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of Transportation

Federal Highway  
Administration

Federal Transit  
Administration

# Transportation Management Area Planning Certification Review

**Roanoke, VA**

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## Transportation Management Area

July 9, 2020



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## **1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

On April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) conducted the certification review of the transportation planning process for the Roanoke Valley Transportation Planning Organization (RVTPO). Due to circumstances related to COVID-19, the certification review was held virtually (Appendix A). FHWA and FTA are required to jointly review and evaluate the transportation planning process for each urbanized area over 200,000 in population at least every four years to determine if the process meets the Federal planning requirements. The population of the Roanoke Valley TPO Study Area is approximately 230,000 and covers the Cities of Roanoke and Salem, the Town of Vinton and the urbanized portions of Bedford, Botetourt, Roanoke and Montgomery Counties – a land area of 247 square miles.

### **1.1 Previous Findings and Disposition**

The first certification review for the RVTPO urbanized area was conducted in 2016. The 2016 Certification Review came after the 2010 census when the RVTPO urbanized area was determined to have a population of more than 200,000. The previous Certification Review's Federal Actions and their disposition are summarized in Appendix B.

### **1.2 Summary of Current Findings**

The current review found that the metropolitan transportation planning process conducted in the RVTPO urbanized area meets Federal planning requirements. Based on this review and ongoing oversight by the FHWA and the FTA, the transportation planning process carried out by the RVTPO is certified as meeting the requirements as described in 23 Code of Federal Register Part 450, Subpart C and 49 Code of Federal Register Part 613.

Although there are no Corrective Actions from this review, there are several recommendations in this report that warrant close attention and follow-up, as well as commendations in areas where RVTPO is performing very well.

Details of the certification findings for the risk based areas of the above items are contained in this report and an overview can be found in Section 5.0 of this report. A list of acronyms can be found in Appendix C.

## **2.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **2.1 Background/Preface**

Pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 134(k) and 49 U.S.C. 5303(k), FHWA and FTA must jointly certify the metropolitan transportation planning process in TMAs at least every four years. A TMA is an urbanized area, as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau, with a population of over 200,000. After the 2010 Census, the Secretary of Transportation designated 183 TMAs – 179 urbanized areas over 200,000 in population plus four urbanized areas that received special designation. In general, the reviews consist of three primary activities: a site visit, a review of planning products (in advance of and during the site visit), and preparation of a Certification Review Report that summarizes the review and offers findings. The reviews focus on compliance with Federal law and regulations, challenges, successes, and experiences of the cooperative relationship between the MPO(s), the State DOT(s), and public transportation operator(s) in the conduct of the metropolitan transportation planning process. Joint FTA/FHWA Certification Review guidelines provide agency field reviewers with latitude and flexibility to tailor the review to reflect regional issues and needs. Therefore, the scope and depth of the Certification Review reports will vary significantly.

The Certification Review process is only one of several methods used to assess the quality of a regional metropolitan transportation planning process, compliance with applicable statutes and regulations, and the level and type of technical assistance needed to enhance the effectiveness of the planning process. Other stewardship and oversight activities provide opportunities for this type of review and comment, including Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) approval, the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), metropolitan and statewide Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) findings, air-quality conformity determinations (in nonattainment and maintenance areas), as well as a range of other formal and less formal interactions provide both FHWA/FTA an opportunity to comment on the planning process. The results of these other processes are considered in the Certification Review process.

While the Certification Review report itself may not fully document those many intermediate and ongoing checkpoints, the “findings” of Certification Review are, in fact, based upon the cumulative findings of the entire review effort.

The review process is individually tailored to focus on topics of significance in each metropolitan planning area. Federal reviewers prepare Certification Reports to document the results of the review process. The reports and final actions are the joint responsibility of the appropriate FHWA and FTA field offices, and their content will vary to reflect the planning process reviewed, whether or not they relate explicitly to formal “findings” of the review. To encourage public understanding and input, FHWA/FTA will continue to improve the clarity of the Certification Review reports.

### **2.2 Purpose and Objective**

Since the enactment of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) of 1991, the FHWA and FTA are required to jointly review and evaluate the transportation planning process in all urbanized areas over 200,000 population to determine if the process meets the Federal planning requirements in 23 U.S.C. 134, 49 U.S.C. 5303, and 23 CFR 450. In 2005, the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient

Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), extended the minimum allowable frequency of certification reviews to at least every four years.

Created in 1979 and formerly referred to as RVAMPO, the RVTPO is the Federally-designated MPO for the Roanoke, Virginia metropolitan area, leading the comprehensive, cooperative, and continuing planning process. Implementing agencies working in partnership with RVTPO in the planning process include the Virginia Department of Transportation, the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transit (VDRPT) and the Greater Roanoke Transit Company (also known as Valley Metro).

According to RVTPO's Vision 2040 Plan, the urbanized area had a population of more than 238,000 people in 2016 and projects a population of more than 245,000 in 2021 which is slightly slower rates than the state of Virginia and the United States.

The policy making body of the RVTPO is its Board which consists of sixteen voting members. The voting membership of the Policy Board consists of two representatives each from the Cities of Roanoke and Salem, the Counties of Botetourt and Roanoke, and the Town of Vinton; and one representative each from the County of Bedford, County of Montgomery, Virginia Department of Transportation (VRDPT), the Greater Roanoke Transit Company, the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation, and the Roanoke-Blacksburg Regional Airport.

Agencies with non-voting membership on the TPO Policy Board include: the Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission, the Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration. RVTPO member localities also have non-voting members on the Policy Board and the TTC - which are usually the same locality staff member. Policy Board meetings are open to the public and bylaws and member names are also posted on the TPO website.

The Transportation Technical Committee provides technical review and assistance in transportation planning to the Policy Board decision makers. The TTC is specifically responsible for advising the TPO in the development of the regionally constrained long-range Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), the regional Congestion Management Process (CMP) Plan and the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) within the Roanoke urbanized area. TTC voting representation includes the seven urban localities represented on the policy board as well as the public transit agencies, Roanoke Valley Greenway Commission and Roanoke-Blacksburg Regional Airport. Meetings are open to the public.

Certification of the transportation planning process is a prerequisite to the approval of Federal funding for transportation projects in such areas. The certification review is also an opportunity to provide assistance on new programs and to enhance the ability of the metropolitan transportation planning process to provide decision makers with the knowledge they need to make well-informed capital and operating investment decisions.

## 3.0 SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Review Process

A summary of the status of findings and Federal Actions from the last review is provided in Appendix B. This report details the TPO's second review, which consisted of a risk-based desk review, a public involvement opportunity and a site visit - conducted virtually in April 2020 due to the impacts of COVID-19.

