



MINUTES

The March meeting of the Transportation Technical Committee was held virtually on Thursday, March 11, 2021 at 1:30 p.m. via Zoom.

VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT

Marief Fowler	County of Bedford
Dan Brugh	County of Montgomery
Megan Cronise	County of Roanoke
Will Crawford	County of Roanoke
Chris Chittum	City of Roanoke
Mark Jamison, <i>Vice Chair</i>	City of Roanoke
Ben Tripp, <i>Chair</i>	City of Salem
Anita McMillan	Town of Vinton
Nathan McClung	Town of Vinton
Dorian Allen	Greater Roanoke Transit Company (Valley Metro)
Liz Belcher	Roanoke Valley Greenway Commission
Daniel Sonenklar	Virginia Dept. of Rail and Public Transportation
Michael Gray	Virginia Dept. of Transportation - Salem District

Note: Will Crawford and Daniel Sonenklar joined after the roll call.

VOTING MEMBERS ABSENT

Peter Volosin	County of Botetourt
Cody Sexton	County of Botetourt
Nathan Sanford	Unified Human Serv. Transp. System (RADAR)

NON-VOTING MEMBERS ABSENT

Kevin Jones	Federal Highway Administration
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Others Present Remotely: Isaac Henry, Roanoke County; Wayne Leftwich, City of Roanoke; Carol Moneymaker, Virginia Department of Transportation-Salem District; Lindsay Webb, Roanoke County; David Henderson, Roanoke County; Samuel Hayes, Moffatt & Nickol; Rich Denbow, Cambridge Systematics; David Jackson, Cambridge Systematics.

RVARC Staff Present: Cristina Finch, Bryan Hill, Rachel Ruhlen, Eddie Wells and Virginia Mullen.

1. WELCOME, CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL

Chair Tripp called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. A quorum was present.

Chair Tripp read the following opening statement..." Pursuant to the City of Roanoke Emergency Ordinance adopted by the RVTPO Policy Board on April 23, 2020 and 2021 Virginia General Assembly legislation SB1271 passed February 27, 2020, the March meeting of the Transportation Technical Committee (TTC) will be held virtually on Thursday, March 11,

2021 at 1:30 p.m. via Zoom. Under the current State of Emergency, and until further notice, it has been deemed unsafe to assemble a quorum of a public body in one place. Any members of the public may view and participate in the meeting through electronic means. Meeting details are listed on the second page of the agenda. All materials made available to the Members will be made available to the public at the same time by posting on the RVARC website.”

2. **APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS**

The following consent agenda items were distributed earlier:

- (A) March 11, 2021 Transportation Technical Committee Meeting Agenda.
- (B) February 11, 2021 Transportation Technical Committee Minutes.
- (C) Recommendation on 2021 Asset Condition Performance Measure: Percentage of Deck Area of Bridges in Good Condition.

Motion: by Liz Belcher to approve items A, B & C under the Consent Agenda, as distributed; seconded by Dorian Allen.

TTC Action: Roll Call Vote: Ayes – 11 (Fowler, Brugh, Cronise, Chittum, Jamison, Tripp, McMillan, McClung, Allen, Belcher, Gray); Nays – 0; Abstentions – 0. Motion carried unanimously.

3. **CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS**

Chair Tripp noted the agenda is busy and will move through it as quickly as possible.

4. **CONTINUED DEVELOPMENT OF THE ROANOKE VALLEY TRANSPORTATION PLAN**

A. Regional Study on Transportation Project Prioritization for Economic Development and Growth

Eddie Wells noted that a staff report on the update of the Regional Study on Transportation Project Prioritization for Economic Development and Growth, was distributed with the agenda (pages 10 through 15). The report outlines the tasks that have been accomplished thus far (various meetings with the steering committee; online business survey; reviewing the identified needs list; identifying and categorizing the needs based on the input received from stakeholders and economic development staff). The staff report also includes a full list of needs and next steps options. Members discussed the options and desired an updated list of 10 projects to support economic development and growth by the summer to prepare project applications for the upcoming rounds of STBG and SMART SCALE funding.

TTC members will be asked to provide their transportation expertise on solutions for how to address the priority needs identified by the economic development stakeholders and ultimately identify specific projects to pursue. Chairman Tripp asked staff to coordinate with the TPO on the list of projects they want to pursue. Chairman Tripp also asked staff to provide at a future meeting a list of projects in the 2018 TED study and their progress.

