

March 4, 2016

MEMORANDUM

TO: Members, Transportation Technical Committee
 FROM: Mark McCaskill, AICP, Director of TPO Programs
 SUBJ: March 10, 2016 TTC Meeting/Agenda

The Transportation Technical Committee (TTC) will meet Thursday, March 10, 2016 at 1:30 pm at the Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission office (Upstairs Conference Room), 313 Luck Avenue, SW in Roanoke, VA.

AGENDA

1. Welcome, Call to Order and Introductions *Chairman Holladay*
2. Action on January 14, 2016 Minutes, pp. 3-8 *Chairman Holladay*
3. Discussion & Recommendation Concerning Transportation *Bryan Hill*
 Alternatives (TA) Project Requests

Sponsor: City of Roanoke **(See Attachment #1)**
Project Name: Colonial Avenue Boulevard Improvements
TA Funds Requested: \$458,814

Sponsor: City of Salem **(See Attachment #2)**
Project Name: Downtown Salem Streetscape and Intersection Improvements
TA Funds Requested: \$480,000

Sponsor: Town of Vinton **(See Attachment #3)**
Project Name: Glade Creek Greenway
TA Funds Requested: \$417,710

Sponsor: Roanoke County **(See Attachment #4)**
Project Name: Friendship Lane/Carvins Creek Bridge Replacement
TA Funds Requested: \$136,495

TPO POLICY BOARD: Cities of Roanoke and Salem; Counties of Bedford, Botetourt, Montgomery and Roanoke; Town of Vinton; Greater Roanoke Transit Company (*Valley Metro*); Roanoke-Blacksburg Regional Airport; Virginia Department of Rail & Public Transportation; Virginia Department of Transportation

TTC Agenda (Cont'd)

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4. Action on Annual Obligations Report *Bryan Hill*
(to be distributed at meeting)
5. RSTP – Feedback from RVTPO Discussion *Mark McCaskill*
6. Other Business
 - Federal Review Overview *Mark McCaskill*
7. Comments by Members and/or Citizens
8. Adjournment

MINUTES

Transportation Technical Committee Meeting January 14, 2016

The January meeting of the Transportation Technical Committee was held on Thursday, January 14, 2016 at 1:30 p.m. at the Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission office, 313 Luck Avenue, SW, Roanoke, VA. Attendance follows:

<u>Member</u>	<u>Representing</u>
Curtis Andrews	RADAR
Liz Belcher	Roanoke Valley Greenway Commission
Brian Epperly	Roanoke County
David Holladay	Roanoke County
Mark Jamison	City of Roanoke
Amanda McGee	Botetourt County
Kevin Price	Valley Metro
Cody Sexton	Botetourt County
Ben Tripp	City of Salem
Karla Turman	Town of Vinton
Gary Woodson	Town of Vinton

Staff Present: Cristina Finch, Bryan Hill, Mark McCaskill and Shane Sawyer.

1. CALL TO ORDER, WELCOME & GUESTS IN ATTENDANCE

Chairman Holladay called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. and noted that a quorum was present. The following guests were in attendance: Megan Cronise and Tori Williams, Roanoke County.

2. APPROVAL OF THE SEPTEMBER 10, 2015 TTC MINUTES

The Minutes of the September 10, 2015 Transportation Technical Committee meeting were distributed earlier.

TPO POLICY BOARD: Cities of Roanoke and Salem; Counties of Bedford, Botetourt, Montgomery and Roanoke; Town of Vinton; Greater Roanoke Transit Company (*Valley Metro*); Roanoke-Blacksburg Regional Airport; Virginia Department of Rail & Public Transportation; Virginia Department of Transportation

Liz Belcher stated that she felt the Minutes did not reflect in the HB2 discussion (Item #5) that the prioritization of the HB2 projects was for the scoring of projects by VDOT. Ms. Belcher stated that she would like the Minutes to reflect that the prioritization was set in the order in which the projects were scored rather than the priority of how the TTC wanted them funded. She suggested that a clause be added to the language at the top of page 4 of the Minutes to read as follows (see red text for her addition): “TTC members were provided a slip of paper with the sixth project and asked to assign a priority ranking **at which VDOT would score the project** (1 to 6, with 1 the highest and 6 the lowest priority).” Ms. Belcher also asked that the same language be reflected in the TTC ACTION as well.

