



Northern Virginia Transportation Authority

The Authority for Transportation in Northern Virginia

TRANSPORTATION TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE
Wednesday, March 24, 2021, 8:30 am
Electronic meeting and livestreamed on [YouTube](#)

SUMMARY NOTES

I. Call to Order/Welcome Chairman Snyder

- Chairman Snyder called the meeting to order at 8:30 am.
- Attendees:
 - **TTC Members:** Councilmember/Chairman David Snyder (City of Falls Church and Authority Member); Mayor Jeanette Rishell (City of Manassas Park and Authority Member); Jim Kolb (Summit Strategies and Authority Member); Supervisor John Foust (Fairfax County); Andrew Meese (TPB/MWCOG); Cathy McGhee (Virginia Transportation Research Council); Hari Sripathi (VDOT); Joe McAndrew (Greater Washington Partnership); Martin Walker (Virginia Tech Transportation Institute); Dr. Richard Mudge (Compass); Dr. Robert Schneider (OmniRide); Mike Garcia (FCDOT); Sean Schweitzer (FCDOT); Greg Rogers (Nuro), Jana Lynott (AARP).
 - **NVTA Staff:** Monica Backmon (Executive Director); Keith Jasper (Principal, Transportation Planning and Programming); Sree Nampoothiri (Senior Transportation Planner); Mackenzie (Jarvis) Love (Regional Transportation Planner).
 - **Other:** John King (FCDOT).
 - **Others:** On YouTube livestream.

Action

II. Resolution finding the need to conduct meetings electronically

Chairman Snyder noted that as a result of the COVID-19 and Governor Northam's declaration of a State of Emergency, the Transportation Technology 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. Approval of February 10th, 2021 meeting minutes.

The meeting summary was approved unanimously, with abstention from members not present.

Discussion/Information

IV. **Transportation Technology Strategic Plan (TTSP)**

Mr. Keith Jasper the NVTA Planning and Programming Principal, provided a brief review of progress that has been made in drafting NVTA's inaugural Transportation Technology Strategic Plan (TTSP) since the end of 2020, and planned actions:

- December 2020:
 - The TTC received draft TTSP 'core content', which included the 8 Strategies, 9 NVTA Roles and 3 Core Values
- January 2021:
 - The TTC received and discussed draft TTSP (minus the Action Plan component)
- February/March 2021:
 - Other NVTA Committees, including the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), Planning Coordination Advisory Committee (PCAC) and, Planning and Programming Committee (PPC), received and discussed the TTSP (full document without Action Plan)
 - The TTC received and discussed the draft TTSP Action Plan
 - TTSP mini-session at [NoVA Transportation Roundtable](#), on March 10th, 2021
- April 2021:
 - TTSP/Action Plan recommendations from all committees will be sought
- May 2021: NVTA will consider/approve TTSP/Action Plan
- May 2021 onwards: Implementation of the Action Plan
- Integration of the TTSP into TransAction update process, expected to be completed in November, 2022.

Ms. Mackenzie Love, Regional Transportation Planner, provided an overview of the input received on the TTSP, from several different sources:

- The 6th Annual Northern Virginia Transportation Roundtable was held virtually on March 10th, and attended by over 140 people, including 12 members of the Authority and 8 members of the TTC.
 - During the event there was a mini-session on the TTSP that began with an introduction to the Plan by NVTA Executive Director, Monica Backmon.
 - The session utilized live polling to engage the audience in five questions related to TTSP topics. Two of these polls encouraged free-form responses, and thus provided the most detailed feedback:
 - “What innovative approaches can the region take to improve transportation equity in Northern Virginia?”
 - Over 50 unique responses were received and a few common topics quickly emerged: effective and meaningful engagement that starts with asking and listening; providing more service and access to multiple modes; improving safety through infrastructure; reduced or free fares/trips; and provision of reliable and real-time data to the public.