Participants in the review included representatives of FHWA, FTA, Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), VDRPT, Greater Roanoke Transit Company (Valley Metro) and RVTPO staff. A full list of participants is included in Appendix A.

A desk audit of current documents and correspondence was completed prior to the virtual site visit. In addition to the formal review, routine oversight mechanisms provide a major source of information upon which to base the certification findings.

A TMA risk-based certification review focuses on the high-risk areas, both challenges, and opportunities, and does not attempt to cover every planning topic. The FHWA and FTA provide regular stewardship and oversight to its TMA planning partners, reviewing and approving planning products, conducting Division/Region Office Risk Assessments, providing technical assistance, and promoting best practices throughout the year. The planning rule introduced transformational changes and added several new provisions. A new mandate necessitates that State DOTs and MPOs take a performance-based approach to planning and programming (PBPP). The final rule requires a transition to performance-driven, outcome-based approaches to link transportation investment priorities to the achievement of performance targets to address specific performance measures in key areas such as safety, infrastructure condition, congestion, system reliability, emissions, and freight movement. As such, MPO(s), State DOTs, and Public Transit Agencies must establish written agreements for the metropolitan area describing roles and responsibilities for PBPP, including: Coordination on target setting, data collection, data analysis, reporting on progress toward target achievement and data collection for the NHS asset management plan.

The certification review covers the transportation planning process conducted cooperatively by the MPO, State, and public transportation operators. Background information, status, key findings, and recommendations are summarized in the body of the report for the following subject areas selected by FHWA and FTA staff for on-site review:

- TPO Committee Structure, Agreements, Boundaries
- Self-Certifications
- Unified Planning Work Program
- Prioritization Process
- Performance Based Planning & Programming
- Long Range Transportation Plan
- Transportation Improvement Program
- Freight Planning

- Transportation Management
- Congestion Management
- Operations/ITS
- Financial Planning and Fiscal Constraint
- Annual List of Obligated Projects
- Public Participation
- Civil Rights (Title VI, Environmental Justice (EJ), Limited English Proficiency (LEP), Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA))
- Transit Planning

## **3.2 Documents Reviewed**

The following MPO documents were evaluated as part of this planning process review:

- Vision 2040: RVTPO Long Range Transportation Plan
- FY2019 RVTPO Annual Listing of Project Obligations
- FY18-21 RVTPO Transportation Improvement Program
- FY2020 RVTPO Transportation Work Program (UPWP)
- RVARC Title VI Implementation Plan
- FY2020 Rural Transportation Work Program
- FY2020 RVARC Work Program
- RVTPO 3C Agreement
- Final Procurement Manual
- MPO TIP Adjustment Agreement
- RVTPO Organization Chart
- Signed Planning Funds (PL) Agreement
- FY2020 5303 Agreement

## **4.0 PROGRAM REVIEW**

### **4.1 Metropolitan Transportation Plan**

#### **4.1.1 Regulatory Basis**

23 U.S.C. 134(c), (h) & (i) and 23 CFR 450.324 set forth requirements for the development and content of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). Among the requirements are that the MTP address at least a 20-year planning horizon and that it include both long and short range strategies that lead to the development of an integrated and multi-modal system to facilitate the safe and efficient movement of people and goods in addressing current and future transportation demand.

The MTP is required to provide a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive multimodal transportation planning process. The plan needs to consider all applicable issues related to the transportation system's development, land use, employment, economic development, natural environment, and housing and community development.

23 CFR 450.324(c) requires the MPO to review and update the MTP at least every 4 years in air quality nonattainment and maintenance areas, and at least every 5 years in attainment areas, to reflect current and forecasted transportation, population, land use, employment, congestion, and economic conditions and trends.

Under 23 CFR 450.324(f), the MTP is required, at a minimum, to consider the following:

- Projected transportation demand
- Existing and proposed transportation facilities
- Operational and management strategies
- A description of the performance measures and performance targets used
- A system performance report
- Congestion management process
- Capital investment and strategies to preserve transportation infrastructure and provide for multimodal capacity
- Design concept and design scope descriptions of proposed transportation facilities
- Potential environmental mitigation activities
- Pedestrian walkway and bicycle transportation facilities
- Transportation and transit enhancements
- A financial plan

#### **4.1.2 Current Status**

To develop a vision for transportation in the year 2040, the RVTPO Policy Board set forth goals including economic competitiveness and prosperity, accessible and connected places, safety and security, proactive and efficient system management, healthy environment, and resiliency and reliability. The MTP was updated to include requirements of the FAST Act including updated planning factors and the incorporation of performance based planning and programming (PBPP) requirements. The 2040 MTP sought to provide context on the possibilities for the Roanoke Valley region for its elected officials, citizens, and other stakeholders. On September 28, 2017, the RVTPO policy board approved the constrained long-range MTP for the region. The TPO is currently in the update process for its 2045 MTP.

The MTP does include a fiscally constrained list of highway and transit projects for the region and a list of "vision" projects are included as identified transportation needs without reasonably available funding. The current MTP includes a long list of amendments made for the inclusion of new projects. The MTP discusses environmental justice and equity, yet it's unclear how well these considerations are used in project selection.

Funding systems have changed since the 2035 long-range transportation plan. There are no longer financially constrained categories such as "City of Roanoke Urban System," "Roanoke County Secondary System", "Interstate System", "Primary System," etc. for every locality in the Study Area. The financial constraint is now done on a regional basis reflecting recent statewide prioritization and project selection procedures through Virginia's "System for the Management and Allocation of Resources for Transportation" or SMART SCALE. Based on review of the MTP, it's unclear how fiscal constraint is achieved between the various funding sources.

Chapter 2 of the MTP notes that the MTP process is a 5-year process that incorporates other studies and plans and that some of these studies and plans may have their public outreach processes. Transportation priority surveys were used to help guide where investments into transportation should go.

#### **4.1.3 Findings**

The TPO meets the Federal requirements for development of the long-range metropolitan transportation plan, as well as consultation and coordination.

**Commendation:** The RVTPO is commended for reviewing environmental justice considerations and factors following the identification of projects. As a matter of note, this element can be taken a step further and incorporated into project selection decision-making by the technical committee.