Transportation Technical Committee Action:

Upon motion by Mark Jamison, seconded by Cody Sexton and carried, the Minutes of the September 10, 2015 Transportation Technical Committee meeting were approved, as amended to reflect the concerns of Ms. Belcher as outlined above.

3. FY 2017 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM DISCUSSION

TTC members reviewed a list of candidate projects (i.e., “Have To” and “Discretionary”) proposed for the FY’17 Unified Planning Work Program (pages 7 and 8 of the TTC agenda). Mark McCaskill stated he would like to get a sense from TTC members of what the projects would entail so he could develop narrative text for presentation at the next meeting. Discussion focused on the following “Discretionary” projects:

- ***Continued Efforts to Implement Recommendations from the Bikeway Plan and the Pedestrian Vision Plan*** – Cristina Finch stated that staff would need to follow through on recommendations from the Pedestrian Vision Plan. Shane Sawyer also stated that the staff continues to maintain a good database of bicycle accommodations as they are installed in the Valley (used as the base for performance measures).
- ***2007 Conceptual Greenway Plan Update*** – Liz Belcher stated that the Regional Commission was lead staff on the last two updates of the Greenway Plan (1995 and 2007). Ms. Belcher stated that Shane Sawyer was able to obtain a VDOT grant that helped to pay for a consultant that was hired to work on the last update. Liz asked if the Commission/TPO staff would need letters from any of the five localities of the Greenway Commission requesting assistance from the Regional Commission/TPO as a work program request. Mark noted that would be helpful as a formality for the RVTPO process as the TTC and RVTPO develop the UPWP. However, a work program request would be needed for the portion outside of the TPO to be covered by the RVARC Rural Planning process. Mr. Sexton asked about a target date for the plan. Ms. Belcher stated that with the incorporation of Botetourt County’s trail plan into the update, a larger scope to the greenway plan would be needed. Mark noted that since this item would be recommended to the TPO, the scope of projects in the UPWP would entail the TPO’s boundary. He asked if a rural component would be needed that is not covered by the TPO boundary for the greenway plan as well. Mr. Sexton stated that the rural portion would entail the Daleville South area. Ben Tripp commented he would like to see connectivity to trails and destinations integrated into the plan. Mark asked for feedback for a stand-alone plan update versus a larger greenway-bicycle-pedestrian effort that could also serve as the greenway plan. Liz agreed that it needs to show that greenways are connecting to these other modes. Cristina Finch stated two things should be

considered: (1) integrate all of the systems and make sure our destinations are being connected with infrastructure that has been put in and planned and look at that component, and (2) the other piece is that the greenway system is growing further out. She noted that this year staff had only 400 hours dedicated for bike-ped greenway type work. She noted that if we could pull from different funding pots that would help to be able to dedicate more time to the project. Cristina stated because the scope is growing, it may be more appropriate to house the plan through the Regional Commission's Work Program. Shane said currently there are no VDOT pilot grants available to help pay for assistance (like the last one received that helped pay for the consultant). It was asked if this could fall under RSTP funding. Mark stated yes, but due to funding cycle of applications, not now. Mark stated that is a big decision if you are talking about the TPO's work program, an in-house effort, and as Cristina spoke about -- does it take the lead to the Regional Commission's work program but supporting time to the TPO or vice versa. Liz noted she could see it as an in-house update. Shane said for the last update, the TPO or Commission staff was actually more involved in the greenway plan and the consultant was more involved with the organizational plan.

Mark stated the concept was shaping up to look like in-house, with potentially some local governments being able to team up with TPO or Commission staff as in-kind or complementary effort. Mark asked Liz to think about Cristina's comments on the Regional Commission serving as the project lead, with sufficient hours in the TPO work program, to contribute to the TPO's part of the work or think about if the Greenway Commission would like this to be TPO lead, where it is primarily TPO focused. He asked that she contact him if she is leaning toward the Regional Commission serving as lead since the Commission's work program has another process and projects have to be directly submitted by a locality.

