Process Section 3.3 Project Screening Requirements

Dr. Ridout explained that there were two minor omissions from the STBG Section 3.3 that were included in the adopted CMAQ process, and TAC agreed to incorporate into the STBG process:

- *Project is identified in a current adopted local, statewide, GWRC, agency plans, Transit Strategic Plan or the FAMPO Long-Range Transportation Plan.*
- *Transit projects require a letter of support... within 30 days of the submission.*

g. Endorse Resolution 24-09 Authorizing Staff to Execute a Contract with Michael Baker International for the FAMPO River Crossing Parkway

Mr. Ollis shared the process used to select MBI from among the three on-call GWRC consultants. Chair Lehane and attendees discussed the locations of traffic count location gateways shown in the proposal, and staff agreed to augment the gateways in the Task Order to include Greenbank Road and Celebrate Virginia Parkway. Mr. Agnello requested that coordination with the Route 3 Pipeline study volumes also be included in the final Task Order, to which staff also agreed.

Motion to Endorse Resolution 24-09 as amended.

Motion: Jamie Jackson; Second: Adam Derrick

Abstentions: None

Motion passed.

h. VRE System Plan Update

Mr. Ruiz shared the following with attendees:

- VRE System Plan 2050 Vision: VRE will grow to serve the region as the transportation service of choice, creating meaningful connections and economic opportunities in a safe, sustainable, and equitable manner.
- Twenty-two service scenarios were examined, resulting in 4 alternatives within the 2030 horizon, to be adopted in the spring of 2024.
- Service area growth, origin / destination results and 2030 ridership forecasts were presented and discussed.
- The Board-preferred 2030 service alternatives include: 60% more weekday service, weekday express trains, and a ramp-up to provide weekend service.
- An important component of the System Plan Vision includes connecting bus and rail to bring long-distance commuters into the VRE system.

The reinstatement of the step-up ticket whereby VRE ticket holders can ride Amtrak for a nominal additional cost was discussed, in addition to the need to diversify travel markets beyond Federal government employment riders. Market strategies were also discussed to expand ridership beyond “choice riders” to commuters. Public outreach strategies will be deployed toward a Spring 2024 adoption of the plan.

8. Correspondence

No correspondence was received.

9. Staff Reports

No Staff Reports were presented.

10. Member Reports

No member reports were presented.

11. Meeting Adjourned 11:55 a.m.