**Corrective Action:** None

**Recommendations:** The Federal Team recommends that as part of the current MTP update, the MTP incorporate selection criteria and goals that integrate PBPP. The updated MTP should also include a clearer understanding on how projects are prioritized and selected for funding in the region and fiscal constraint is achieved. The MPO should continue its 3C planning process with stakeholders to ensure fiscal constraint is clear in the update MTP. To better support PBPP goals in the MTP, the MPO in coordination with transit providers, should consider looking at holistic transit goals for the region and not fully relying on the state's Transit Asset Management (TAM) goals that are part of VDRPT's Tier II group plan. The TPO planning process should reflect the goals, objectives, performance measures, and targets of VDRPT's Tier II group plan or consider a new Tier II plan specific to the Roanoke region's needs.

Within the PBPP process, the process for selecting projects and strategies for programming should tie directly to the goals in the MTP and project/strategies should be directly tied to performance measures.

**Schedule for Process Improvement:** None

**Proposed FHWA/FTA Technical Assistance:** None

## 4.2 Transportation Improvement Program

### 4.2.1 Regulatory Basis

23 U.S.C. 134(c), (h) & (j) set forth requirements for the MPO to cooperatively develop a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Under 23 CFR 450.326, the TIP must meet the following requirements:

- Must cover at least a four-year horizon and be updated at least every four years.
- Surface transportation projects funded under Title 23 U.S.C. or Title 49 U.S.C., except as noted in the regulations, are required to be included in the TIP.
- Make progress toward achieving the performance targets.
- A description of the anticipated effect of the TIP toward achieving the performance targets (to the maximum extent practicable).
- List project description, cost, funding source, and identification of the agency responsible for carrying out each project.
- Projects need to be consistent with the adopted MTP.
- Must be fiscally constrained.
- The MPO must provide all interested parties with a reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposed TIP.

### 4.2.2 Current Status

The Roanoke Valley TPO's 2018-2021 TIP was developed in cooperation with the Virginia Department of Transportation, VDRPT, local public transportation operators (i.e., GRTC and RADAR), and the local governments encompassing the urbanized area's transportation system. As was the case during the last certification review, the TIP is still largely driven by the Six-Year Improvement Program (SYIP<sup>11</sup>). The CTB has lead responsibility for selecting and programming federally funded Interstate Maintenance, Bridge, National Highway System, Statewide (non-metropolitan) STP, Safety, Enhancement projects, while local governments have lead responsibility for selecting projects within the urban and secondary roadway systems. Local governments have primary responsibility for selecting projects within the urban and secondary roadway systems; however, it's not apparent if those project selections are consistent with the LRTP. The STIP submitted by the CTB to FTA and FHWA must be consistent with all metropolitan TIPs. The TPO however has lead responsibility for the project review, selection and funds allocation process for STBG and Transportation Alternatives (TA) programs. The RVTPO also awards its allocation of TA set-aside funding with VDOT scoring the candidate projects.

The Roanoke Valley TPO Policy Board is responsible for scoring and awarding STBG funds for RVTPO candidate projects. Virginia's SMART SCALE prioritization program awards points to projects for estimated reductions in fatality and serious injury crashes. When allocating STBG funds, the RVTPO awards points to projects that increase safety and security of the transportation system. In addition, the VDOT Construction Districts also have the flexibility to address safety considerations, such as rumble strips or striping in coordination with resurfacing projects.

The criteria used in selecting proposed projects and in developing project priorities include conformance to the TPO adopted long-range plan, consistency with local government/agency plans, the MAP-21 planning factors, availability of funding for previously programmed projects in need of additional funds, and comments from the public. Currently, how projects are prioritized from the TIP is not clear with regional projects being selected by regional stakeholders and not reflecting priorities and goals from the TIP and MTP. As was noted during the site visit, projects are generally selected by the member localities first, some of which may or may not be incorporated in the MTP, and then included in the TIP if successfully funded.

The TIP appears to contain all regionally significant projects funded by FTA and FHWA. Project listings for roadway and transit sections include sufficient descriptive material and estimated project costs. The public was afforded several opportunities to comment on the TIP including online, hardcopy at the library, via US mail, and a public hearing that was held on April 27, 2017.

The currently approved TIP is the first to document Performance-Based Planning and Programming (PBPP) measures and targets and the current TIP lists the Transit Asset Management (TAM) plan targets adopted from the state and VDRPT. The performance measures section of the TIP includes measure and targets for safety, pavement and bridges, and highway system performance. Many of the included performance measures are based on the VTrans2040 Vision, Goals, & Objective, and Guiding Principles.

#### **4.2.3 Findings**

The TPO meets the Federal requirements for the TIP, but future TIPs should address how the TIP is working towards PBPP targets.

**Commendation:** None

**Corrective Action:** None

**Recommendations:** The FY18-21 TIP fails to identify the criteria and process for how projects are prioritized and selected by member localities and how it's consistent with the MTP. Inclusion of a prioritization process prior to funding of local jurisdiction projects would help to better link projects included in the MTP. The current TIP does not appear to be a management tool for implementing the MTP and it's not clear how the TIP reflects policies, investment choices, and priorities from the MTP. The TIP should also include documentation describing how programmed projects support implementation of transportation performance measures and progress toward established targets.

The TIP should be updated to reflect amendment and modification procedures and no longer rely on the September 2005 agreement document between VDOT, TPO, and VDRPT. When amendments or modifications are made to the TIP, there should be a process outlined for how fiscal constraint is ensured.

**Schedule for Process Improvement:** None

**Proposed FHWA/FTA Technical Assistance:** None

<sup>[1]</sup> The SYIP is updated annually and is the means by which the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) meets its statutory obligation under the Code of Virginia to allocate funds to interstate, primary, secondary and urban highway systems, public transit, ports and airports and other programs for the immediate fiscal year. The CTB allocates funds for the first fiscal year of the SYIP but the remaining five years are estimates of future allocations. Fiscal years start on July 1 and end on June 30. The STIP unlike the SYIP is the federally approved regional transportation programming document covering four years.

## **4.3 MPO Structure and Agreements**

### **4.3.1 Regulatory Basis**

23 U.S.C. 134(d) and 23 CFR 450.314(a) state the MPO, the State, and the public transportation operator shall cooperatively determine their mutual responsibilities in carrying out the metropolitan transportation planning process. These responsibilities shall be clearly identified in written agreements among the MPO, the State, and the public transportation operator serving the MPA. Additionally, 23 CFR 450.314(h) states that the MPO, the State, and the public transportation operator shall jointly develop specific written provisions for cooperatively developing and sharing information related to transportation performance data, the selection of performance targets, the reporting of performance targets, the reporting of performance to be used in tracking progress toward attainment of critical outcomes for the region of the MPO, and the collection of data for the State asset management plans for the National Highway System. Furthermore, 23 CFR 450.314(g) states if part of an urbanized area that has been designated as a TMA overlaps into an adjacent MPA serving an urbanized area that is not designated as a TMA, the adjacent urbanized area shall not be treated as a TMA. However, a written agreement shall be established between the MPOs with MPA boundaries, including a portion of the TMA, which clearly identifies the roles and responsibilities of each MPO in meeting specific TMA requirements (e.g., congestion management process, Surface Transportation Program funds sub-allocated to the urbanized area over 200,000 population, and project selection).

