



Northern Virginia Transportation Authority
The Authority for Transportation in Northern Virginia

PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE

Monday, March 1, 2021, 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).
 - **Other NVT A Members:** None.
 - **NVT A Staff:** Monica Backmon (Executive Director); Keith Jasper (Principal); Sree Nampoothiri (Senior Transportation Planner); Mackenzie Love (Regional Transportation Planner).
 - **Jurisdiction/Agency Staff:** 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 November 2, 2020 Meeting

- The November 2, 2020 Planning and Programming Committee meeting summary was approved unanimously.

Discussion/Information

IV. **TransAction Technology Strategic Plan**

- Mr. Jasper presented on NVTA’s draft Transportation Technology Strategic Plan (TTSP), covering its background and purpose, and its linkage to upcoming long range transportation plan update. After the adoption of last TransAction plan in October 2017, under the guidance of NVTA Executive Director Ms. Backmon, the Transportation Technology Committee (TTC) was created as an advisory committee with Council Member Snyder as its Chair. Primary charge of this committee was to draft a strategic plan, that will inform the emerging transportation technology related issues in long range planning.
- TTSP is a comprehensive approach to address exponential growth in technology and its transportation implication, one overarching objective is to ensure that NVTA’s investment does not become obsolete by the time projects are implemented. An overview of the draft TTSP was presented:
 - Introduction, including some sample Q&A.
 - Summary of TTSP Strategies and NVTA Roles.
 - Technologies mapped to TTSP Strategies.
 - Guidance on desired feedback and how to respond.
- Several introductory/sample questions were presented to committee members: TTSP’s relationship to NVTA planning and programming process; pandemic and resulting travel pattern; role of technologies in this new travel pattern; equity and environmental justice and technology; role of technology in recovery from pandemic; possible priorities for technology in the “new normal”. On these topics, committee members discussed how the issue of transportation equity needs to be addressed.
- Ms. Love then presented a summary of strategies and structure; NVTA’s roles for each strategy; and a list of emerging technologies mapped to these strategies. In the draft plan, there are 8 strategies outlined, with 9 NVTA roles.
- Council Member Snyder commented that the TTC took a proactive approach of identifying the direction of the region and what role technology can play in it rather than technology deciding the direction of the region.
- Mayor Rishell added that TTC was clear that the region should not invest funds in rapidly developing technology that might become obsolete in short timeframe.
- In response to Chair Wilson’s question on the objective of TTSP as shaping the expectation in terms of investment from member jurisdictions or NVTA’s investment, Mr. Jasper affirmed that it is a mixture of these and other factors. He added that TTSP will be an evolving/living document as some actions coming out of TTSP would be immediate while others would be medium- and long-term actions. It could also drive identification and development of transportation policies that can leverage technology for achieving the vision of the region.
- Mayor Rishell commented that there is an uncertainty on use of technology for shared mode of travel in the aftermath of pandemic. In response to her question on NVTA’s ability to fund replacement buses without capacity addition for the promotion of electric buses, Mr. Jasper and Ms. Backmon answered in the affirmative that the 70% Regional revenues need to be used for capital investment and capacity additions. Ms. Backmon added that the 30% Local revenue funds may be used for operations and bus replacements.

- In response to Chair Wheeler’s inquiry on federal actions for national standards that can help interoperability across jurisdictions and systems, Ms. Love noted that the Plan proposes to monitor federal and state level initiatives on standards as well as utilizing any opportunity to advocate for NVTA at federal and state levels depending on NVTA’s priorities. Mr. Jasper added that the Plan is hoping to promote efficiency across the region and maximize NVTA investment in this field.
- In response to Chair Wheeler’s question on potential ranking of the various items in the strategies and technologies matrix, Ms. Love noted that there are several interdependencies among the components and their complexity, ranking was not considered at this point. She added that the upcoming Action Plan will identify timeline of activities.
- Chair Wilson encouraged to ensure information dissemination to transportation committees and commissions in addition to jurisdiction staff.
- Mayor Rishell encouraged everyone to be flexible with expectations due to the uncertainties.
- Council Member Snyder noted that TTSP should be considered a template plan while the upcoming Action Plan should identify more concrete activities. He added that the connection of TTSP with all the other documents and activities NVTA does need to be detailed out in the coming days.
- Council Member Snyder appreciated the vision and hard work from Ms. Backmon and NVTA staff in taking a leading role in technology in the region. Ms. Backmon noted that the staff is working with the offices of Senator Warner and Congressman Connelly to ensure the region’s needs are kept in mind in federal and state legislation and funding activities.

V. TransAction Update

- Ms. Backmon noted that the Finance Committee recommended award of TransAction consultant contract to Cambridge Systematics. Cambridge Systematics will also be doing the model-based project evaluations for the next three Six Year Program (SYP) updates.
- In addition to Mayor Rishell’s question on the meaning of model validation, Ms. Backmon notes that the model needs to be validated to the ground situation in terms of current traffic patterns.

VI. NVTA Update

- Ms. Backmon noted that the Authority, at its March 11th meeting, will receive presentations from Mayor Wilson on the progress of NVTA-funded Potomac Yard Metrorail Station project and from JBG Smith about transportation infrastructure investments in the National Landing area. She encouraged members to contact staff if they need to register for the Annual Transportation Roundtable.

Adjournment

VII. Adjourn

- The meeting adjourned at 6:15 pm.