

RTA SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

January 29, 2024 – 6:00 p.m.

406 Princess Anne Street, Fredericksburg, VA 22401

Video Recording: <https://youtu.be/FmKW9y9-yw>

Committee Members Present: (V) indicates voting member

Ms. Meg Bohmke, Chair, Stafford County (V)
Ms. Monica Gary, Stafford County (V)
Ms. Crystal Vanuch, Stafford County (V)
Ms. Lori Hayes, First Vice-Chair Spotsylvania County (V)
Mr. Drew Mullins, Spotsylvania County (V)
Mr. Chris Yakabouski, Spotsylvania County (V)
Mr. Jason Graham, Second Vice-Chair, City of Fredericksburg (V)
Dr. Robert Schneider, PRTC (V) (remote)
Ms. Cathy Binder, King George County
Mr. Timothy Welsh, Vice Chair CTAC
Mr. Chris Clarke, Vice Chair BPAC (remote)

Committee Members Absent:

Mr. Deuntay Diggs, alternate Stafford County (V)
Dr. Pamela Yeung, alternate Stafford County (V)
Mr. Gerald Childress, alternate Spotsylvania County (V)
Mr. Jacob Lane, alternate Spotsylvania County (V)
Mr. Timothy Baroody, City of Fredericksburg (V)
Mr. Will Mackintosh, City of Fredericksburg (V)
Mr. David “Sully” Sullins, alternate King George County
Mr. Jeffery Black, Caroline County
Ms. Nancy Long, alternate Caroline County
Mr. David Brown, alternate City of Fredericksburg (V)
Ms. Marcie Parker, Representative from the Secretary of Transportation (V)
Ms. Cathie Coffey, alternate Representative from the Secretary of Transportation (V)
Mr. Joe Stainsby, alternate PRTC (V)
Mr. Steven Minor, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
Mr. Daniel Koenig, Federal Highway Administration (FTA)
Ms. Chelsea Beytas, alternate Federal Transit Administration (FTA)
Ms. Laura Sellers, Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB)
Ms. Susan Gardner, Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)
Ms. Casandra Lord, alternate Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)
Ms. Amy Garbarini, Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT)
Mr. Todd Horsley, alternate Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT)
Ms. Jamie Jackson, Fredericksburg Go! (FXBGO!)
Ms. Melody Fowler, alternate Fredericksburg Go! (FXBGO!)
Mr. Matthew Lehane, Chair BPAC

Others Present:

Joshua Cole
Gavin Gardon
Al Watkins
Chip Boyles
Susan Spears
Eric Sundberg
Kevin Stephens
Jim Shiels

Staff Present:

Mr. Ian Ollis, FAMPO Administrator
Ms. Becky Golden, Transportation Planning Manager
Dr. John Ridout, Transportation Planner II
Ms. Kari Eaves, Transportation Planner III
Mr. Connor Anderson, Transportation Planner/GIS Technician
Mx. Colie Touzel, Public Involvement/Title VI Coordinator
Ms. Leda Hinkle, Transportation Intern

1. Call RTA Subcommittee Meeting to Order

Chair Bohmke called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

2. Roll Call

Mx. Touzel conducted roll call.

3. Questions received from Policy Committee Members for discussion

Mr. Ian Ollis pointed out the geography of the existing Regional Transportation Authorities in Virginia, noting the shared geography with I-81 and I-95 corridors. His overview was supplemented by a map that included the proposed Rappahannock RTA.

Mr. Ollis continued to review the origin and goals of the subcommittee, where the Policy Committee formed the respective subcommittee to answer RTA legislative questions. All GWRC jurisdictions are invited to participate, and staff will try to provide requested materials. He also addressed two questions inquiring about 1) current projects that could receive RTA funding and 2) HPP match funding with and without an RTA.

Mr. Ollis introduced the response to the first question, summarizing project lists used for RTA estimates and scenario planning including funded projects in the TIP and SMART SCALE (item 4a) and all CLRP projects (item 4b). Project lists excluded local developer funded projects and local revenue sharing projects. Scenario A suggests initial projects the RTA could fund, mapped with order of magnitude costs. Scenario B tries to illustrate the influence of the RTA by reviewing unfunded projects that might have been funded if an RTA already existed. He emphasized that responses to the subcommittee's questions are estimates and hypothetical scenarios, stressing the sovereignty of the committee for drafting RTA legislation and operation.