### **4.3.2 Current Status**

The RVTPO is the organization responsible for conducting the continuing, comprehensive, and coordinated (3-C) planning process for the Roanoke Valley area in accordance with Federal requirements. Staff of the transportation planning division of the Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission performs the day-to-day operations of the TPO. Seven localities are represented with 16 voting members and 11 non-voting members. In March 2018, the policy board bylaws were updated with significant changes to the Boards composition including who could appoint members. The TTC created an RSTP subcommittee in 2017 to develop the FY19-24 RSTP Financial Plan and again in 2018 to update the STBG Project Development and Selection Procedures. In addition to programming subcommittees, the TTC also created a committee of its whole self for the 2040 Long-Range Plan. For a short time, the TTC also hosted a Bike/Ped Committee, but it was determined this committee was best housed as a broader regional committee outside the auspices of the RVTPO and thus was dissolved and reformed as a committee hosted by the RVARC.

The voting membership of the Policy Board consists of two representatives each from the Cities of Roanoke and Salem, the Counties of Botetourt and Roanoke, and the Town of Vinton; and one representative each from the County of Bedford, County of Montgomery, Virginia Department of

Transportation, the Greater Roanoke Transit Company, VDRPT, and the Roanoke-Blacksburg Regional Airport. Other agencies with non-voting membership on the TPO Policy Board include: the Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission, the Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration. Policy Board meetings are open to the public and bylaws and member names are also posted on the TPO website.

The RVTPO Policy Board currently has one committee called the Transportation Technical Committee (TTC). The role of the TTC is to advise the RVTPO Policy Board and to provide technical advice to the RVARC staff on transportation-related activities, as needed. The TTC will advise the RVTPO Policy Board on technical matters pertaining to the development of the regional Constrained Long-Range Multimodal Transportation Plan (CLRMTTP), the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), the Surface Transportation Block Group (STBG) Program, the Transportation Alternative (TA) selection process, the Congestion Management Process (CMP), and the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) as part of a continuing, comprehensive and cooperative transportation planning and programming process. TTC voting representation includes public transit agencies and holds meetings open to the public.

### **4.3.3 Findings**

The TPO meets the Federal requirements for MPO organizational structure.

**Commendation:** None

**Corrective Action:** None

**Recommendations:** The RVTPO should consider forming additional committees that support the Board including financial planning and programming committees that can assist with project selection and prioritization.

**Schedule for Process Improvement:** None

**Proposed FHWA/FTA Technical Assistance:** None

## **4.4 Self-Certification**

### **4.4.1 Regulatory Basis**

Self-Certification of the metropolitan planning process, at least once every four years, is required under 23 CFR 450.334. The state and MPO shall certify to FHWA and FTA that the planning process is addressing the major issues facing the area and is conducted in accordance with all applicable requirements of 23 CFR 450.300 and:

- 23 U.S.C. 134 and 49 U.S.C. 5303 and Sections 174 and 176(c) and (d) of the Clean Air Act (if applicable)
- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Title VI assurance executed by each State

- 49 U.S.C. 5332, prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, sex, or age in employment or business opportunity
- Section 1101(b) of SAFETEA-LU and 49 CFR Part 26, regarding involvement of DBE in U.S. DOT-funded planning projects
- 23 CFR Part 230, regarding the implementation of an equal employment opportunity program on Federal and Federal-aid highway construction contracts
- ADA and U.S. DOT regulations governing transportation for people with disabilities [49 CFR Parts 27, 37, and 38]
- Older Americans Act as amended, prohibiting discrimination on the basis of age Section 324 of Title 23 U.S.C., regarding the prohibition of discrimination based on gender
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and 49 CFR Part 27, regarding discrimination against individuals with disabilities
- All other applicable provisions of Federal law (e.g., while no longer specifically noted in a self-certification, prohibition of use of Federal funds for “lobbying” still applies and should be covered in all grant agreement documents (see 23 CFR 630.112).

A Certification Review by FTA and FHWA of the planning process in TMAs is required at least once every four years, in addition to the required self-certification by the MPO and State.

#### **4.4.2 Current Status**

The April 2017 self-certification comprehensive documentation is collaboratively prepared by TPO and VDOT, and addresses all MPO Federal planning regulations. The TPO executes the self-certification with each update of the TIP and it’s anticipated that another self-certification will be executed by the Board in June 2020. The self-certification is provided to VDOT for their review and signature. The documentation is then presented to the TPO, reviewed by the Policy Board members, adopted by resolution, and signed by the TPO chair.

#### **4.4.3 Findings**

The TPO meets the Federal requirements for self-certification of the metropolitan transportation planning process.

**Commendation:** None

**Corrective Action:** None

**Recommendations:** None

**Proposed FHWA/FTA Technical Assistance:** None

**Schedule for Process Improvement:** None

## 4.5 Public Participation

### 4.5.1 Regulatory Basis

Sections 134(i)(6), 134(j)(1)(B) of Title 23 and Section 5303(i)(5) and 5303(j)(1)(B) of Title 49, United States Code, require a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to provide adequate opportunity for the public to participate in and comment on the products and planning processes of the MPO. The requirements for public involvement are detailed in 23 CFR 450.316, which requires the MPO to develop and use a documented participation plan that includes explicit procedures and strategies to include the public and other interested parties in the transportation planning process.

Specific requirements include giving adequate and timely notice of opportunities to participate in or comment on transportation issues and processes, employing visualization techniques to describe metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs, making public information readily available in electronically accessible formats and means such as the world wide web, holding public meetings at convenient and accessible locations and times, demonstrating explicit consideration and response to public input, and periodically reviewing the effectiveness of the participation plan.

### 4.5.2 Current Status

RVTPPO's current Public Participation Plan was approved in February 2018. RVTPPO reaches their stakeholders through traditional ways such as newspapers and postings at the library but they also utilize modern methods such as e-mails and social media (e.g. Facebook).

RVTPPO utilizes social media to solicit input from stakeholders and conduct surveys to inform their decision-making process. Staff noted that while replying directly to survey responses has obvious challenges, the RVTPPO has made it common practice to respond to the comments of stakeholders to maximize stakeholder engagement beyond the regulatory requirements.

