



Northern Virginia Transportation Authority
The Authority for Transportation in Northern Virginia

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, July 16, 2014, 7:00pm

NVTA Office

3060 Williams Drive, Suite 510

Fairfax, Virginia 22031

SUMMARY NOTES

I. Call to Order/Welcome

Chairman Boice

- Chairman Boice called the meeting to order at 7:07pm.
- Attendees:
 - Members: Chair Boice; Vice Chair Fahl; Meredith Judy; Pat Turner; Shanjiang Zhu (arrived 7:14pm).
 - NVTA Staff: Monica Backmon (Executive Director); Keith Jasper (Program Coordinator).
 - Other Staff: Noelle Dominguez (Vice Chair, JACC).
 - Other: Kanti Srikanth (VDOT); Valerie Pardo (VDOT); David Roden (AECOM); David Birtwistle (Northern Virginia Transportation Alliance); Rob Whitfield (Dulles Corridor Users Group).

II. Meeting Summary of June 18, 2014, Meeting

- Ms. Turner moved to approve the minutes of June 18, 2014; seconded by Mr. Zhu. Motion carried unanimously.

Discussion/Information

III. HB599 Presentation

VDOT

- Mr. Srikanth reminded Committee members of presentations made earlier in the year regarding performance measures, weightings, and the selection of projects for the study.
- Mr. Srikanth presented the preliminary (basic) findings of the HB 599 study, supported by Mr. Roden. The purpose of the basic ratings is to support NVTA's activities related to development of its Six Year Program. The HB 599 study will conclude with the detailed ratings later in the year.
- Page numbers below refer to VDOT's presentation dated July 16, 2014, entitled *Evaluation and Rating of Significant Transportation Projects in NoVA*. Mr. Roden addressed slide #6 thru slide #15, and Mr. Srikanth addressed the remainder.

Page #5

- Mr. Srikanth was not aware of any region that has assessed the same projects with different tools, as is the case for the ‘basic’ and ‘detailed’ ratings for the HB 599 study.

Page #6

- Mr. Roden explained that the ratings for 2020 differ to those for 2040 in part because many of the projects that are in the Constrained Long Range Plan (CLRP) have been built by 2040 (but not by 2020).

Page #7

- HOV3+ is reflected in the first feedback loop for each time period (am, pm, midday, and night.)

Page 10

- The Committee considered the map is unclear. Mr. Roden stated that the color codes are as follows: red = reduced volumes; green = increased volumes. In response to a question from Vice Chair Fahl, Mr. Roden indicated that traffic changes beyond the project impact area were ignored. Mr. Zhu noted that when the network is near capacity, small changes can have big effects.

Pages #14/15

- In response to a question from Vice Chair Fahl, Mr. Roden confirmed that all five performance measures used for the basic ratings are weighted equally.

Page #16

- Mr. Srikanth stated that, unlike the basic ratings (high/medium/low), detailed ratings will be numeric on a scale of 0 to 100.
- Vice Chair Fahl requested more detail on the rule of thumb for including links that do not meet the 250 vehicle/20% threshold. Mr. Roden indicated this was on a case-by-case basis in which ‘natural breaks’ in project impact were identified.
- Mr. Srikanth stated that VDOT rejected normalizing all five measures (other than PMT per Capacity increase) on the basis that these measures provide a sense of scale for project impact.

Page #18

- Mr. Srikanth noted the change made to the analysis of project NVTA-11 since the Project Implementation Working Group meeting on July 11, 2014.
- Mr. Zhu commented that the difference between 2020 and 2040 ratings reflects the change relative to other projects, and not necessarily a change in the level of congestion relief. Ms. Judy added that a low rating does not mean a project is not worthwhile.
- Chair Boice noted the low ratings for project CTB-3. Mr. Roden suggested this may be because the project did remove traffic, and is located on a high volume route (I-395). Mr. Srikanth added that the regional model used for the basic ratings does not capture all congestion impacts. He anticipates the model that will be used for the detailed ratings may simulate a bigger congestion impact. Mr. Zhu agreed that the regional model was not intended for this type of analysis.
- Vice Chair Fahl asked whether VDOT has a project on Belmont Ridge Road south of Dulles Greenway (between project NVTA-8 and project NVTA-9) as

this appears to be a gap. Analysis of these projects on a standalone basis may be misinterpreted by the public.

- Mr. Jasper noted that VDOT was only required to evaluate each project individually, and not packaged with other projects.

Page #19

- Vice Chair Fahl requested that the maps indicate which version of the CLRP is assumed to be in place, or at least the major projects that are committed. He expressed concern over the lack of mapping. Mr. Srikanth agreed to consider this, although he was concerned that the maps map become cluttered.
- With respect to the ‘Area of Greatest Impact’, Mr. Srikanth stated that the rating is more related to the links in the area, rather than the size of the area.

Page #20

- The performance measures and weightings for the detailed ratings have already been defined and agreed with NVTA.
 - Mr. Srikanth indicated there are currently no plans for VDOT to take these ratings to the Commonwealth Transportation Board.
- Overall, the Committee came to a consensus that the ratings study is on the right track, although members did not had the opportunity to review the findings in detail. The Committee acknowledged that the detailed ratings to be presented later in the year will use a model that is more likely to capture the operational impacts of some types of projects than the model used for the basic ratings. Other specific comments:
 - VDOT should consider enhancing its graphical presentation, to clarify what projects are included in the base analysis for each project;
 - VDOT should be clear that the differences between the 2020 and 2040 ratings for each project reflected a change in relative ranking, not that the project impacts were lower;
 - A project rated as “Low” does not mean it is not worthwhile;
 - Projects may have both local and regional benefits;
 - The performance of some projects may vary depending on how they grouped with other projects, e.g. filling gaps, but it was outside of VDOT’s scope to investigate this;
 - This approach may result in misinterpretation of the findings by the public.

IV. NVTA Updates

Ms. Backmon

- Ms. Backmon reported that the Project Implementation Working Group is developing a schedule for the Authority’s Two Year Program (for FY2015/16.) The detailed HB 599 ratings will be a component of the project selection criteria for this program.

Adjournment

V. Adjourn

- Meeting adjourned at 8:44pm.