Item 4e addresses the second question and includes OIPI slides and a staff example to illustrate local match or RTA match results.

Mr. Ollis provided an example from Hanover County, which receives \$14 million a year (\$14M/year) in local revenues excluding regional Central Virginia RTA (CVTA) funds.

Ms. Hayes asked what tax was installed to get the \$14M/year in local revenues. Mr. Ollis answered that it was a combination of taxes including a gas and sales tax.

Chair Bohmke asked if Hanover would be the most rural of all the localities within the CVTA and if the \$14M/year was standard across all counties in the RTA. Mr. Ollis answered that the \$14M/year was specific to Hanover County, with each county getting a prorated amount determined by the state finance department, which is the taxing authority for RTAs. Mr. Ollis noted that staff will investigate if the state requires an administrative fee.

Mr. Yakabouski asked if Hanover receives more funding than what residents are being taxed. Mr. Ollis noted that the formula for prorating funds back to localities within the CVTA is not available.

Ms. Hayes asked how the CVTA compares to other RTAs in the state. Mr. Ollis compared the pro rata of Hampton Roads' RTA with the CVTA and Northern Virginia's RTA. Essentially, the RTA determines the split of RTA funds given back to individual localities and those added to regional funds. The state then determines the pro rata of the funds given back to localities.

4. Staff presentations and responses

a. Projects currently underway

Dr. John Ridout provided a presentation on already funded projects in the Transportation Improvement Program and within the VDOT project dashboard, categorized as to whether the project is committed funds by SMART SCALE or another funding source. The list illustrates what projects will not need RTA funding.

b. Projects put together through FAMPO (including CLRP and Recent Studies)

Before presenting the project compilation, Dr. Ridout first defined the CLRP as a fiscally constrained list, which Mr. Ollis emphasized can only include projects that have identified sources of funding. Staff clarified that these sources are identified by obtaining estimates of future funding amounts from various sources. The MPO constructs the CLRP based on these estimates.

Included on the project list is the 2050 CLRP, GWRC rural projects in Caroline and King George counties, projects from FAMPO's 2045 and 2040 CLRPs, and the Long-Range Project Needs list. The Long-Range Project Needs list is not fiscally constrained and would require finding additional funding. However, projects on that list could be swapped with those in the CLRP. FAMPO-identified projects and study recommendations were also presented to the committee.

To address Ms. Hayes's question about project categorization, staff will provide information about projects in the CLRP that have now received funding for the next subcommittee meeting.

c. What the RTA could actually be funding: Scenario A

Mr. Anderson presented an ArcGIS StoryMap of potential projects that could be funded (in part or full) by the Rappahannock RTA. It included locations, alignments,

descriptions, and cost estimates. These 12 projects include: the Harrison Road Interchange and Bridge Widening, the I-95 Widening from Exit 130 to 126, the River Crossing Parkway, the Enon Connector Road, the Mine-Centreport Connector Road, the Ladysmith Bridge Widening and Interchange Modification, the King George Triangle Study, the Eastern Bypass Study, the Southern Bypass Study, the Western Bypass Study, the VCR Trail Tunnel, and the High Capacity Transit (HCT) Pilot Project. To summarize Scenario A, Mr. Ollis shared that all projects are substantial and, aside from the studies, supported by existing studies.

Ms. Gary commented on the area's growing population and expressed her concern about the inevitability of a future beltway, clarifying this is a realistic consideration given the growth of the region. She shared her support for an RTA, noting its necessity to address regional growth. She also complimented the diversity of the projects listed in Scenario A, stating that all jurisdictions should benefit from the RTA.

Mr. Graham agreed that population growth would need to be addressed regionally and shared his support for the diversity of projects. He asked committee members to acknowledge that the projects included in Scenario A would address the problem of congestion, something committee members should prioritize rather than the specific jurisdiction's projects.