RVTPPO also regularly looks for ways to enhance their public involvement process with a recent example being the creation of a "Citizen's Version" of the last approved Long Range Plan. When the planning document was released to the public, it included a high-level overview and summary of the information covered in the more dense and planning document that followed.

### 4.5.3 Findings

**Commendation:** The Federal Team commends RVTPPO for their efforts concerning Public Participation among their stakeholders. RVTPPO is commended for using non-traditional methods to achieve Public Participation and for demonstrated commitment to following up with their stakeholders' comments & questions concerning the transportation planning process.

**Corrective Action:** None

**Recommendations:** None

**Schedule for Process Improvement:** None

**Proposed FHWA/FTA Technical Assistance:** None

## **4.6 Civil Rights (Title VI, LEP)**

### **4.6.1 Regulatory Basis**

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, prohibits discrimination based upon race, color, and national origin. Specifically, 42 U.S.C. 2000d states that “No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.” In addition to Title VI, there are other nondiscrimination statutes that afford legal protection. These statutes include the following: Section 162(a) of the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1973 (23 U.S.C. 324), the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973/Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. The ADA specifies that programs and activities funded with Federal dollars are prohibited from discrimination based on disability.

Executive Order 12898 (Environmental Justice) directs federal agencies to develop strategies to address disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of their programs on minority and low-income populations. In compliance with this Executive Order, USDOT and FHWA issued orders to establish policies and procedures for addressing environmental justice in minority and low-income populations. The planning regulations, at 23 CFR 450.316(a)(1)(vii), require that the needs of those “traditionally underserved” by existing transportation systems, such as low-income and/or minority households, be sought out and considered.

Executive Order 13166 (Limited-English-Proficiency) requires agencies to ensure that limited English proficiency persons can meaningfully access the services provided consistent with and without unduly burdening the fundamental mission of each federal agency.

Title 49 CFR 21.7 (Title VI Assurances) requires that recipients provide Title VI assurances as a condition to receiving Federal financial assistance. U.S. DOT Order 1050.2A, DOT Standard Title VI Assurances and Non-Discrimination Provisions (April 2013) provide the content that the Assurances must include. Any changes to the Assurances are initiated by the USDOT operating administrations and must be coordinated by the Departmental Office of Civil Rights.

### **4.6.2 Current Status**

RVTPo updated their Title VI Implementation Plan in October, 2019. This came after the TPO staff initiated the utilization of the FHWA Virginia Division and the FHWA Resource Center to host a Title VI training in Roanoke. The approved Title VI Implementation Plan document was reviewed by the Federal

team and includes updated procedures for discrimination complaints and LEP monitoring policies which include a four factor analysis for identifying the most prominent languages within the population of the RVTPO service area. RVTPO produced a signed Title VI Assurance, per DOT Order 1050.2A.

#### **4.6.3 Findings**

It was apparent to the Federal team that the RVTPO has given a considerable amount of attention to their Title VI programs since the last Certification Review in 2016. The TPO updated their Title VI Implementation Plan and have put best practices in place to ensure proper communication with those from LEP communities. In addition to the Title VI plan and the LEP practices being outlined in the updated documents, the Federal team determined compliance with the ADA, DBE policies as well as Title VI assurances.

**Commendation:** During the desk audit and the virtual site visit, RVTPO proved to be committed to ensuring that communities of Environmental Justice and Limited English Proficiency can participate in the transportation decision making process. They have two staff members who are proficient in Spanish and regularly review demographic data in the Roanoke Valley area to determine if modifications to their engagement need to be made.

**Corrective Action:** None

**Recommendations:** None

**Schedule for Process Improvement:** None

**Proposed FHWA/FTA Technical Assistance:** None

## **4.7 Performance Based Planning and Programming**

### **4.7.1 Regulatory Basis**

23 U.S.C. 150(b) identifies the following national goals for the focus of the Federal-aid highway program: Safety, Infrastructure Condition, Congestion Reduction, System Reliability, Freight Movement and Economic Vitality, Environmental Sustainability, and Reduced Project Delivery Delays. Under 23 U.S.C. 134(h)(2), the metropolitan planning process shall provide for the establishment and use of a performance-based approach to transportation decision-making to support the national goals, including the establishment of performance targets.

23 CFR 450.306(d) states that each MPO shall establish performance targets to support the national goals and track progress towards the attainment of critical outcomes. Each MPO shall coordinate with the relevant State to ensure consistency, to the maximum extent practicable, and establish performance targets not later than 180 days after the State or provider of public transportation establishes its performance targets. The selection of performance targets that address performance measures described in 49 U.S.C. 5326(c) and 49 U.S.C. 5329(d) shall be coordinated to the maximum extent

practicable, with public transportation providers to ensure consistency with the performance targets that public transportation providers establish under 49 U.S.C. 5326(c) and 49 U.S.C. 5329(d). Additionally, each MPO shall integrate the goals, objectives, performance measures, and targets from other performance-based plans and programs integrated into the metropolitan transportation planning process.

23 CFR 450.314(h) states that the MPO, the State, and the public transportation operator shall jointly develop specific written provisions PBPP, which can either be documented as part of the metropolitan planning agreements or in some other means.

#### **4.7.2 Current Status**

Beginning in 2012 and since the RVTPO became a Transportation Management Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (TMA MPO), a performance measures report has been generated as part of a statewide effort to track common performance measures, evaluate the region's transportation system against its transportation goals and standards, and contribute to the Statewide Transportation Plan. The RVTPO has participated in the Virginia Department of Transportation's (VDOT's) Performance Measures Reporting System in turn has produced a RVTPO Regional Performance Measures Report annually since 2012. However, it is the sentiment by the RVTPO that the level of performance measurement reporting system is not completely in alignment with the Federal Metropolitan Transportation Planning Final Rule (dated May 27, 2016); therefore, a transition in performance measures and performance-based planning may still be needed.

As an MPO, the RVTPO is required by the federal and state government to track regional performance measures the following categories were listed on the RVTPO webpage and in the Vision 2040 MTP:

1. Safety (Highway & Transit)
2. Highway Infrastructure Condition (Pavement and Bridge Condition)
3. Highway System Performance
4. Transit Asset Management

In 2014, legislation was approved which affects the way projects are prioritized in the VDOT Six Year Improvement Program (SYIP). Under the Code of Virginia §33.1-23.5:5 Statewide prioritization process for project selection, this legislation created a system for project prioritization to guide decision making by the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB). Public hearings were held throughout the Commonwealth in September and October 2014 to receive citizen and stakeholder input as well as to inform the public of the new prioritization legislation, more commonly known as SMART SCALE. The six prioritization factors included in SMART SCALE are: congestion mitigation, economic development, accessibility, safety, environmental quality, and land use/transportation coordination.

