

HRMPO TAC Minutes February 1, 2024, 2:00 p.m.

Rockingham County Administration Center
20 East Gay Street
Harrisonburg, Virginia 22802

Voting Member	Alternates	Staff
City of Harrisonburg	Megan Byler, Bridgewater	Ann Cundy
✓ Tom Hartman	Libby Clark, Mt. Crawford	✓ Ansley Heller
✓ Bill Blessing, Chair	✓ Jakob zumFelde, Harrisonburg	✓ Rita Whitfield
✓ Thanh Dang	Elliot Menge, Harrisonburg	
✓ Erin Yancey	Dan Rublee, Harrisonburg	Others
✓ Cheryl Spain	Gerald Gatobu, Harrisonburg	✓ Kim Sandum, Shenandoah Alliance
Rockingham County	Kayla Yankey, Rockingham	✓ Shane McCabe, VDOT
✓ Rhonda Cooper, Vice Chair	Rachel Salatin, Rockingham	✓ Avery Daugherty, DRPT
Casey Armstrong	✓ Brad Reed, VDOT	
✓ Dylan Nicely	✓ Jeremy Mason, VDOT	
Town of Bridgewater	✓ Jeff Lineberry, VDOT	
✓ Alex Wilmer	Tiffany Dubinsky, DRPT	
Town of Dayton		
Meggie Roche		
Town of Mt. Crawford	Non-Voting Members	
✓ Bobby Taylor	Kevin Jones, FHWA	
VDOT	Chelsea Beytas, FTA	
✓ Adam Campbell	Bill Yates, JMU	
✓ Don Komara	Rusty Harrington, Aviation	
DRPT	✓ Valerie Kramer	
✓ Grace Stankus		

Call to Order

The February 1, 2024, meeting of the Harrisonburg-Rockingham Metropolitan Planning Organization (HRMPO) Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) was called to order at 2:00 p.m. by Chairperson Bill Blessing. Based on the 2022 amendment to Virginia’s FOIA law, the HRMPO is eligible to hold up to three meetings virtually each year. The HRMPO February 1, 2024, meeting was conducted via video conferencing using Zoom.

Minutes

Chairperson Blessing presented the minutes from the January 4, 2024, TAC meeting. Mr. Komara moved, seconded by Ms. Cooper, to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Public Comment

Chairperson Blessing opened the floor for public comment. Ms. Kim Sandum, Alliance for the Shenandoah Valley, ask about the Dinkel Avenue/Friedens Church Road Corridor Small Area Study Survey. Ms. Heller responded the HRMPO is seeking community input on the future of the Dinkel Avenue/Freidens Church Road Corridor. She noted that the survey can be found on the hrvampo.org website and is available until February 24th.

Presentation: I-64 Virginia Breeze Feasibility Study

Chairperson Blessing presented I-64 Virginia Breeze Feasibility Study. Ms. Heller introduced and welcomed Mr. Avery Daugherty, Statewide Programs Manager, Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT), who gave a presentation on Virginia Breeze I-64 East-West Connection Needs Assessment. Mr. Daugherty gave an overview on the Virginia Breeze Study and Needs Assessment, and the intercity needs and issues. He stated that Virginia Breeze was launched in 2017 to connect underserved rural communities to national bus network and other transportation modes and reviewed the existing Virginia Breeze service area. Mr. Daugherty noted that DRPT is currently studying the creation of an east-west Virginia Breeze route that would connect the Staunton/Harrisonburg area and Virginia Beach area along the Interstate 64 corridor. Mr. Daugherty noted that the study is focused on determining if there are unmet intercity bus needs in the areas of Virginia between Virginia Beach and Harrisonburg/Staunton. He stated that DRPT has implemented rural intercity bus service under the Virginia Breeze brand (see <https://virginiabreeze.org/> for more information) and is interested in knowing if there are additional needs for additional connections to offer east-west bus service across the Commonwealth. Mr. Daugherty reviewed the project timeline, noting that the draft and final reports would be available in February 2024.

HRMPO FY 2025 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Development (TAC Memo #24-3)

Chairperson Blessing presented the HRMPO FY 2025 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Development. Ms. Heller gave a brief review on the FY 2025 UPWP, noting that the HRMPO is beginning the process of developing the FY 2025 UPWP, which provides the annual scope of work and budget for the MPO. She stated that the UPWP identifies all activities to be undertaken by the HRMPO



within the Metropolitan Planning Area for the fiscal year and is required by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) as a basis and condition for all Federal funding assistance for transportation planning. Ms. Heller noted that once the UPWP is approved, it will be submitted to the Virginia Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation, and Federal Transit Administration for review and approval. She requested if anyone had any ideas regarding any small area studies or planning topics that the HRMPO should focus on in FY 2025, to let the HRMPO staff know.

Agency Updates

Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)

Mr. Campbell gave an update on SMART SCALE preapplications, noting they are open on March 1, 2024, and will close on April 1, 2024. He noted that there is a SMART SCALE Round 6 preapplication training session webinar scheduled on February 28, 2024. Mr. Campbell noted that during this training session, one can gain a comprehensive understanding of the Round 6 changes, updates to the SMART Portal, and essential project readiness requirements.

Mr. Komara reported on the following:

- Reported that the Route 33 west project in the City of Harrisonburg is progressing;
- Reported on the Route 33 west project through Rawley Springs, noting it was moving along, with a summer of 2025 completion date;
- Reported that the Route 11 four-lane project south of the City of Harrisonburg near the Rockingham County Fairgrounds is scheduled to be advertised this spring;
- Reported on the groundbreaking ceremony for the future Buc-ee's location in Rockingham County; and
- Reported on projects in the Stanton-Augusta County and Lexington-Rockbridge County areas and encouraged everyone to check out www.improve81-org for updated information on upcoming and ongoing projects.

Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT)



Ms. Grace Stankus announced that DRPT launched the DRPT Connects Business Marketing Campaign, set to run until the end of February. She stated that the goal of the campaign is to help Virginia-based businesses discover the benefits of providing a variety of community options for their employees and learn more about the services that DRPT's commuter assistance programs can provide.

City of Harrisonburg Department of Public Transportation (HDPT)

Ms. Cheryl Spain announced that DRPT submitted their FY25 grant applications for operating, capital, and a demonstration project for microtransit. She reported on the FTA triennial review session she had attending regarding the upcoming triennial review for 2025; and reported on the rebranding kickoff meeting with Pulsar Advertising that was held on January 26, 2024.

Localities

City of Harrisonburg

Mr. Hartman announced a public meeting for the South Main Street Safety Improvement Project will be held on February 22, 2024, at the Sentara RMH Wellness Center, Harrisonburg.

Upcoming Meetings

Chairperson Blessing announced that the HRMPO Policy Board will hold a meeting on February 15, 2024, at 3:00 p.m.; and the next HRMPO TAC meeting will be held on March 7, 2024, at 2:00 p.m.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Committee, a motion for adjournment was unanimously passed at 2:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ann W. Cundy".

Ann Cundy
Director of Transportation