



Northern Virginia Transportation Authority
The Authority for Transportation in Northern Virginia

PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE

Monday, November 2, 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).
 - **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 September 29, 2020 Meeting

- The September 29, 2020 Planning and Programming Committee meeting summary was approved unanimously.

Discussion/Information

IV. TransAction Update

- Mr. Jasper presented an overview of TransAction update vision, goals, objectives, and performance measures and presented a framework for updating the vision and goals.
 - The proposed Vision statement has three new elements – equity, sustainability, and resiliency.
 - Equity, to integrate fairness in mobility and accessibility, at the regional, sub regional or community levels. The element of equity facilitates social and economic opportunities by providing equitable levels of access to transportation options that serve the needs of all, particularly, the underserved populations.
 - Sustainability, focusing on meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs under the three pillars of economy, environment, and society.
 - Resiliency, which is a concept on maintaining the mobility functions and quickly recovering from incidents such as major crashes, terrorism, weather, or planned events.
 - Mr. Jasper added that “safety” is also explicitly incorporated in the vision statement though safety was already considered in the objectives and measures previously.
 - Mr. Jasper presented draft potential goals and how they can be tracked to objectives and measures.
- In response to Chair Wheeler’s question on the rationale for removal of the second paragraph of the current vision statement, Mr. Jasper noted that the second paragraph sounds more like a “how” statement than a vision statement and, therefore, is recommended to be removed. Following up on Chair Wheeler’s comment on potential qualitative measures for the additional elements, Mr. Jasper agreed that there will be a mix of quantitative and qualitative measures.
- Ms. Hynes encouraged staff to review the work on equity as part of the VTrans Update, being undertaken by the Office of Intermodal Planning and Investment (OIPi). Mr. Jasper noted that staff is looking at all partner agencies and jurisdictions on their activities.
- Ms. Hynes highlighted that ‘equitable access’ may be very specific while ‘equity’ is a broader concept and urged staff to be clear on how specific it should be. Mayor Wilson and Mayor Rishell echoed the same notion. Mr. Jasper noted that staff will define these better based on the feedback from the Committees, the Authority, and others.
- Mayor Rishell noted that the technology in transportation can become exclusionary and need to be addressed.
- In response to Mayor Rishell’s inquiry of safety during crises being included in resiliency, Mr. Jasper noted that evacuation is considered part of resiliency and is required by the language on homeland security in the HB599 legislation while general traffic safety is already considered as a separate measure. He also added that currently, there are too many performance measures, which dilutes the weights to a

level where they lose their meaning. He noted that performance measures will be discussed at a later stage.

- Mayor Meyer observed that jurisdictions have different takes on priorities for measures based on jurisdictions' location and development patterns, which may be different from the funding legislation called for in 2013. He urged to consider equity not only for scoring individual projects but in totality as well.
- Mayor Wilson urged to directly address and reduce equity in terms of transportation rather than simply safeguarding against exacerbation of equity impacts.
- Ms. Hynes encouraged developing a shared definition of equity by discussion among Authority members and jurisdiction/agency staff and visualizing equity, similar to Transportation Planning Board (TPB)'s equity emphasis areas.
- Delegate Roem noted that multimodal and mass transit facilities are important equity issues across the region as the majority of socio-economic and racial minority depends on transit.
- Council Member Snyder noted that sustainability and resilience are also equally important as equity and require same level of effort to be incorporated in TransAction.
- Mr. Jasper presented the two complementary approaches for use in TransAction process – 'performance-based' (model-based and off-model analyses) and 'core value' (overarching qualitative review of the Plan) approaches.
- Mr. Jasper asked for opinions on the most urgent equity issues pertinent to the region that should be considered in TransAction.
- Mayor Rishell noted that one of the major issues her constituents face is lack of transit facilities, particularly buses, to reach basic destinations such as grocery stores and medical offices.
- Chair Wheeler noted the lack of local transit services, even micro transit, in certain locations in Prince William County as an important issue.
- Ms. Hynes indicated transit and dedicated lanes for transit and carpools as priority. She added that the Authority should think about potentially making NVTA funds available for local transit operations.
- Mayor Wilson emphasized the need to improve transit and remove investment disparities across modes. He added that the pandemic has highlighted the need for flexible transit infrastructure and operations.
- Council Member Snyder noted that better transit infrastructure such as bus shelters is important aspect of equity. He added that making transportation infrastructure and services resilient in the midst of increasing climate risks is also important issue to be addressed. He paraphrased Abraham Lincoln to say that 'as the case changes, so our thinking must change' in the context of changing social, economic, and political circumstances that require changing responses.
- *A motion, moved by Council Member Snyder and seconded by Chair Wheeler, to approve the recommendation of the proposed Vision Statement to the Authority, was approved unanimously.*

V. NVT A Update

- Ms. Backmon noted that the Authority, at its November 12th meeting, will receive presentations from the Auditors on NVT A’s annual financial audit, Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) on 495 Next, Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) on I-495 Transit/TDM Study, and Office of Intermodal Planning and Investment (OIPI) on VTrans Update.

Adjournment

VI. Adjourn

- The meeting adjourned at 6:20 pm.