B. Consolidated Needs Assessment

Ms. Cristina Finch presented the Roanoke Valley's transportation needs noting this was the first time a comprehensive needs assessment has been conducted as part of the RVTPO's transportation planning process. Because there was still some confusion regarding what

constitutes a need, Ms. Finch clarified how the term need was being used in the assessment describing the relationship between needs, solutions, and projects. She used a simple example of someone saying they “need” cake, but that cake is actually a solution to address a need (e.g. - a need to celebrate a birthday, to address hunger, to address a headache, etc.). Depending on the need to be addressed, other solutions may also be possible; likewise various types of cakes (i.e. specific projects) may be pursued depending on the need. Ms. Belcher remarked it sounded like a need was a problem, to which Ms. Finch agreed.

Ms. Finch noted feedback from members had been incorporated as a result of individual meetings held since December. The needs identified by local economic development stakeholders as solicited via the Regional Study on Transportation Project Prioritization for Economic Development and Growth were also incorporated. Ms. Finch asked the TTC to endorse the Needs Assessment so that work could continue on the next elements of the plan.

Megan Cronise complimented staff on the map and all the information provided on the needs assessment in the staff report. Ms. Cronise noted that incredible data was provided but would need more time to go through it and asked that the item is tabled for the next TTC meeting. Anita McMillan requested additional time as well. Cristina Finch commented that this would be ok and noted that the needs will also be shared with the Policy Board at their March meeting. Mr. Gray asked for clarification on the consolidated list and will discuss further with staff. Ms. Finch noted members should contact staff if they would like to discuss further the clarification on the consolidated needs.

C. Future Factors and Next Steps

Mr. David Jackson with Cambridge Systematics presented a PowerPoint presentation on the future factors and next steps in the continued development of the Roanoke Valley Transportation Plan. (The PowerPoint presentation is included with the Minutes.)

5. RECOMMENDATION ON PROPOSED ADJUSTMENT TO CURRENT SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BLOCK GRANT (STBG) PROJECTS

Ms. Finch presented the latest information on the STBG financial plan's development including lower financial forecasts, the results of STBG projects in the draft SMART SCALE round 4 funding scenario, the latest additional funding requests from current project sponsors. Upon request from Mr. Chittum, Ms. Finch went through each proposed change. Project sponsors present added justification for their additional funding requests. Mr. Chittum expressed concern over the rising costs on several projects. Mr. Jamison left the meeting at 3pm but before leaving, he noted other future projects of regional interest (such as improvements to Route 460) would have a harder time moving forward if the available STBG funds are spent to cover existing project cost overruns.

Ms. Anita McMillan noted that the amounts listed for Gas Nicks Boulevard Project under TTC action, #9 on page 62 of the agenda should be corrected. After the change it should read as follows:

9. Increase Gus Nicks Boulevard Pedestrian/Bicycle Crossing funding by \$234,262 for a total of \$403,912.

Mr. Mark Jamison asked about the deficit in FY22 and FY23 with the reduction in funding. Ms. Finch replied that it is a financial plan in progress and noted that all the project's funding requests do not fit in the seven-year period; there is not enough money in the forecast. Chair

Tripp asked staff to indicate with a different color the conditionally funded projects' amounts in the excel funding spreadsheet.

Motion: by Liz Belcher to recommend to the RVTPO Policy Board the following total allocation increases and changes to the financial plan (#1 through #12), and the deficit can be taken out of 6b. Motion was seconded by Megan Cronise.

1. Increase Roanoke River Greenway - Greenhill Park (Roanoke County) to Riverside Park (Salem) by 3,083,069 for a total of \$7,673,829.
2. Pending confirmation by VDOT financial analysis - Accept return of \$750,000 from Roanoke River Greenway – City of Salem line to Bridge Street.
3. Accept return of \$2,752,469 from Roanoke River Greenway – Water Pollution Control Plant to the Blue Ridge Parkway.
4. Remove one completed project from the financial plan: Exit 140 Park and Ride Reconstruction.
5. Increase Walnut Avenue Bicycle and Pedestrian Accommodations (W. Lee Avenue to 1st Street) funding by \$260,330 for a total of \$805,580.
6. Route 220 Superstreet and Access Management project
 - b. Reallocate conditionally committed funding of \$2,076,000 to FY28 (and subtract from this amount the funds needed to balance the budget).
7. Increase Orange Market Park and Ride/Parking Lot Improvements funding by \$892,526 to \$1,236,099.
8. Recommendation from VDOT – Roanoke River Greenway – East project should be listed as study-only. Total cost of construction unknown.
 - a. Consider Committing \$750,000 to RRG-East in FY28.
9. Increase Gus Nicks Boulevard Pedestrian/Bicycle Crossing funding by \$234,262 for a total of \$403,912.
10. Increase Oak Grove Streetscape Improvements – Crosswalk funding by \$82,000 for a total of \$218,748.
11. For projects that were successful in the draft SMART SCALE Round 4 funding scenario, add the conditionally committed funding to the committed funding.

