



Northern Virginia Transportation Authority
The Authority for Transportation in Northern Virginia

PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE
Monday, July 12, 2021, 5:00 pm
Northern Virginia Transportation Authority

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 NVTA Members:** None.
 - **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.
 - **Others:** Thomas Harrington (Cambridge Systematics); Dalia Leven (Cambridge Systematics).

Action

II. Summary Notes of May 3, 2021 Meeting

- The May 3, 2021 Planning and Programming Committee meeting summary was approved unanimously.

Discussion/Information

III. TransAction: Goals, Objectives, Measures

- Mr. Jasper informed the Committee about the TransAction update process underway and introduced the consultant team Cambridge Systematics.
- Mr. Nampoothiri noted that the Phase 1 of TransAction, including development of goals, objectives, performance measures/weights, and bottom-up project list are underway. He added that the public engagement activities are starting with Focus Group meetings next week and MetroQuest survey in August. In addition, a computer model based on that of the Transportation Planning Board (TPB) is being developed for needs assessment, project evaluations, and scenario analysis to be carried out in Phase 2. The Phase 1 activities are expected to be completed by the end of the year.

- In response to Mayor Rishell’s clarification question on needs assessment, Mr. Nampoothiri noted that the needs assessment includes identification of transportation problems in the region, not individual projects.
- In response to Mayor Wilson’s question on examples of top-down projects, Mr. Jasper noted that top-down projects are projects that are not conceived by a specific jurisdiction/agency but the TransAction team comes up with to address any unmet needs after considering all the projects submitted by the jurisdictions and agencies. He added that project such as a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) line on Route 50 is an example of top-down project in the current TransAction. Ms. Backmon added that a transit connection across American Legion Bridge or Metrorail extension on Orange Line or Blue Line would be other examples.
- Mr. Nampoothiri noted that the public engagement results will be provided to the NVTAA statutory and standing committees, including the PPC, for further discussion and recommending performance measures by October and weights by November.
- Mr. Nampoothiri noted that the current goals, objectives, measures, and weights will be reviewed and revised as appropriate. Ms. Backmon noted that there are 15 performance measure in the current TransAction and there is a potential need to reduce the number in order to avoid importance of measures being diluted by too many measures.
- Mr. Nampoothiri noted that the measures need to be finalized by November and weights by December for the team to work them into the computer models for various analyses.
- Ms. Leven presented three goals – mobility, accessibility, and resiliency – that were developed from the vision statement. She noted the core values of equity, sustainability, and safety, that will be the guiding principles for the development of the Plan and the plan update process. These core values will also help in identifying needs, performance measures, scenarios, policies, and projects.
- Ms. Leven noted the eight proposed objectives under the three goals and a number of potential performance measures.
- In response to Chair Wheeler’s question on evaluation of projects based on vehicle miles traveled (VMT), Ms. Leven noted that the focus of this measure is to provide higher scores to projects that can reduce emissions. Chair Wheeler encouraged everyone to consider the need to accommodate growth in the outer jurisdictions that do not have mass transit access and could lead to VMT increase. Council member Snyder noted that the objective is the right one and how we achieve it can be in different ways. Mayor Wilson added that the objective is good and more thought could be given to fine tune the measure.
- Council Member Snyder encouraged consideration of reducing idling under the emission reduction objective.
- Council Member Snyder urged to broaden the definition of resiliency to include better management of frequent system breakdowns as well as climate resiliency. Mayor Wilson agreed with Council Member Snyder that both macro- and micro-level resiliency need to be considered.

- In response to Mayor Rishell’s question of if the 60 minutes in ‘accessible jobs within 60 minutes on transit’ an average for the entire region, Ms. Leven elaborated that it is a sum of number of jobs accessible from different neighborhoods in the region.
- In response to Council Member Snyder’s question, Ms. Leven noted that the objectives of expanding travel choices and safety help increase resiliency of the system.
- In response to Chair Wheeler’s question on weight for these measures, Ms. Backmon noted that there was an agreement in keeping the congestion reduction weight similar to what Commonwealth used for Smart Scale. She noted that the evaluation factors used in Six Year Program (SYP) build upon those used in TransAction, but take into account other factors as well.
- Ms. Leven presented the four scenarios (technology, pricing, climate change, post-pandemic new normal) that will be tested to understand the performance of the projects in TransAction. Effectively, each scenario provides a sensitivity test, and will help to understand uncertainty associated with long-range transportation planning.
- In response to Mayor Rishell’s question on inclusion of safety of software systems in the technology scenario, Ms. Leven noted that the model-based analysis cannot take that into consideration. Mr. Jasper added that the Transportation Technology Strategic Plan (TTSP) and Action Plan address this issue.
- Chair Wheeler encouraged to consider the fluidity of post-pandemic travel patterns when thinking about new normal.
- Council Member Snyder suggested referring to transportation element pricing/incentives, rather than road pricing.

IV. NVTa Update

- Ms. Backmon noted that there is no Authority meeting in August and the next meeting is scheduled for September 9, 2021. She noted that the Call for Regional Transportation Projects for the FY2022-2027 SYP is open with an application deadline of October 1, 2021 and the deadline to submit governing body resolution is December 3, 2021. She added that the Finance team is still working on the available amount to fund the SYP and should be available early next year.

Adjournment

V. Adjourn

- The next meeting date will be decided later. The meeting adjourned at 6:15 pm.