For each prioritization factor, there are a series of measures which generate the overall SMART SCALE project score.

### 4.7.3 Findings

The Federal Team observed, during the site review, that there has been resistance by localities and stakeholders in fully adopting PBPP requirements although the RVTPO continues to make an effort to incorporate PBPP in its planning processes by discussing the merits of PBPP with its localities and stakeholders. With that said, the performance measures required by Virginia are met by the RVTPO, however the Federal Team identified that PBPP was only mentioned by name throughout the RVTPO planning documents with no real follow up discussion on its methodology and use in meeting Federal Requirements within the MPO. The Federal Review Team finds that the MPO is actively working and continues to be proactive in trying to meet the federal PBPP requirements and incorporating PBPP principles into its planning development process but will require continued assistance in coordinating with its localities and stakeholders to ensure that performance targets and reporting accurately reflect the regional area. There is an opportunity for the RVTPO to improve and better implement the PBPP requirements of the MAP-21 and FAST Act to incorporate performance-based planning and programming principles into the development of the UPWP, MTP, and TIP.

There have been potential solutions discussed, including recognizing regional network needs by the State and there to be a process for MPOs to screen projects, to include areas that are not certified. Overall, the RVTPO has demonstrated a working Prioritization Process with an opportunity to have continued discussions with the State so the prioritization process can be improved so that it is not heavily weighted with State interests while localities are neglected.

The RVTPO meets the regulatory requirements for Performance Based Approach to Planning and Programming, however there is a strong opportunity for continued guidance and follow up by its Federal Partners to improve PBPP in its planning processes.

**Commendation:** The RVTPO, although not meeting the full potential of implementing PBPP in its planning process, was very open and proactively seeking guidance and has a sincere interest in utilizing resources provided by its Federal Partners in promoting PBPP with its localities and stakeholders.

**Corrective Action:** None

**Recommendations:** Expand PBPP to enhance investment decision-making, PBPP allows an opportunity for clear and open discussions about the public's desired outcomes and the strategic direction that an agency should take. The Federal Team recommends that the RVTPO and its stakeholders better utilize PBPP since it provides key information for the decision-making process by heightening the role of data and focusing attention on performance outcomes. Furthermore, the Federal Review Team wishes to offer its training resources and coordination to assist the RVTPO to help its localities and stakeholders better understand the benefits of the utilization of PBPP in order to enhance the planning and policymaking process.

**Schedule for Process Improvement:** None

**Proposed FHWA/FTA Technical Assistance:** Regular and consistent check-ins by Federal Partners with the RVTPO. As well as potential workshops or small trainings provided by FHWA and FTA to the RVTPO and its stakeholders at Committee Meetings with the localities.

## **4.8 Financial Planning and Fiscal Constraint**

### **4.8.1 Regulatory Basis**

The metropolitan planning statutes state that the long-range transportation plan and TIP (23 U.S.C. 134 (j) (2) (B)) must include a "financial plan" that "indicates resources from public and private sources that are reasonably expected to be available to carry out the program."

(23 U.S.C. 134 (j) (2) (B)) Financial plan. --The TIP shall include a financial plan that-- (i) demonstrates how the TIP can be implemented; (ii) indicates resources from public and private sources that are reasonably expected to be available to carry out the program; (iii) identifies innovative financing techniques to finance projects, programs, and strategies; and (iv) may include, for illustrative purposes, additional projects that would be included in the approved TIP if reasonable additional resources beyond those identified in the financial plan were available.

### **4.8.2 Current Status**

During the 2016 TMA Certification Review for the RVTPO, it was recommended that the RVTPO adopt a Financial Plan as part of the constrained long-range multimodal transportation plan (CLRMTTP). The RVTPO adopted a Financial Plan in March 2019 which successfully reflected revenue and expenses, where revenue is resources from public and private sources that are reasonably expected to be available. The RVTPO as with other TMAs in the State, rely heavily on the State for provision of revenue and cost information for development of their MTP and TIPs. Chapter 3 of the Financial Plan indicates the financial assumptions utilized for long range planning in the region. The financial estimates for both revenues and costs in the MTP are given in year of expenditure dollars and reflect reasonable growth and inflation factors. VDOT cost estimates are from the VDOT Project Cost Estimating System.

Finally, funding systems have changed since the 2035 long-range transportation plan. There are no longer financially constrained categories such as "City of Roanoke Urban System", "Roanoke County Secondary System", "Interstate System", "Primary System," etc. The financial constraint is now done on a regional basis reflecting recent statewide prioritization and project selection procedures through Virginia's "System for the Management and Allocation of Resources for Transportation" (SMART SCALE).

### **4.8.3 Findings**

The RVTPO has expended significant effort in adopting and improving their financial plan, however some fiscal constraint and project prioritization issues appear to remain. Particular issues are translation of locality project priorities to Statewide project priorities. The RVTPO is recognizing that the shifting of projects in fiscal constraint is an academic exercise as the regional partners don't abide or understand the process. The RVTPO also find themselves struggling on how VDOT determines fiscal constrained projects, especially with SMART Scale since it is not formula based, rather it is selected competitively.

The Federal Review Team finds that the RVTPO meets the Federal Requirements for financial planning of the metropolitan transportation planning process.

**Commendation:** None

**Corrective Action:** None

**Recommendations:**

1. The Federal Team recommends the RVTPO continue to provide increased stewardship and oversight to ensure that the financial assumptions for projects are reasonable. Along these lines, the RVTPO should consider utilizing resources and its Federal Partners to help educate regional partners and stakeholders to better understand fiscal constraint and project priority process.
2. The Federal Team recommends the RVTPO to utilize both State and Federal resources to help their localities and stakeholders better understand where financial projections and costs come from.

**Schedule for Process Improvement:** None

**Proposed FHWA/FTA Technical Assistance:** Regular and consistent check-ins by Federal Partners with the RVTPO. As well as potential workshops or small trainings provided by FHWA and FTA to the RVTPO and its stakeholders at Committee Meetings with the localities.

## **4.9 Transit Planning**

### **4.9.1 Regulatory Basis**

Section 5303 of Title 49 and Section 134 of Title 23 require the transportation planning process in metropolitan areas to consider all modes of travel in the development of their plans and programs. Federal regulations cited in 23 CFR 450.312 state that the MPO in cooperation with the State and operators of publicly owned transit services shall be responsible for carrying out the transportation planning process.

