



# Northern Virginia Transportation Authority

*The Authority for Transportation in Northern Virginia*

## PLANNING COORDINATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE Wednesday, October 26, 2022, 6:30 pm Northern Virginia Transportation Authority

### MEETING SUMMARY

#### I. Call to Order/Welcome

- Council member Miles (Town of Dumfries), Vice-Chair of the Committee, welcomed committee members and called the meeting to order at 6:37 p.m.
- Attendees:
  - **PCAC Members:** In-person – Council member Miles (Vice-chair, Town of Dumfries); Supervisor Glass (Loudoun County); Council member Bagley (City of Alexandria); Council Member Duncan (City of Falls Church); Council member Milan (Purcellville).  
Virtual - Board Member Karantonis (Arlington County); Council Member Friedrichs (Town of Herndon).
  - Alternate – Council Member Ralph Smith (City of Manassas, for Vice-Mayor Pamela Sebesky).
  - **NVTA Staff:** Monica Backmon (Chief Executive Officer); Keith Jasper (Principal, Planning and Programming); Sree Nampoothiri (Senior Transportation Planner); Harun Rashid (Regional Transportation Modeler).  
Consultant Staff: Dalia Leven (Cambridge Systematics).

#### II. Summary Notes of September 28, 2022 Meeting

- The September 28, 2022, meeting summary was approved, with abstentions from members who did not attend the September 28 meeting.

#### III. Status of TransAction Plan Update.

- The presentation from Mr. Jasper covered ongoing long-range transportation planning process in three distinct topics – a process overview to provide a refresher to committee members; summary of feedback comments from statutory/standing committees; and proposed enhancements to draft Plan and Project List.
  - TransAction Overview: A set of distinct characteristics dictate what this Plan can/cannot offer. For example, this is a fiscally and geographically unconstrained long-range multimodal plan (horizon year 2045) that includes a set of 429 projects/programs, whose performance related to congestion reduction and other factors is evaluated using ten weighted performance measures, approved by NVTA in November and December 2021. At the same time, this Plan is not a

land use plan, a funding document (but provides broad directions for associated funding programs), or a project prioritization or ranking tool. Mr. Jasper then presented a set of key take-aways: TransAction provides jurisdictions and agencies with a diverse range of multimodal project options (but not commitments) for future funding requests (via updates to NVTA's Six Year Program); identifies how transportation technologies can be leveraged; includes regional Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system to provide alternatives to driving alone while anticipating Metrorail improvements on a longer timescale; and TransAction acknowledges the inter-relationship of land use and transportation using Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments' Cooperative Planning Forecasts.

- NVTA and consultant staff responded to following questions:

*How responsive is TransAction to current regional thinking to reduce transportation-sector GHG emission, for example, what is Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) per capita between Plan No-Build and Build conditions?* In the last committee meeting in September, detail analyses results from the regional travel demand model were presented. VMT-related emissions were presented in two ways – in Build condition, with/without higher electric vehicle penetration rates. It is to be noted that while Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB) has recently set aspirational targets for such metric, NVTA's plan needs to be in compliance with legislative mandates from Virginia General Assembly. Ms. Backmon also noted TransAction's adopted goals, Core Values, and performance measures reflect the diverse needs of the region and aid TransAction's evaluation of the transportation network on the regional level.

*Is there a breakdown in project analyses results, to distinguish impacts from extra-territorial projects?* NVTA and consultant staff ran a few analyses with packages of projects that are mostly based on modes. This Plan will not attempt to determine likelihood of project funding for a given type of project. Partially, or completely outside of the region projects were considered to capture regional travel origins and destinations of travelers in Northern Virginia. For example, Potomac River crossings and Metrorail core capacity improvements.

*How were transportation needs derived in this Plan?* The analysis is based on a set of ten performance measures, which were derived to quantify the Plan's vision/goals/objectives. It includes public perceptions and opinions on travel conditions in the region, captured via a series of public engagement events, and a set of analytical tools to analyze the transportation network.

*Based on growth patterns in certain part of a community, some projects may become obsolete. Will the Plan consider that?* The Plan considers two network conditions, No-Build and Build. Projects that are completely funded and will complete by 2045 are considered in the No-Build network. The current set of 429 projects in the Build network were derived from local jurisdictions' and agencies' transportation plans and regional connectivity/gap analyses. Also, this candidate project list and Plan is updated every 5 years, which should capture any project obsolescence due to major shifts in travel pattern/behavior.

- Feedback from NVTA and Committees: In the September-October meeting cycle, all three statutory/standing committees, and the Authority held discussions on the planning process, candidate projects, and analyses results. Committee members asked a number of clarification questions, and provided suggestions for staff. Staff responded to following questions:

*Describe major findings from public comment process, e.g., was there substantial support/opposition for certain modes?* There were 205 unique commenters, with a total of 223 responses. This is about a third of the responses received during the last round of TransAction update. One common theme was opposition to roadway capacity increase projects, and support for transit and active transportation network improvement. Also, it appears there are comments from organized groups, especially for a single roadway project in Prince William County.

*How do we address the following concern from a local advocacy group - TransAction must be up front on the climate crisis and the action needed to reduce the region's largest source of emissions?* TransAction is a multimodal plan to address diverse needs of the region, based on diverse population and geography. While climate change is an important issue in this Plan, so are other factors, for example accessibility of jobs by disadvantaged population group. Based on these considerations, committee members assigned weights to the set of performance measures. This analytical framework is based on this Plan's vision, goals, and objectives.

- Proposed Enhancements to the Draft Plan and Project List: Based on feedback received from committee members, and comments from stakeholders and general audience, staff is proposing a set of enhancements/update to the draft Plan and Project List. For the draft Plan, these are primarily to better communicate and present analyses results. For example, clearly explain the assumptions behind each scenario and their corresponding results, e.g., the emission reduction findings. In addition, there are some corrections and updates to the Project List.

*Introduction of land use analyses, especially the connection between land use and transportation is a very good idea. Perhaps it would be helpful to show that even with concentrated/smarter growth plans, there still will be congestion problem?* In the current TransAction plan adopted in October 2017, there were similar land use analyses to test concentrations of all future growths in regional Activity Centers. It is apparent that some localized land activity concentration will increase congestion level.

#### **IV. NVTA Update**

- NVTA Chief Executive Officer, Ms. Backmon mentioned that the draft 2023 legislative agenda will be presented to Authority in November meeting, with anticipated adoption in December. The primary focus is to protect regional transportation revenues for NVTA, and other transportation organizations in the region.

#### **V. Adjourn**

- Vice-chair Miles reminded members of the November meeting, which will be held on earlier date on the 16<sup>th</sup>. The meeting was adjourned at 8:21 pm.