Project	Previous STBG Conditionally Committed	Previous STBG Committed Funding	NEW STBG Committed Funding
Route 419 Streetscape Improvements, Phase 2	\$2,841,712	\$1,505,438	\$4,347,150

Aviation Drive/Valley View Blvd. Pedestrian Improvements	\$936,500	\$313,500	\$1,250,000
Valleypointe Parkway Realignment	\$1,707,707	\$792,293	\$2,500,000
Route 460 (Orange Ave) Improvements near Blue Hills Drive	\$676,720	\$0	\$676,720
Route 460 (Orange Ave) Improvements at King Street	\$550,280	\$0	\$550,280
Route 460 at West Ruritan Road Intersection Improvements	\$785,549	\$0	\$785,549
Route 460 Intersections from Carson Road to Huntridge Road	\$427,803	\$0	\$427,803

12. Remove \$2,544,860 of conditionally committed funding from Route 460 and Alternate 220 Intersection Improvements.

TTC Action: Roll Call Vote: Ayes – 12 (Fowler, Brugh, Cronise, Crawford, Chittum, Leftwich, Tripp, McMillan, McClung, Allen, Belcher, Gray); Nays – 0; Abstentions – 0. Motion carried unanimously.

6. OTHER BUSINESS

A. Draft Review FY2022 Unified Planning Work Program

Ms. Finch shared the draft FY22 Work Program in the agenda packet and noted that budget information would be added for the final draft to be presented in April. A recommendation from the TTC for Policy Board would be sought at the April meeting.

7. **COMMENTS BY MEMBERS AND / OR CITIZENS**


No comments were made.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:22 p.m.



Cristina D. Finch
Cristina D. Finch, AICP, LEED AP, Secretary,
Transportation Technical Committee



**Roanoke Valley Transportation
PLANNING ORGANIZATION**
MEMBER OF THE REGIONAL COMMISSION


March 11, 2021

Roanoke Valley Transportation Plan Update

Factors to Consider as We Work Toward Accomplishing the Region's Vision

presented to
Transportation Technical Committee

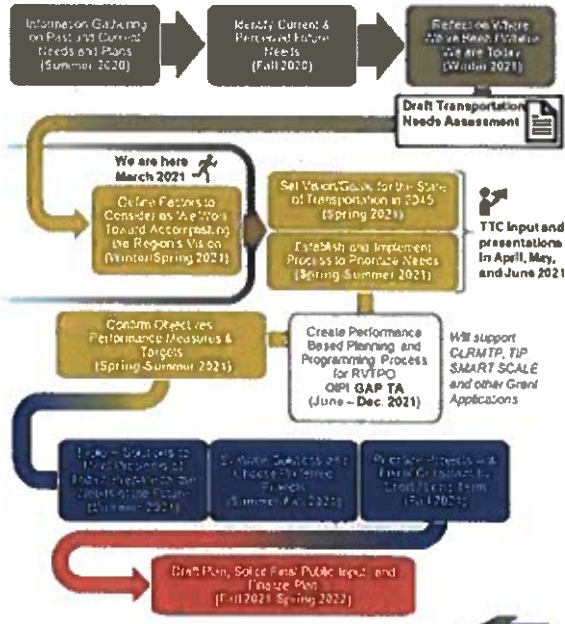
presented by
Cambridge Systematics, Inc.



CAMBRIDGE SYSTEMATICS


1

Purpose:
Compile research on current and future trends, overlaid with recent regional plans to assemble topics to consider as we develop the Plan goals and objectives, prioritize current needs and future factors, and develop solutions.



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            graph TD
            A[Information Gathering on Past and Current Needs and Plans (Summer 2020)] --> B[Identify Current & Perceived Future Needs (Fall 2020)]
            B --> C[Reflect on Where We've Been, Where We are Today (Winter 2021)]
            C --> D[Draft Transportation Needs Assessment]
            D --> E[Set Vision/Goals for the State of Transportation in 2045 (Spring 2021)]
            E --> F[Establish and Implement Processes to Prioritize Needs (Spring-Summer 2021)]
            F --> G[Confirm Objectives Performance Measures & Targets (Spring-Summer 2021)]
            G --> H[Create Performance Based Planning and Programming Process for RVTPO OPI GAPA (June-Dec. 2021)]
            H --> I[Develop Solutions to Meet Priorities of Transportation Users (Winter 2021)]
            I --> J[Develop Solutions and a Policy/Program Plan (Summer-Fall 2021)]
            J --> K[Present Options with Public Input to Draft Plan (Spring 2022)]
            K --> L[Draft Plan, Solicit Final Public Input, and Finalize Plan (Fall 2021-Spring 2022)]
            L --> I
            
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CAMBRIDGE SYSTEMATICS

2


Future Factors

Research on future factors


- Reviewed federal, state and regional research reports, plans and documents
- Categorized emerging trends and futures into five themes:




Technology




Society



Economy




Sustainability



Funding & Finance


How will future factors influence the Roanoke Valley?