### **4.9.2 Current Status**

The Greater Roanoke Transit Company (GRTC), or Valley Metro, is a private, non-profit, public service organization wholly owned by the City of Roanoke. Valley Metro provides bus service along fixed routes, special services for the disabled, commuter service to the New River Valley and special event shuttle buses. Besides the City of Roanoke, Valley Metro provides contracted fixed-route service to the City of Salem and Town of Vinton. In all, Valley Metro provides service within a 60 square mile area to a population of 127,440 residents. Valley Metro's paratransit service is operated by RADAR, a non-profit corporation that provides rural and specialized transit for the physically and mentally disabled, as well as transportation disadvantaged individuals in the Greater Roanoke Valley. RADAR is available to all qualifying individuals within the City of Roanoke and Town of Vinton, regardless of their proximity to a

fixed-route. Passengers in the City of Salem are required to be within ¼ mile of a fixed-route to use the paratransit service.

As noted during the 2016 certification review the TPO staff remain committed to transit solutions and during the April 2020 site visit, it was noted that a loss in ridership is being experienced as a result of COVID-19; however loss in ridership is anticipated to be temporary in nature.

Valley Metro completed the Roanoke Valley Transit Vision Plan in September 2016 after a 3-year effort that began in 2013. The plan continues to serve as a foundation for regional decision-makers for transit operations and a vision for transit strategies for the region and the plan included robust public outreach. In August 2018, Valley Metro completed an exhaustive Comprehensive Operational Analysis that assessed routes and schedules for fixed route bus service. The Comprehensive Operational Analysis was adopted by Valley Metro in August 2018. In August of 2018, The Greater Roanoke Transit Company's Board of Directors adopted the Valley Metro Transit Development Plan (TDP). VDRPT requires that any public transit operator receiving state funding prepare, adopt, and submit a TDP at least every six years. VDRPT provides a set of TDP requirements that form the basis of the planning effort. The purpose of a TDP is to help transit operators improve their efficiency and effectiveness by identifying the need and required resources for modifying and enhancing services provided to the general public and also help operators effectively execute planning, funding, and implementation of public transit services. Valley Metro continues to pursue a new bus transfer center in downtown Roanoke to replace the aging Campbell Court facility.

The National Transit Asset Management System Final Rule, 49 U.S.C. 625, requires all transit agencies that receive federal financial assistance under 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53, and own, operate, or manage capital assets used in the provision of public transportation, create a TAM plan. Transit agencies are required to fulfill this requirement through an individual or group plan. FTA defines two tiers of transit agencies based on sizing and operating perimeters. Each tier has different requirements for TAM plans. Valley Metro is a Tier II operator with VDRPT as the Group Plan sponsor.

Sources of Federal funds for transit are programmed on a yearly basis based on the availability of apportioned funds. The TPO noted during the site visit that Federal sources of funds can be limited for transit investments and that transit financial constraint information was included in the 2040 MTP. The TPO coordinates with regional employers on their various transit needs and they work with Valley Metro to understand and meet regional transit needs. VDRPT provides operating and capital funding to public transit providers throughout Virginia. DRPT's transit funding program is referred to as "MERIT" – Making Efficient and Responsible Investments in Transit. Two of VDRPT's MERIT funding programs are for operating and capital and VDRPT began utilizing MERIT in FY20.

#### **4.9.3 Findings**

The RVTPO meets Federal requirements for considering public transportation planning in the MPO planning process.

**Commendation:** The RVTPO is commended for its transit planning work and coordination with Valley Metro on transit needs and planning for the region.

**Corrective Action:** None

**Recommendations:** None

**Schedule for Process Improvement:** None

**Proposed FHWA/FTA Technical Assistance:** None

## **5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The FHWA and FTA review found that the metropolitan transportation planning process conducted in the Roanoke Valley urbanized area meets Federal planning requirements as follows.

### **5.1 Commendations**

The following are noteworthy practices that the RVTPO is doing well in the transportation planning process:

- 1) The RVTPO is commended for reviewing environmental justice considerations and factors following the identification of projects. As a matter of note, this element can be taken a step further and incorporated into project selection decision-making by the technical committee.
- 2) The Federal Team commends RVTPO for their efforts concerning Public Participation among their stakeholders. RVTPO is commended for using non-traditional methods to achieve Public Participation and for demonstrated commitment to following up with their stakeholders' comments & questions concerning the transportation planning process.
- 3) The Federal Team commends RVTPO for their commitment to ensuring that communities of Limited English Proficiency (LEP) can participate in the transportation decision making process. RVTPO has two staff members who are proficient in Spanish and regularly review demographic data in the Roanoke Valley area to determine if modifications to their engagement need to be made.
- 4) The RVTPO, although not meeting the full potential of implementing PBPP in its planning process, was very open and proactively seeking guidance and has a sincere interest in utilizing resources provided by its Federal Partners in promoting PBPP with its localities and stakeholders.
- 5) The RVTPO is commended for its transit planning work and coordination with Valley Metro on transit needs and planning for the region.

### **5.2 Corrective Actions**

There are no corrective actions that the RVTPO must take to comply with Federal Regulations.

## 5.3 Recommendations

The following are recommendations that would improve the transportation planning process:

- 1) The Federal Team recommends that as part of the current MTP update, the MTP incorporate selection criteria and goals that integrate PBPP. The updated MTP should also include a clearer understanding on how projects are prioritized and selected for funding in the region and fiscal constraint is achieved. The MPO should continue its 3C planning process with stakeholders to ensure fiscal constraint is clear in the update MTP. To better support PBPP goals in the MTP, the MPO in coordination with transit providers, should consider looking at holistic transit goals for the region and not fully relying on the state's Transit Asset Management (TAM) goals that are part of VDRPT's Tier II group plan. The TPO planning process should reflect the goals, objectives, performance measures, and targets of VDRPT's Tier II group plan or consider a new Tier II plan specific to the Roanoke region's needs. Within the PBPP process, the process for selecting projects and strategies for programming should tie directly to the goals in the MTP and project/strategies should be directly tied to performance measures.
- 2) The RVTPO should consider forming additional committees that support the Board including financial planning and programming committees that can assist with project selection and prioritization.
- 3) The Federal Team recommends that the TIP should include documentation describing how programmed projects support implementation of transportation performance measures and progress toward established targets. Inclusion of a prioritization process prior to funding of local jurisdiction projects would help to better link projects included in the MTP. The current TIP does not appear to be a management tool for implementing the MTP and it's not clear how the TIP reflects investment choices and priorities from the MTP. The TIP should be updated to reflect amendment and modification procedures and no longer rely on the September 2005 agreement document between VDOT, TPO, and VDRPT. When amendments or modifications are made to the TIP, there should be a process outlined for how fiscal constraint is ensured.
- 4) The Federal Team recommends expanding PBPP to enhance investment decision-making, PBPP allows an opportunity for clear and open discussions about the public's desired outcomes and the strategic direction that an agency should take. The Federal Team recommends that the RVTPO and its stakeholders better utilize PBPP since it provides key information for the decision-making process by heightening the role of data and focusing attention on performance outcomes. Furthermore, the Federal Review Team wishes to offer its training resources and coordination to assist the RVTPO to help its localities and stakeholders better understand the benefits of the utilization of PBPP in order to enhance the planning and policymaking process.
- 5) The Federal Team recommends the RVTPO continue to provide increased stewardship and oversight to ensure that the financial assumptions for projects are reasonable. Along these lines, the RVTPO should consider utilizing resources and its Federal Partners to help educate regional partners and stakeholders to better understand fiscal constraint and project priority process.
- 6) The Federal Team recommends the RVTPO to utilize both State and Federal resources to help their localities and stakeholders better understand where financial projections and costs come from.