- **Regional Land Use and Transportation** – Cristina Finch said this would be in line with the prior development work of the multimodal centers and would delve more into the land use/zoning components. Possible utilization of VDOT's Transportation Efficient Land Use and Design Guide.
- **Workforce and Transportation** – Still under consideration at this time.
- **Regional Multimodal Corridors Identification** – Continuation of work that began in the FY'15 UPWP working off the regional modal plans to define the regional corridors where infrastructure supporting public transportation, walking, and biking exists or is desired. What particular sections under the DRPT Multimodal Guidelines. Goal is have bike and pedestrian and transit corridors completed and overlay all the systems. Then begin to think about each corridor and what would be ideal/what they would look, then balance needs in a fixed space.
- **Corridor and Area Studies** – Preliminary corridor studies include Route 419, Brambleton Avenue, Downtown Salem Parking Analysis, Botetourt County Comprehensive Plan Assistance, and Exit 150 Small Area Study. Chairman Holladay noted that the County may require further assistance from the staff with 419 and Brambleton.
- **General Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning** – No changes.

- **RIDE Solutions Bicycle Pedestrian Coordinator Position** – Still under development. RIDE Solutions and City of Roanoke want to fund a full-time bicycle coordinator and events position that would have some planning responsibilities. However, the combined funding from RIDE Solutions and the City of Roanoke only amounts to about 2/3 of what is needed so the position would complement Shane's normal bicycle planning activities in the UPWP for the remaining 1/3. This position would be assigned different projects to Shane's bicycle projects. Mark Jamison stated someone needs to be out talking to the public about bicycles and to handle bike month activities. More details on this position should be available next month. RIDE Solutions component would pay for advocacy aspect, not enough money available for those aspects only. Mark mentioned, perhaps, they could document how we are reaching out to the public/Environmental Justice and Title VI with regards to bicycle planning.

Mark stated that he would begin to develop narrative text for work program projects, as well as begin to look at projects vs. budget.

4. **RSTP POLICIES & PROCEDURES UPDATE (FIRST DISCUSSION)**

In anticipation of future rounds of Regional Surface Transportation Program (RSTP) applications, Mark McCaskill reported that now is the time to update the RSTP Project Development & Selection Procedures. The original procedures manual was approved in March of 2013 and updated in June of 2014. Mark stated he wanted to open the floor for discussion to gain ideas to develop a draft document for review at future meetings. Mark also noted that the central question in the discussion would be what role RSTP would play with regards to HB2. It is anticipated that the next round of HB2 will begin on August 1, 2016 with subsequent rounds on a biennial schedule beginning August 1, 2018, August 1, 2020, etc. Mark stated that the question is -- countercyclical to HB2 vs. simultaneous with HB2?

Three potential RSTP strategies for consideration and discussion:

- 1) **Countercyclical** – Recommend to the TPO Policy Board in this strategy that RSTP applications be received on a fixed biennial basis that runs countercyclical to HB2. This would mean that applications would be accepted in August/September of 2017, 2019, 2021, etc. This strategy would abandon the current practice of RSTP applications being called at the RVTPO's discretion in response to external conditions in favor of the fixed biennial schedule that would give more predictability to applicants. It also has the advantage of positioning RSTP as a way to complement, supplement or replace any funds that did or did not get awarded in previous cycles.
- 2) **Cyclical** – This strategy would resemble the previous strategy in recommending a fixed biennial schedule. The only difference is that RSTP would run simultaneous with the HB2 application cycle so that applications would be accepted August/September 2016, 2018, 2020, etc. One advantage of this strategy is that applicants can prepare the information for both HB2 and RSTP simultaneously. Additionally, with the simultaneous application cycle, and provided the TPO's RSTP selection occurs following HB2 scoring announcements (roughly January of the following year), additional funds could potentially be available to other RSTP applicant projects which either did not apply for or did not score well in the HB2 process. Since the applications would be simultaneous they would essentially proceed independently. Similar to the countercyclical strategy, fully funded

HB2 project applications can provide an opportunity to other projects seeking RSTP funding.

