



# Northern Virginia Transportation Authority

*The Authority for Transportation in Northern Virginia*

## PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE

Friday, September 29, 2020, 5:00 pm

Northern Virginia Transportation Authority

**ELECTRONIC MEETING**

with livestreaming on YouTube

### SUMMARY NOTES

#### I. Call to Order/Welcome

- Chairman Wilson called the meeting to order at 5:05 pm.
- Attendees:
  - **PPC Members:** Mayor Wilson (City of Alexandria); Council Member Snyder (City of Falls Church); Mayor Rishell (City of Manassas Park); Chair Wheeler (Prince William County); Mayor Meyer (City of Fairfax).
  - **Other NVTA Members:** Ms. Hynes (Governor's Appointee/CTB Member); Delegate Roem (Virginia House of Delegates).
  - **NVTA Staff:** Monica Backmon (Executive Director); Keith Jasper (Principal); Sree Nampoothiri (Senior Transportation Planner); Ria Kulkarni (Regional Transportation Planner).
  - **Council of Counsels:** None
  - **Jurisdiction/Agency Staff:** None on the WebEx. Several staff members followed the proceedings on livestreaming on YouTube Live.

### Action

#### II. Resolution finding need to conduct meeting electronically

- Chairman Wilson noted that as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and Governor Northam's declaration of a State of Emergency, the Authority's Planning and Programming Committee Meeting was being held electronically. He noted that the passage of the amendments to HB 29 (the FOIA Bill) allowed regional bodies such as the Authority, and their committees to conduct business meetings electronically. He added that the meeting by electronic means is authorized because the items on the Committee Meeting Agenda are statutorily required or necessary to continue operations of the Authority. The resolution was approved unanimously.

#### III. Summary Notes of June 19, 2020 Meeting

- The June 19, 2020 Planning and Programming Committee meeting summary was approved unanimously with abstentions from members not present at the June 19<sup>th</sup> meeting.

## Discussion/Information

### IV. TransAction Update

- Mr. Jasper noted that TransAction update process has begun and as part of that NVTA staff has been looking at various transportation trends in the region. He gave a presentation of the transportation impacts of COVID-19 that updated the one he presented to the Authority at its July meeting. The presentation reflected on how the four scenarios studied by NVTA compared with the current observed travel trends. The presentation included:
  - Summary of statewide and Northern Virginia-specific volumes, traffic speeds, WMATA-, VRE-, and local transit ridership.
  - Summary of employer telework survey by Commuter Connections, VDOT/DRPT survey of commuters, and Greater Washington Partnership survey of employers.
  - These trends match more with short term impacts predicted under the quick recovery and active transportation scenarios.
  - Transit ridership trends are way below what was expected under all four scenarios, and this will need further analysis. Potential explanation includes safety perception of riders, DC-centric trip patterns for rail and commuter bus travelers, and rail travelers shifting to auto.
  - As NVTA embarks on TransAction update, these factors need to be considered in the development of scenarios and modal choice approaches.
- Ms. Hynes noted that the reduction in volume on I-66 inside the beltway could be also in part due to the establishment of tolls and lighter traffic on parallel arterials.
- In response to Mayor Rishell's question on truck traffic, Mr. Jasper noted that freight traffic is back to pre-pandemic levels statewide, as per CTB.
- Council Member Snyder commented on the need to consider teleworking as a major mode, potential for employees not fully coming back, policies on transit and highway, and road safety.
- Ms. Hynes noted the need to understand the impact of school openings and the difference in local transit trip compared to DC-centric trips.
- Mayor Wilson confirmed that the City of Alexandria has seen higher demand on local bus system. He added that local transit systems should pay attention to flexible routing and other options to meet the changing needs.
- Chair Wheeler cautioned against taking major policy changes to meet short-term needs but to look at the long-term policies, particularly in the context of TransAction. She added that everyone needs to be flexible in approach until there is more clarity.
- Mayor Meyer noted that the NVTA plan and investments are long term and needs to keep that perspective in its reactions.
- Mayor Rishell noted that the life will go back to normal and we need to continue our focus on infrastructure.
- Mr. Jasper presented an overview of TransAction vision, goals, objectives, and performance measures and presented a framework for updating the vision and goals.
  - A proposed revision of the vision statement that was developed after discussing with jurisdiction and agency staff: "Northern Virginia will plan for,

and invest in, a sustainable and integrated multimodal transportation system that enhances quality of life, strengthens the economy, and builds resilience.”

- Three goals – improve mobility, increase accessibility, and build resiliency – were mapped from the vision
- The objectives and performance measures will be developed further along the plan development process.
- Equity and other factors will be explored as core values that look holistically at the plan.
- Ms. Hynes requested staff provide a detailed understanding of equity in transportation.
- Mayor Wilson stressed the importance of this topic and shared the experience of community engagement in the City of Alexandria.
- Council Member Snyder encouraged the staff and committees to explore traffic safety, technology, and equity in the Plan.

#### **V. NVT A Update**

- Ms. Backmon noted that Governance and Personnel Committee (GPC) will meet prior to the Authority meeting on Thursday and will discuss on items to be focused during the upcoming General Assembly session. The Authority meeting will follow the GPC meeting.

### **Adjournment**

#### **VI. Adjourn**

- The meeting adjourned at 6:25 pm.