## **5.4 Training/Technical Assistance**

The following training and technical assistance is recommended to assist the MPO with improvements to the transportation planning process:

1. Regular and consistent check-ins by Federal Partners with the RVTPO. As well as potential workshops or small trainings provided by FHWA and FTA to the RVTPO and its stakeholders at Committee Meetings with the localities.
2. Regular and consistent check-ins by Federal Partners with the RVTPO. As well as potential workshops or small trainings provided by FHWA and FTA to the RVTPO and its stakeholders at Committee Meetings with the localities.

## **APPENDIX A - PARTICIPANTS**

The following individuals were involved in the Federal Review Team:

Daniel Koenig, FTA  
Richard Duran, FHWA  
Iris Vaughan, FHWA  
Kevin Jones, FHWA  
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Michael Gray, Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)  
Dan Soneklar, Virginia Department of Rail & Public Transit (VDRPT)  
Dorian Allen, Greater Roanoke Transit Company (Valley Metro)  
Wayne Strickland, Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission (RVARC)  
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Bryan Hill, Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission (RVARC)



## APPENDIX B - STATUS OF FINDINGS FROM LAST REVIEW

One of the priorities of each certification review is assessing how well the planning partners in the area have addressed corrective actions and recommendations from the previous certification review. This section identifies the corrective actions and recommendations from the previous certification and summarizes discussions of how they have been addressed.

Finding	Action	Status
MPO Organization Structure	Recommendation	The TPO updated their website to include Policy Board and TTC meeting minutes as part of the posted "agenda" package.
Agreements and Contracts	Recommendation	The MOA was approved in June 2018.
Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)	Recommendation	The next approved UPWP, the TPO indicated who will perform or lead the work and a simple schedule for completing each work item. The most recent UPWP was approved in May 2020. RVTPO included who will perform or lead the work and included a simple schedule for each work item.
Transportation Planning Process	Recommendation	The TPO's Vision 2040 Plan reflects the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act planning factors.
Metropolitan Transportation Plan Development/Consultation & Coordination	Recommendation	The Metropolitan Transportation Plan (Vision 2040) was approved in September 2017 and includes a full list of projects through 2040 with financial constraints provided by VDOT. References to the TPO's approved performance measures are included in the vision 2040 plan.
Financial Planning	Recommendation	Sources of revenue are outlined in the Vision 2040 plan and projects that are or will be pursued to implement the plan are documented.
Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) Development & Project Selection	Recommendation	The Vision 2040 plan updated and approved in 2017 includes a full list of projects through 2040 with financial constraints provided by VDOT.
Public Outreach and Public Involvement	Recommendation	The TPO updated their Public Participation Plan and the document was approved in February 2018

Self-Certifications	Recommendation	The TPO self-certifies its planning & programming process when it approves a new 4-year TIP. That will take place again at the June 25, 2020 TPO meeting.
Laws and Regulations Pertaining to Title VI and Non-Discrimination	Recommendation	The Title VI Implementation Plan was updated in 2019. It covers everything in the FHWA Title VI Plan development checklist, Appendix E and includes VDOT's DBE language.
Congestion Management Process	Recommendation	The CMP underwent a full staff review in Fall 2018 which identified several areas for improvement in the next update. A workshop with stakeholders was held in Fall 2019 and a CMP update has been underway since. It is expected to be completed by Fall 2020.
Travel Forecasting Methods	Recommendations	VDOT is updating the Roanoke model. RVTPO staff have been using Probe Data Analytics Suite, available through VDOT's membership in the I-95 corridor coalition, which provides tools to analyze INRIX data. This has been incorporated in the Congestion Management Process update which is underway and anticipated to be included in the next update of the Long-Range Plan.
Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)	Recommendation	ITS architecture has not been a regular topic of discussion between the TPO and VDOT but coordination is improving.

## **APPENDIX C - LIST OF ACRONYMS**

**ADA:** Americans with Disabilities Act  
**CFR:** Code of Federal Regulations  
**CMAQ:** Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality  
**CMP:** Congestion Management Process  
**DOT:** Department of Transportation  
**EJ:** Environmental Justice  
**FAST (Act):** Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act  
**FHWA:** Federal Highway Administration  
**FTA:** Federal Transit Administration  
**FY:** Fiscal Year  
**HSIP:** Highway Safety Improvement Program  
**ISTEA:** Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act  
**ITS:** Intelligent Transportation Systems  
**LEP:** Limited-English-Proficiency  
**LRTP:** Long Range Transportation Plan  
**M&O:** Management and Operations  
**MPA:** Metropolitan Planning Area  
**MPO:** Metropolitan Planning Organization  
**MTP:** Metropolitan Transportation Plan  
**PBPP:** Performance Based Planning and Programming  
**RVARC:** Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission  
**RVTPO:** Roanoke Valley Transportation Planning Organization  
**SAFETEA-LU:** Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users  
**STIP:** State Transportation Improvement Program  
**TBP:** Transportation Planning Board  
**TDM:** Travel Demand Management  
**TIP:** Transportation Improvement Program  
**TMA:** Transportation Management Area  
**TPM:** Transportation Performance Management  
**TPO:** Transportation Planning Organization  
**U.S.C.:** United States Code  
**UPWP:** Unified Planning Work Program  
**USDOT:** United States Department of Transportation  
**VDOT:** Virginia Department of Transportation  
**VDRPT:** Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transit



**Report prepared by:**  
**FHWA Virginia Division Office and**  
**FTA Region 3**