

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, June 18, 2025

7:00 p.m. EDT

2600 Park Tower Drive, Suite 601

Vienna, VA 22180

This meeting was held in person and livestreamed via YouTube.

MEETING SUMMARY

1. Call to Order/Welcome

- ✓ The meeting was conducted in-person. Substitute Chair Ciccarelli called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.
- ✓ **Attendees:**
 - **TAC Members:** Chair Randy Boice, Michelle Cavucci; Armand Ciccarelli; Amy Morris; Frank Spielberg.
 - **NVTA Staff:** Monica Backmon, CEO (virtual); Keith Jasper, Principal, Transportation Planning and Programming; Amanda Sink, Project Delivery / Grants Manager (virtual); Sree Nampoothiri, Senior Manager, Transportation Planning and Programming; Alyssa Beyer, Regional Transportation Planner.
 - **Others:** Dalia Leven, National Planning Lead for Transit and Shared Mobility at Cambridge Systematics, Inc.

2. Summary Notes of March 19, 2025, Meeting

- ✓ A motion to approve the summary notes of the January 15, 2025, meeting was made by Mr. Spielberg and seconded by Mr. Ciccarelli. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Summary Notes of May 21, 2025, Meeting

- ✓ A motion to approve the summary notes of the January 15, 2025, meeting was made by Mr. Ciccarelli and seconded by Ms. Morris. The motion passed unanimously with Chair Boice abstaining due to absence during that meeting.

4. BRT Action Plan (Formerly Preliminary Deployment Plan)

- ✓ Mr. Jasper began by sharing the context of and a status update for the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Action Plan, highlighting its intent to act as a strong

blueprint for incremental BRT development to create an integrated regional system. He reminded the TAC of the approach of “Think Big, Start Small, Build Momentum” with the intent of working steadily toward a cohesive BRT network in the region.

- ✓ Mr. Jasper also stressed the highly collaborative nature of the BRT Action Plan. This includes collaboration with jurisdictions and agencies in Northern Virginia along with Montgomery County, Prince George County, and District Department of Transportation through the BRT Planning Working Group. It also includes coordination with other jurisdictional and agency programs such as Northern Virginia Transportation Commission’s (NVTC) Regional Bus Analysis, Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority’s (WMATA) Better Bus Network Redesign, DMVMoves and SJ28 initiatives, and more.
- ✓ Ms. Leven provided a summary of major findings, most of which were covered at previous meetings. In total there were 587 completed surveys with 1,518 comments across 7 open-ended questions. The response to the proposed network is largely positive, with 72% of respondents indicating that they would be very/extremely likely to use the BRT system if it was available. Ms. Leven shared that 31% of response left a generally positive / supportive comment and only 5% left a generally negative or unsupportive comment. The remaining comments provided feedback and suggestions.
- ✓ Ms. Leven reminded the TAC that the proposed BRT system is forecast to serve approximately 47 million riders each year by 2045. This will shift 27,000 trips from driving every day, reduce daily congestion by 12,000 person-hours of delay and daily emissions by 23 tons of CO₂, increase accessibility to 17,000 additional jobs within 60 minutes by transit, and avoid costs of damages and injuries from crashes by \$10 million annually, all with fare revenues covering 15% of the BRT system operating costs.
- ✓ Mr. Jasper emphasized the importance that drivers are willing to consider shifting their travel mode, provided that the BRT system is fast, frequent, and reliable. He also noted that many BRT lines are likely to be within a competitive range for NVTa funding if submitted for evaluation under the Six Year Program process. If implemented, the BRT Action Plan will ensure that NVTa’s BRT-related investments reduce congestion, provide a meaningful alternative to driving, and ensure that the whole network is greater than the sum of its parts. In addition, it will maximize customer experience for many Northern Virginians, support an integrated and interoperable regional BRT system, and support many other transit-related benefits. Lastly, the BRT

Action Plan enhances the potential for the region to successfully compete for state and federal funding for BRT-related projects.

- ✓ The recent amendments to the document are in Section 8.2: Conclusions and Recommendations. Other minor revisions include updated maps and selected route profiles, clarification that BRT route numbers do not indicate ranking or priority of BRT lines, and a reflection of the progress of the current Six Year Program.
- ✓ NVTA staff recommend continuing to build momentum by further refining the regional BRT Action Plan. NVTA can provide more detailed deployment plan through additional consideration of funding, evaluation of routes, technology, operational, and governance considerations, knowledge transfer within the region and beyond NoVA, development of guidelines and best practices, and ongoing education/outreach and consensus building (including the business community). Jurisdictions and agencies can consider further steps in planning and coordination, including incorporation of BRT projects in their comprehensive, transit, and local plans and confirmation that TransAction correctly lists the potential BRT lines, managing project development, and continued engagement with NVTA.
- ✓ Mr. Spielberg asked if the Action Plan would be periodically reviewed and updated due to changing conditions. Mr. Jasper confirmed that the plan will be periodically reviewed, likely during each TransAction update but potentially more frequently. While an update schedule has not been determined, the document will be reevaluated as needed.
- ✓ Chair Boice asked if the BRT Action Plan will be incorporated into jurisdictional comprehensive plans, and Mr. Jasper responded that while NVTA has requested that jurisdictions and agencies incorporate the BRT Action Plan into all relevant planning documents, it has not been mandated. Chair Boice pointed out that this type of plan has been in discussion for quite a long while within some of the jurisdictions.
- ✓ Ms. Morris asked how funding applications would work for BRT interjurisdictional routes. Mr. Jasper answered that requests for funding would need to be for an entire BRT line, not segments. Currently NVTA requires governing body resolutions from all impacted jurisdictions and agencies for projects that impact multiple jurisdictions. We can expect this to become more normal, and it would also require identification of the BRT

route operators and other governance issues for inclusion in project applications.