- Increase awareness and understanding of trends, opportunities, and challenges
- Help inform the goals and objectives
- Stimulate conversation about prioritizing needs
- Provide information to shape priorities and solutions

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3

Emerging Trends and Futures



Technology

Connected & Automated Vehicles: Safety and efficiency improvements from increased levels of automation and connectivity in the vehicle fleet through 2050. There is a potential for advanced long-distance freight automation by 2050, which will lower trucking and shipping costs and increase the need for larger distribution centers.


Drone / AV deliveries: Delivery of goods via drones or other AVs is anticipated.

Broadband: Broadband availability will expand, providing better access to online services in rural areas.


On-Demand Transit: Increased use of microtransit and on-demand transit in areas where sufficient demand for scheduled transit service does not exist.

Mobility as a Service: Multiple public or private Mobility as a Service (MaaS) providers with a suite of integrated transportation services that may shift some users from owning personal vehicles.


Driverless vehicle technologies are likely to transform personal and freight travel




Growth in travel options has begun to reshape travel from a focus on individual modes to mobility-as-a-service




Unmanned aerial vehicles are a promising tool for system management, package delivery, and even people movement




Alternative fuel vehicles and ownership models, and modes of transportation are emerging, fueled by private sector innovation



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Emerging Trends and Futures




Society


Demographic Transition: Expanded transportation services for older adults, persons with disabilities, and others with limited access to private vehicles will be necessary as these populations grow.

Equity: The transportation system will need to increase consideration of barriers to unbanked and/or low-income individuals and access to new transportation services, as well as the need to equitably serve a society that is more diverse in terms of racial and ethnic backgrounds.

Increased reliance on remote services: For the foreseeable future, there will be a continued increase/ high use of remote services (e.g., telehealth) and remote work.


Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic: The impact of COVID-19 on long-term attitudes on the use of ridehailing, ridesharing, and using public transportation remain unknown.





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Emerging Trends and Futures



Economy


Labor Force: Slower population growth and lower labor force participation will constrain the supply of labor. Slow population growth is anticipated in the RVARC region. Contract workers, who do not receive employer benefits, are expected to be a greater proportion of the workforce. Income inequality will remain a key concern.

Job Types and Skills: There will be a continued decline in the labor market outlook for unskilled workers, particularly as automation continues to advance.


"Green" Economy: There is the potential for spending related to the transition to a "green economy" to provide a basis for economic growth in the coming decades, should these investments be made.

Fewer "Bricks and Mortar" Retailers: The continued shift to deliveries vs. in-store shopping will result in fewer physical store fronts.

Tourism Based: Opportunities will continue to grow in the region for eco-tourism, recreation, and entertainment.




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Emerging Trends and Futures




Sustainability

Electrification: Rapid electrification of the transportation system is expected to take place through the 2030s.

Climate Change: There will be a focus on mitigating the impact of climate change to the transportation system and reducing the climate impacts of our transportation system.

Natural Resources: Increased focus on protecting watersheds and sensitive ecosystems balanced with smart development principles to help manage municipal systems (water, sewer, utilities).

Alternative Energy: More opportunities for low-impact/low-cost energy sources, like solar and wind.



Funding & Finance

Revenue Sources: Potential changes to revenue sources (e.g., shift from gas tax to road usage charges or decrease in transit fare box recovery) have unknown impacts on end user travel costs and travel behavior. Existing revenue sources increasingly will need to be supplemented by new sources due to impacts of electrification.

Pricing: Increase in pricing, and introduction of new models of pricing, of curb space and parking in urban areas.


Costs: Labor and material costs will continue to rise, in many cases faster than inflation or revenue, leading to further constraints especially on capital spending.

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What Does This Mean?

- As future factors evolve, future needs may change
- Solutions should reflect these trends by being:
 - **Robust** – Solutions that can effectively work regardless of what future evolves
 - **Resilient** – Solutions that should help the transportation system recover as change/disruption occurs



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8

Next Steps

- **TTC to complete brief survey**
Will ask you to rate the most critical of the five themes, the most critical factor within each of the five themes, and the most critical factor overall
- **Compile results and finalize prior to April TTC**
- **Use results to inform Draft Roanoke Valley transportation goals**
Future factors incorporated within goal definition and objectives
- **Consider results within needs prioritization**
Future factors could be a qualitative aspect of prioritizing current and anticipated future needs