- Adjust Strategy descriptions to focus on topics not covered in other Strategies.
 - Make Strategy titles and summaries more flexible, to accommodate unknowns regarding innovation and market penetration.
- She went on to suggest the following title revisions:
 - Change Strategy #1 from “Reduce Congestion” to “Reduce congestion through technologies that support transit, shared occupancy rides and use of micro modes”
 - Change Strategy #2 from “Maximize access to jobs, employees and housing” to “Support innovative and data-driven approaches to improving access to jobs, employees and housing”
 - Change Strategy #3 from “Maximize cybersecurity and maximize privacy for members of the public” to “Prioritize cybersecurity and privacy in funding decisions and procurements, and support others in doing the same”
 - She also suggested changing Strategy #8 from “Create a network of charging infrastructure, for use by private and fleet vehicles” to “Support development of infrastructure that reduces reliance on internal combustion engines”
- There was discussion among the members about the impetus for the revisions and the suggested titles:
 - Mayor Rishell said the idea to reword was excellent and approved of the suggested revisions. She went on to suggest adding “increase throughput” to Strategy #1, to help ensure that technology would be used to the benefit of the entire transportation system, including existing modes.
 - Chairman Snyder cautioned that one of the greatest challenges for NVRTA is how to reduce congestion without building new highways. He advised that if technology is used to reduce congestion, linkages to Core Values (particularly sustainability and equity) must be considered. He also noted that this region is large and contains some areas with high transit use and other areas that are car dependent.
 - Mayor Rishell agreed but noted that these transitions will happen over time and is not sure how long that will take. In the meantime, she says the roads will not stop being built, because the demand exists. So her suggestion applies both to making existing roads more efficient and to improving any corridors that will be built.
 - Dr. Mudge stated that he preferred the original wording, for the sake of simplicity.
 - Mayor Rishell said that she could understand Dr. Mudge’s perspective here but also agreed with the feedback that some “strategies” sound more like “goals.”

- Supervisor Foust said that he appreciated moving more towards strategic language as well.
 - He also suggested that Strategy #8 may still be too specific and suggested refocusing on reducing carbon emissions.
- Mr. Kolb advised that if things are too specific, they lose the ability to evolve and change over time, and we should endeavor to remain flexible.
 - He also agreed with Supervisor Foust’s suggestion to go with a broader strategy title on reducing carbon emissions.
- Ms. Lynott agreed with both the notion of short titles but that some current titles read as “goals.”
 - She suggested that the title of Strategy #3 may also be too specific, as cybersecurity and privacy issues may arise in more than just funding and procurement decisions.
 - Chairman Snyder cautioned that “there isn’t a system out there that isn’t hackable.” He went on to say that care is needed in deciding how much to invest in cybersecurity versus tangible projects, such as EV charging infrastructure.
- Chairman Snyder said that while the TTSP should be broad in terms of technologies, it is important to not lose focus on Electric Vehicles (EVs), as the Commonwealth is moving forward on this topic, and a rewording here should not interfere with progress.
- Chairman Snyder suggested that the committee members caucus on the Strategy titles and send feedback to Staff, via email. He stated that he would like to see this matter addressed before drafts are shared again.
- Mayor Rishell emphasized the importance of retaining the phrase “reduce congestion”, and added that technology should work for every mode of transportation we have (regardless of what else is added.)
- Mr. Rogers asserted that Strategy #4 should focus on Zero Occupancy passenger Vehicles (as opposed to all Zero Occupancy Vehicles or ZOVs.) He expanded on this point by noting that some Autonomous Vehicles are/could be used to deliver groceries, goods and prescriptions, without passengers.
- Mr. Jasper suggested Staff look at the wording of all eight Strategies.
 - He also committed to sending the revised Strategies to the TTC, and seek any additional feedback, before the next draft of the TTSP would be shared with NVTA Committees.