- ✓ Mr. Ciccarelli asked about the response if a BRT funding application was not consistent with the Action Plan. Mr. Jasper clarified that an application does not have to be identical with the Action Plan, and the response would depend on the degree of variance from the Action Plan on key points. Applications should allow the system to remain interoperable and connected as well as fast, frequent, and reliable.
- ✓ Ms. Cavucci asked if the Action Plan development had considered where BRT already existed in jurisdictional and agency plans, and if the locations had been vetted. Ms. Leven responded that the consultants had considered jurisdictional and agency documents, including local plans, corridors of regional significance, the Better Bus Network Redesign, and more. The consultants evaluated and screened locations for stops and other infrastructure based on these findings, route evaluations, and collaboration with jurisdictional and agency staff members.
- ✓ Mr. Spielberg asked if the Action Plan would make it easier to receive FTA funding, and if it would still require alternatives analysis for project applications. Mr. Jasper stated that connecting with the FTA is one of the recommended next steps, and so the full impact of this plan on FTA funding applications is unknown. However, NVTA staff have heard that it would help member agencies and jurisdictions to be competitive for FTA funding. It might also be helpful for NVTA to submit projects for funding on behalf of the jurisdictions and agencies.
- ✓ A motion to approve the BRT Action Plan was made by Chair Boice and seconded by Mr. Spielberg. The motion passed unanimously.

5. NVTA's Five-Year Strategic Plan Update

- ✓ Ms. Sink informed the TAC that the NVTA Vision, Mission, Core Values, and four Goals for the 2025 Five-Year Strategic Plan were approved by NVTA. There were some minor changes to wording since the presentation to the TAC in March, such as the inclusion of NVTA Core Values within the Mission and the addition of the wording “in collaboration with jurisdictions and agencies” to the first Goal, “Lead the region’s transportation initiatives”. Ms. Sink emphasized that the Goals are in alignment with NVTA’s legislative mandates.

- ✓ NVTA staff are currently drafting Strategies and Metrics for each Goal. NVTA staff are seeking a high-level approach, listing approximately four Strategies per Goal. Metrics will also take a high-level qualitative approach and will be drafted in a flexible and consistent way to assess alignment and advancement of each Goal. In addition, NVTA staff will provide annual updates on Strategic Plan progress once adopted.
- ✓ Full adoption by the NVTA is anticipated in the fall, and Ms. Sink asked for insight from the TAC on what to include in Strategies and Metrics.
- ✓ Chair Boice asked if the 2017 Strategic Plan was being used as an input for this update, and Ms. Sink responded that those strategies and metrics were used as inputs to the new Goals. The 2017 plan was very aspirational, and this version refines those goals.
- ✓ Ms. Sink verbally shared some draft Strategies, including sustaining and evolving regional coordination to advance multimodal policies and projects, seeking to maintain and evolve the Six Year Program, improving lifecycle tracking and accountability of projects, expanding accessibility and transparency, supporting modeling efforts, and more.
- ✓ Mr. Ciccarelli asked if there would be a mix of qualitative and quantitative Metrics included and inquired how many Metrics are being considered for each goal. Ms. Sink responded that the Strategies need to be developed more before the Metrics are determined. However, she anticipates having about four Metrics per Strategy. Because of the high-level approach, it would be difficult to take a quantitative approach directly for the Metrics, but progress will be defined more concretely during the annual updates. Ms. Backmon indicated that staff are fine-tuning the proposed Strategies for dispersal for the TAC at a future meeting.
- ✓ Ms. Cavucci asked what was meant by “technical assistance” in Goal 3. Examples given by Ms. Sink, Mr. Jasper, and Ms. Backmon included performing modeling for smaller jurisdictions, SMART SCALE application assistance, and GIS-based data analytics.

6. NVTA Update

- ✓ Ms. Backmon provided the NVTA update. She highlighted that the FY2026-2031 Six Year Program Call for Projects is currently open and will close at 4:59pm on August 1st. Supporting resolutions are due October 31st by 4:59pm.
- ✓ Ms. Backmon also stated that NVTA staff have received a request from the Chairs of the Senate and House Transportation Committees to perform a study for funding of bicycle and pedestrian projects, building off an inventory

study of bike/ped facilities and needs completed by Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT). NVTa staff plans to use the work by NVTC for SJ28 for this project and will report back.

- Chair Boice asked if localities would be helping with this project, and Ms. Backmon indicated that there will be a stakeholder group and engagement by the Regional Jurisdiction and Agency Coordinating Committee (RJACC).
- Ms. Cavucci asked how prioritization would be considered, and Ms. Backmon clarified that this request did not include a prioritization component. NVTa was asked to complete this study by November 15th, or at least prior to the start of the next General Assembly session. It may serve as an input to a related bill.

7. Adjourn

- ✓ The meeting was adjourned at 7:54 p.m.
- ✓ The next meeting is scheduled for July 16, 2025, at 7:00 p.m. in person at the NVTa Offices.