- 3) Other/No Material Change** – One option would be to leave things as they are and have the RVTPO decide when to call for a new round of RSTP applications at their discretion without a fixed schedule. The advantage of this strategy is that the RVTPO could be completely responsive to changing opportunities or conditions.

Mark asked for feedback by TTC members on a fixed schedule. Comments included:

- Liz Belcher said she thinks the fixed schedule is good because it gives people time to plan and know what to expect and when and it seems more proactive vs reactive.
- Cody Sexton stated his question is not so much a fixed schedule on the application side, but if there were any rules governing the back end of the plan. He stated discussion last year was if you put things in the out years (more than 3-4 years out); you might as well assume that another application process would come along.
- Ben Tripp stated he likes the scheduled nature, but he feels the decision on that needs to include a consideration of how much funding and over what length of time your project can get that maximum. If knowing you are going to come back and reevaluate something at a certain period of time, maybe part of that discussion is to have some rules.

Mark McCaskill stated that according to the comments heard, it sounded as if everyone was on board with a fixed schedule of around two years and then discuss the pros and cons of countercyclical vs. cyclical.

- Mark Jamison stated a fixed schedule is good but it would be nice to have better certainty of the level of funding that might be available. Mr. Jamison feels some sort of fixed cycle so we can be planning for until there is a leveling out of how much funding is available.

Mark McCaskill stated around \$4 million is anticipated. Mark stated that the TPO staff is in favor of recommending for discussion the countercyclical approach so you would have information on HB2 scores from the previous round. Chairman Holladay agreed setting a schedule was good since all have to respond to local boards and/or councils. Mark asked members to think over and email him comments/concerns on the recompute versus HB2-like of guaranteed funding system. Because, he noted, if it is HB2-like, it could disappoint stakeholders (i.e., yes, you can put in an application but you cannot get funded for four years by definition).

5. PEDESTRIAN PERFORMANCE MEASURES UPDATE

Cristina Finch reported that last year the Pedestrian Vision Plan was adopted and a lot of being able to gauge how well we are doing with meeting what was set forth in that plan is being to quantitatively calculate how well we are measuring up to the pedestrian routes we want to accomplish over time. Start by looking at all the performance measures recommended in the Pedestrian Vision Plan. A standard performance measures report is done each September,

but there are several new performance measures that were recommended in the plan. Specifically the ones being looked at now are how many feet of public walkways within multimodal centers, multimodal districts, and the entire TPO Study Area do we have and how does that match up with what is desired in the plan. Cristina stated all the greenways have been mapped, as well as the current sidewalks from the Cities of Salem and Roanoke, the Town of Vinton and have a layer from Roanoke County. TTC members were asked what they felt was important to know about the sidewalk network and what to get out of an online database of where sidewalks exist and how that information can be used. Also, walkability-wise what is needed in each area in terms of sidewalks. Shane Sawyer addressed challenges currently faced with making sure data is up-to-date. Mark Jamison stated it is important to have a mechanism in place to maintain the mapping data. Cristina stated to update data, staff could generate electronically or print out maps to be circulated between city/county departments and have people add new and/or outdated information, based on their knowledge,

6. **OTHER BUSINESS**

- Transit Vision Plan Public Meetings – Two upcoming transit vision plan public comment meetings have been scheduled for Thursday, January 21, 2016. The first will be held from Noon to 2:00 p.m. at Campbell Court in downtown Roanoke, followed by the second at the Vinton Library from 5:00-7:00 p.m.
- HB2 Scores – Bryan Hill provided a handout and stated that HB2 scores would be released on January 15 and provided a website address for members.
- Update on Transportation Alternatives (TA) Projects – Bryan stated no word has been received on scoring of TA projects.

7. **COMMENTS**

- Chairman Holladay announced that the County is forming focus groups for their community strategic effort. He stated that members are welcome to participate, noting the effort is not limited to only Roanoke County residents.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:17 p.m.

Submitted by:

Jackie Pace, Office Manager
Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission