



**Northern Virginia Transportation Authority**  
*The Authority for Transportation in Northern Virginia*

**PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION WORKING GROUP**

**Monday, February 13, 2015, 9:30 am**

**Northern Virginia Transportation Authority**

**3040 Williams Drive, Suite 200**

**Fairfax, Virginia 22031**

**SUMMARY NOTES**

**I. Call to Order/Welcome**

Chairman Nohe

- Chairman Nohe called the meeting to order at 9:34 am.
- Attendees:
  - **PIWG Members:** Chairman Nohe; Chairman Bulova (Fairfax County); Chairman York (Loudoun County); Chair Hynes (Arlington County); Mayor Parrish (City of Manassas), Council Member Rishell (City of Manassas Park); Rick Canizales, James Davenport (Prince William County); Tom Biesiadny, Karyn Moreland, Ray Johnson (Fairfax County); Bob Brown (Loudoun County); Sarah Crawford (Arlington County); Pierre Holloman (City of Alexandria); Wendy Block Sanford (City of Fairfax); Patrick Moore (City of Manassas); Richard West (Town of Dumfries); Mark Duceman (Town of Herndon); Calvin Grow (Town of Leesburg); Helen Cuervo, Norman Whittaker (VDOT); Kate Mattice, David Koch (NVTC); Doug Allen, Christine Hoeffner (VRE); Cynthia Porter-Johnson (PRTC); Greg Potts (WMATA).
  - **NVTA Staff:** Monica Backmon (Executive Director); Mike Longhi (CFO); Denise Harris (Program Coordinator), Peggy Teal (Finance Specialist), Kala Quintana (PIO), Keith Jasper (Program Coordinator).
  - **Other Staff:** Ellen Posner (Fairfax County); Steve MacIsaac (Arlington County); Angela Horan, Kimberly Bibbee (Prince William County).
  - **Other:** Nancy Hiteshue Smith (Northern Virginia Transportation Alliance); Bob Whitfield (Fairfax County Taxpayers Alliance).

**II. Meeting Summary of January 15, 2015, Meeting**

- Unanimously approved.

**Discussion/Information**

**III. NVTA Update**

Ms. Backmon

- Ms. Monica Backmon informed the group that during the upcoming February 26th NVTA meeting there will be a Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)

presentation about the I-66 Inside the Beltway Study. She also notified the group that the NVRTA annual report for 2014 will be unveiled and will highlight the accomplishments of the Authority since HB2313 was signed.

- Ms. Backmon reminded the group that she is available to present the “Roadshow” at the request of any localities or jurisdictions.
- Preliminary discussions regarding the application of the HB599 process to transit projects are underway, and transit projects are being selected for a pilot test; periodic updates regarding this process will be provided to the group as progress is made.

#### **IV. Finance Committee Report**

Mr. Longhi

- Mr. Longhi reported that revenue estimates for FY2015-16 remain on track. He informed the group that the results of the PIWG meeting will be taken to the Finance Committee Meeting on Friday, February 20, 2015.

#### **V. Draft Policy for addressing delayed NVRTA-funded projects**

- Ms. Backmon explained that while NVRTA approval of projects in July 2013 was the first step, Standard Project Agreements (SPAs) are still needed to ensure the projects advance. Of the 32 approved FY2014 projects, the Authority has approved 26 SPAs. Project advancement demonstrates good financial stewardship of taxpayer dollars. Ms. Backmon noted that, ideally, the NVRTA will approve this policy when the FY2015-16 Two Year Program is approved so that jurisdictions are fully aware of this policy.
- Mr. Jasper outlined three scenarios in which a project may be delayed and the suggested actions to be taken for each:
  - Projects not advancing from approval to the SPA stage would be subject to question after 4 months;
  - Project delays related to procurement/funding issues after an SPA is in place would be questioned 6 months after approval.
  - Changing priorities on the part of the sponsoring entity causing the project not to be advanced would also be addressed after 6 months.
- The group discussed the timeframe of 6 months and most agreed that flexibility is needed in assessing project advancement. Many unavoidable factors such as right-of-way acquisition, utility relocation (especially during storms), VDOT permissions, and procurement were cited as possible unforeseen circumstances that could result in unforeseen delays.
- Chairman Nohe emphasized that showing diligent pursuit is key; he recommended language in the policy that indicates the project will be addressed after 6 months but the progression of the project will be evaluated with discretion and on a case-by-case basis to ensure it is being pursued responsibly.

- Ms. Hynes suggested that the policy statement could also more clearly state that advancing projects using a blend of funds is the goal of the NVTAs and that periodic updates to the policy will be made.

## **VI. Draft NVTAs FY2015-16 Two Year Program**

Mr. Jasper

- Mr. Jasper provided an overview of changes made to the updated draft NVTAs FY2015-16 Two Year Program. Mr. Longhi explained that the funding changed from \$373 million to \$364 million as a result of the potential funding for the TransAction update and the Finance Committee’s goal to set aside funds for future flexibility. He pointed out that the regional revenue funds will only be used for regional projects and programs that support regional projects.
- Mr. Jasper explained that the new bus component of Project 10 (WMATA) was removed due to re-scoping of the project and, therefore, the NVTAs score was significantly reduced, taking the project from green to white (still under consideration but no longer a recommended project). This freed up funds, which were reallocated to Project 19: Arlington Ballston Metrorail Station West Entrance and Project 6: Fairfax County Connector Bus Service Expansion – Capital Purchase 22 Buses. While Fairfax County appreciated the inclusion of Project 6, the Fairfax County Project 5: West Ox Bus Garage is needed so that the additional buses have appropriate storage. Therefore, Mr. Tom Biesiadny suggested reallocation of \$20 million from Project 7: Fairfax Innovation Center Metrorail Station Construction to Project 5: Fairfax West Ox Bus Garage.
- Mr. Jasper noted that three dollar-related columns were added to Tables 3 and 4:
  - FY2015-16 Request
  - Project Cost
  - Potential Future Request (to NVTAs)
- The Potential Future Request column was added to provide insight regarding potential downstream requests for NVTAs funding; however, there could be other revenue streams and some projects are listed as TBD because the future funding is unknown. Chairman Nohe recommended creating an appendix defining “Potential Future Request” to avoid creating unnecessary confusion. Ms. Hynes stated it is important to explain to the general public that these projects span years, there are multiple phases required to achieve completion, and the funds may come from a variety of sources. It was also noted that the project description sheets provide more detailed information for each project and can be referenced for further information regarding project funding.
- In response to Ms. Hynes’ request for some flexibility in considering buses in the future, Chairman Nohe reminded the group that money can be set aside in reserve so that a particularly important project can be reconsidered at a later time; but the ability to do this may diminish as other projects are considered. Ms. Backmon added that, although the group is currently recommending the draft program for the Authority to release for Public Hearing, it could differ slightly from the program that is approved in April 2015. Ms. Hynes also suggested revision of the description and status for Project 10: WMATA – Bus Infrastructure Improvements.

- Due to the public awareness of the unsafe railroad crossing within the Route 15 widening project, Chairman Nohe recommended acknowledging this project by listing it in the advertisement as a candidate project (not recommended but listed).
- In response to Chairman Nohe's question regarding how the Ballston Metrorail Station West Entrance project reduces congestion, Ms. Crawford explained that the Ballston Metrorail Station is highly congested in that everyone must funnel into one entrance, which also leads to platform congestion. The proposed new entrance will be 0.2 miles to the west of the existing entrance, which is located east of the station. Adding a second entrance at the opposite end will allow people to spread across entrances, reducing platform congestion and train dwell times (increases throughput and reliability), and also providing an alternate egress in the event of an emergency. Adding this entrance also allows easier access and more bus stop space for long distance commute bus services, which will be highly beneficial considering its proximity to Route I-66. Over time, the new entrance will support transit-oriented development west of Glebe Road.

**Requested revisions to the draft NVT A FY2015-16 Two Year Program:**

- **Mass Transit projects:**
  - Reduce the funding for Project 7 – Fairfax County Innovation Center Metrorail Station Construction from \$48 to \$28 million and reallocate this \$20 million in funds to Project 5 – Fairfax West Ox Bus Garage
  - Reduce the funding for Project X – Fairfax Connector Buses from \$11 million to \$6 million
  - Add Project 3 – City of Fairfax CUE 35-Foot Bus Acquisition (\$3 million)
  - Add Project 14 – Manassas Park VRE Station Parking Expansion Study (\$500,000)
  - Add Project 17 – VRE Crystal City Platform Extension Study (\$400,000)
- Net reduction \$1.1 million
- **Highway projects:**
  - Increase the funding for Project 32 – Manassas Route 28 (Manassas Bypass) Study - Godwin Drive Extension from \$500,000 to \$2.5 million
  - Add Project 30 – Fairfax VA Route 28 Widening (PWC Line to Route 29) (\$5 million)
- Net increase \$7.0 million
- **Total increase: \$5.9 million (Mass Transit and Highway projects)**
- In addition to funding, the following changes were requested:
  - Change Project 29 Prince William Route 15 Widening from 'not recommended' to 'candidate' for the Public Hearing
  - Adjust the HB599 rating for Project 6 – Fairfax Frontier Drive Extension and Braided Ramps to reflect a revision made by VDOT

- The PIWG unanimously approved these changes.

## **VII. Public Hearing Preparations**

Ms. Quintana

- Ms. Quintana provided an overview of the advertising materials and logistics for the Public Hearing scheduled for March 25, 2015. In order to accommodate the 30-day comment period and the NVTAs deadlines, she recommended all materials be available to the public by March 11, 2015; this will also allow citizens to prepare for the Public Hearing. She also encouraged jurisdictions to hold their own town hall meetings to highlight projects most important to their localities. The dates and times of these meetings can be advertised and promoted along with the Public Hearing if this information is provided to Ms. Quintana within the next couple of weeks.
- Suggestions from the group included adding a snow date to the flyer; adjusting the Public Hearing times at least one half-hour later so that citizens can more easily attend; providing a shuttle from Dunn Loring to the Public Hearing; and advertising in “The Express” and posting advertisements on the buses for more public awareness.

## **Adjournment**

## **VIII. Adjourn**

- The meeting adjourned at 11:12 a.m.
- The next PIWG meeting was scheduled for 9:30 a.m. on Monday, April 13, 2015 at NVTAs