



Northern Virginia Transportation Authority

The Authority for Transportation in Northern Virginia

PLANNING COORDINATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, September 22, 2021, 6:30 pm
Northern Virginia Transportation Authority

SUMMARY NOTES

I. Call to Order/Welcome Chair Colbert

- Chair Colbert welcomed Committee members and called the meeting to order at 6:40 p.m.
- Attendees:
 - **PCAC Members:** In-person – Chair and Mayor Colbert (Town of Vienna); Board Member Libby Garvey (Arlington County); Supervisor Walter Alcorn (Fairfax County); Council Member Phil Duncan (City of Falls Church); Vice-Mayor Preston Banks (City of Manassas Park); Council Member Signe Friedrichs (Town of Herndon); Council Member Stanley Milan (Town of Purcellville).
Remote - Vice-Mayor Sebesky (City of Manassas); Vice-Mayor Marty Martinez (Town of Leesburg).
 - **NVTA Staff:** Monica Backmon (Chief Executive Officer); Keith Jasper (Principal, Transportation Planning and Programming); Harun Rashid (Transportation Planner).
Consultant: Dalia Leven (Cambridge Systematics).

Action

II. Summary Notes of July 28, 2021 Meeting

- The July 28, 2021, meeting summary was approved, with abstentions from members who did not attend the July 28 meeting.

Discussion/Information

III. Updates on TransAction public engagement events

Mr. Jasper

- NVTA staff presented on two tasks in phase 1 of its long-range transportation plan (TransAction) update process – public engagement, and a set of goals/objectives/measures. Mr. Jasper discussed the role of NVTA’s long range plan to guide project investment decision-making; public participation plays a significant role in all aspect of this plan. This task consists of following key strategies – Online Survey; Pop-up Events; Virtual Focus Groups; Live Chat Sessions; Stakeholder Group. The objective is to solicit citizen’s opinions and experiences with Northern Virginia’s transportation system, for example – travel choices before and during the pandemic, issues in getting around in the region, interpretations of TransAction core values, preferred types of transportation improvements, attitudes toward emerging travel options. Project consultant Ms. Leven shared key findings from various focus group discussions, for example, for travel choices and issues:
 - Single occupancy vehicles (SOV) are chosen specifically for their reliability and flexibility
 - Metrorail was used (pre-pandemic) to get to work or for occasional discretionary into DC
 - Housing prices make it more difficult to live close to a Metro station
 - Those currently telecommuting generally expect that they will continue telecommuting in the future at a minimum of a hybrid schedule
- Following questions/comments were discussed during this part of the presentation:

On equity core value discussion, did participants identify any particular mode? Yes, Metrorail was mentioned more than any other modes when discussing about transit options.

Would responses be different had the participants were more informed? The objective was to create an environment conducive to open and spontaneous dialogue. Can there be any bias in the selection of focus groups? Staff explained the process to eliminate any biases.

IV. TransAction: Goals, Objectives, and Measures

Mr. Jasper

- In long range planning, the policy framework of goals-objective-performance measures dictates the analyses for evaluating proposed projects. Mr. Jasper explained the role of this framework, specifically the need to strike an effective balance in identifying a set of performance measures. Current TransAction plan has a total of 15 measures, with no clear emphasis in the associated weighting scheme. Ms. Leven outlined the approval process and timeline of this policy set, and presented a revision with inputs from this, and other NVTA statutory/standing committees. Goal statements and objectives/measures were revised for legibility and clear definitions (e.g., resiliency definition with FHWA guideline). Next month, committee members will send their recommendation of goals/objectives/performance measures for Authority’s adoption in November.

- During this segment of the presentation, following questions/comments were discussed:

Under Mobility goal, should we consider non-motorized and micro-mobility modes? In the analytical process, non-motorized mobility is harder to quantify. We propose to analyze this under Accessibility goal. Proposed measures include - access to high-capacity transit, improve walk/bike environments; improve access to information on travel options.

Within this Mobility goal, it appears measures 1 and 3 are both accounting for vehicular congestion/delay? Yes, this is to emphasize the need to reduce congested travels in the system.

In measuring congestion and delay, are we also considering future conditions? Yes, we will utilize a travel demand model tool to analyze future build/no-build transportation network.

In analyzing non-motorized transportation facilities (e.g., bike/ped trails), how do we account for users' safety and aesthetic enhancements (e.g., landscaping elements)? The second measure under Accessibility - Improve walk/bike environment, including disabled access, will capture some of these qualitatively.

Projects that improve access to jobs and other destinations for population in dense developments (e.g., in Herndon) will receive higher scores? How about creating non-motorized connections for the same? Yes, second objective under Accessibility states – “Reduce dependence on driving alone by improving conditions for people accessing transit and using other modes”. Proposed measures under this objective will analyze these impacts qualitatively.

Comment - Accessibility conditions can also be improved with land use zoning regulations. Yes, although NVTa is not in a position to guide land use policies of local jurisdictions, a number of NVTa committee members, who also sit in their corresponding jurisdictions' policy-making bodies, are well aware of these transportation/land use connections.

Comment – During Fairfax County's planning of Transit-oriented Development (TOD), it was identified that bike-ped facilities need to be safe and attractive. We need to be able to quantify these factors and their impacts on transportation system. We may need to manage our expectations in this regard, as this long-range plan will not evaluate each project individually. That will be a subsequent task in the funding program that follows.

How do we analyze stormwater and roadway flooding issues? Not included in the standard analyses, we propose to address these issues in one of the scenarios.

In TransAction, the analytical framework is based on MWCOG/TPB model and data? Yes, that is the starting point. We are enhancing the toolset with emerging modes and disaggregate traffic flow analyses, known as Dynamic Traffic Assignments. It allows for better granularity in congestion analyses, for example travel conditions will be analyzed in 15-minute bins, instead of the entire peak periods.

V. NVRTA Update

- Ms. Backmon reminded committee members of the October 1 deadline for project funding applications, in the current Call for Regional Transportation Projects for the FY2022-2027 Six Year Program. Currently staff is working to update revenue forecasts, to determine funds available for allocation in this program cycle.
- To mitigate schedule conflicts of committee meetings and Authority session in November, staff discussed the need to reschedule November 17 meeting. After a brief discussion, members agree to reschedule November meeting to be held on December 1.

VI. Adjourn

Chair Colbert mentioned the next meeting to be held on October 27. Meeting was adjourned at 8:35 pm.