Mr. Yakabouski asked whether projects funded by the RTA would have to be multi-jurisdictional in their geography. Mr. Ollis answered that there is no legislation explicitly ordering either way. Mr. Yakabouski continued to commend Scenario A for the regional connectivity strengthened by project selection and advocate for an equitable distribution of RTA funded projects across localities.

Chair Bohmke ended the discussion after advocating for North-South connectors that decrease regional reliance on I-95.

d. Which items the RTA could have funded if we had one: Scenario B

Dr. Ridout presented a project list based upon the Constrained Long Range Plan and Rural Need list as well as the calculated hypothetical yield of funds from an RTA in the region from 2013 to 2024. The calculated yield from this example time period would have been \$600 million, with over \$1 billion from leveraging RTA funds for match funding from federal sources or SMART SCALE.

e. The matching mechanism with High Priority Projects (HPP) with examples

Ms. Eaves provided a presentation on the changes to the SMART SCALE funding process and noted that leveraged funding will play an increased role in the success of receiving SMART SCALE funding. For projects equal to or greater than \$30 million, leveraged projects are six times more successful with SMART SCALE funding. Ms. Eaves presented two leveraged project examples, one from Hampton Roads demonstrating the massive amount of matched funds some large RTAs can commit to projects and one from Virginia Beach, which showed a more typical return on investment (ROI). She emphasized that any leveraged funding gives a project an advantage over similar projects without such funding, but with larger projects it becomes essential.

5. Discussion of goals and projects

Mr. Graham proposed that the goals of the subcommittee, in order of chronological precedence, should be first to determine whether the subcommittee recommends an RTA and, if recommended, determine the percentage of funds raised, prioritization of projects, and bylaws of the RTA. He proposed that the subcommittee decide whether to recommend an RTA by the next meeting, so that future subcommittee meetings can work through other logistical considerations.

Ms. Gary supported the committee first evaluating the potential impacts and logistics of an RTA before determining whether or not to support one.

Chair Bohmke recommended inviting a representative from the NVTC to the subcommittee as a guest speaker to share information about their experience with an RTA.

Ms. Hayes expressed the importance of discussing the options localities have should they wish not to participate in an RTA. Mr. Ollis clarified that the outcome of the subcommittee would be the decision of whether to support the RTA and, if the subcommittee supports the RTA, what conditions the region has for the creation of an RTA.

Ms. Vanuch emphasized that the school debt tax in Stafford County would influence her decision to support an RTA. Mr. Ollis suggested that the subcommittee wait to discuss taxes until knowing where the General Assembly stands. Mr. Graham offered the topic of working through of methodology of project prioritization.

After Ms. Binder shared that King George would not support an RTA with a 60/40 split, Mr. Ollis suggested the committee hold off on discussing taxes and consider the RTA’s split of regional and locality funds in the meantime.

Mr. Yakabouski reminded the committee that the General Assembly will ultimately vote on and decide the administration of an RTA in the region. He suggested that the more thought the subcommittee puts into a recommendation for an RTA, the more influence they will have. He also suggested that the committee think of the RTA as a short-term, finite resource for funding, rather than a long-term funding source. Considering potential changes in future funding opportunities and processes, he recommended that the subcommittee focus on specific identified goals and short-term projects as well as how to make an RTA an equitable benefactor for all jurisdictions in the GWRC.

6. Future Subcommittee Meeting dates:

- a. February 29, 2024, at 6 p.m.
- b. March At 6 p.m.
- c. April At 6 p.m.
- d. May At 6 p.m.

7. February Agenda Plan and Requests for Staff

The committee requested staff provide information about how RTA funds get distributed to jurisdictions, costs of I-95 bridges, and a list of projects that have already received funding. The subcommittee will invite a representative from the NVTC to speak at a future subcommittee



meeting and plans to discuss the split of RTA funds and the mechanism for how to choose projects.

8. **Adjourn/Next RTA Subcommittee Meeting February 29, 2024, at 6:00pm.**

Chair Bohmke adjourned the meeting at 8:16 pm.