Mr. Jasper provided examples of possible outcomes of the TTSP and its Action Plan, noting that a comment from Mayor Justin Wilson, the Chair of the Planning and

Programming Committee, brought Staff to the realization that outcomes had not been sufficiently addressed hereto. The possible outcomes include:

- TransAction scenario (sensitivity) analysis, possibly evaluating the impacts of the following:
 - Incentives and pricing mechanisms to reduce car dependency
 - Mr. Jasper noted that this might need to be rephrased.
 - Climate change and resiliency of regional transportation system
 - Pandemic ‘new normal’ implications of increased work-from-home and e-commerce
- Increased outreach/education, on topics like:
 - Facts and Myths: Connected, Autonomous, Shared, and Electric (CASE) vehicles
- Identify potential additions to NVTA’s Legislative Program. Mr. Jasper noted that NVTA tends to initiate the process to develop its legislative package(s) in later summer/early fall, making the timing of this effort excellent. Topics could include:
 - Support EV infrastructure
 - Support Zero Emission Vehicles
 - Concern regarding Zero Occupant Vehicles
- Identify potential refinements to future NVTA SYP project selection process (post-TransAction update), for example:
 - Funding commitments could be made to be contingent on TTSP related criteria, to be identified and approved through the process laid out in the Action Plan.
 - Mr. Jasper noted that this would not be possible until after TransAction is adopted in November 2022, and would not take effect until the first SYP after that.
 - Funded projects could be required to participate in standardization of things like transit signal priority communications.
- Identifying projects for potential funding:
 - TransAction Project List is the first filter for projects that can be funded using NVTA regional revenues.
 - NVTA staff is currently coordinating with jurisdiction/agency staff to update the candidate projects list.
- Develop White Papers for future regional transportation policy, potentially on the following topics:
 - Shared mobility devices
 - Autonomous transit shuttles
 - Zero occupant vehicles
- Chairman Snyder added that this discussion (particularly regarding integration with TransAction and its project list) is critical, because otherwise the TTSP would just sit on a shelf.
- Ms. Lynott suggested including an example outcome that relates to human services and addressed those who have been marginalized.

Next Mr. Jasper explained the recommendations Staff anticipates seeking from this committee.

- Recommendation to the Authority to approve the Eight Strategies
- Recommendation to the Authority to approve Staff to begin implementation of the Action Plan.

- Mr. Jasper also committed that if the Authority were to approve the above action, NVTA Staff will also:
 - Provide an update on progress every six months until TransAction is adopted. These updates would incorporate:
 - Feedback during TransAction public engagement phases
 - Relevant findings from TransAction analyses.
 - Include TTSP/Action Plan in public engagement efforts around the TransAction update.
- After TransAction is adopted, the TTSP will be reviewed/updated annually. Typically, the annual review will take place around the anniversary of adoption of the TTSP by the Authority, however, other events may trigger the cycle, including:
 - Adoption or enactment of any new Federal/Commonwealth laws that directly or indirectly pertain to transportation technologies and/or any concept covered within the then-current iteration of the TTSP.
 - Relevant actions of NVTA member jurisdictions or other regional bodies.
 - Market factors.

Finally, Mr. Jasper discussed next steps:

- The draft Action Plan will be presented to the following NVTA Committees, for their initial review, during the March meeting cycle:
 - PCAC – 6:30pm on Wednesday, March 24th
 - PPC – 5:00pm on Thursday, March 25th
- An updated draft TTSP, inclusive of its Action Plan, will be shared with all Committees, for final review, by early April 2021.

Ms. Backmon noted that a lot of the things discussed today are things that the Authority can do but TTC members also have influence here and we will be looking beyond the Authority for implementation of the TTSP. NVTA will be looking to work with TTC members, their agencies, entities and jurisdictions.

V. **Member Updates**

- Ms. Lynott informed the Committee of the publishing of new AARP papers of interest on these topics: Older Adults, New Mobility and Autonomous Vehicles; Modernizing Demand-Responsive Transportation for the Age of New Mobility; Volunteer Driver Insurance in the Age of New Mobility.
 - The papers can be found here: www.aarp.org/futureoftransportation
 - Additionally, she noted that Autonomous Vehicle Alliance would release its new “Accessible & Barrier Free Research” the day after this meeting. It can be found here: <https://itsa.org/advocacy-material/accessible-barrier-free-research/>

VI. **NVTA Updates**

No additional updates were provided.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:05 am.