

HRMPO TAC Minutes March 7, 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 Fisher	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	
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 March 7, 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. Pursuant to §2.2-3708.2 of the Code of Virginia, HRMPO TAC members may participate in meetings of the HRMPO or its committees through electronic communication means. Those who attended virtually are indicated by an asterisk; all others attended in-person.

Minutes

Chairperson Blessing presented the minutes from the February 1, 2024, TAC meeting. Ms. Cooper moved, seconded by Ms. Spain, to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Public Comment

Chairperson Blessing opened the floor for public comment. There were no comments from the public.

SMART SCALE Round 6 Pre-Applications (TAC Action Form #24-1)

Chairperson Blessing presented for consideration SMART SCALE Round 6 Pre-Applications. Ms. Ann Cundy gave a review on the SMART SCALE Round 6 Pre-Applications, noting that HRMPO staff is working with the City of Harrisonburg to submit two SMART SCALE Round 6 pre-applications by the April 1, 2024, deadline as follows:

- South Main Street Pipeline Project - Construct a median between Southgate Court and Baxter Drive. Construct sidewalks to fill in gaps between Mosby Road and Pleasant Valley Road.
- I-81 Exit 245 Pipeline Project – Construct southbound and westbound right turn lanes at the Port Republic Road and Forest Hill Road intersection. If this cannot be achieved through maintenance-level efforts, there is a possibility of widening the I-81 southbound off-ramp to two lanes.

Ms. Cundy noted that the SMART SCALE pre-application period is open from March 1 to April 1, 2024, and the full application cycle is from June 1 to August 3, 2024. She reported on the next steps, noting that HRMPO staff will provide a summary of the pre-applications to the Policy Board at their March meeting. Pending Board approval, staff will submit the pre-applications in coordination with VDOT Staunton District Planning and the City. Ms. Cooper moved, seconded by Ms. Spain, to recommend the HRMPO Policy Board approve the submission of up to two HRMPO SMART SCALE Round 6 pre-applications on behalf of the City of Harrisonburg. Motion was carried by unanimous vote.

HRMPO FY 2025 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Discussion and FY 2025 Small Area Study Proposal (TAC Memo #24-4)

Chairperson Blessing presented for discussion the HRMPO FY 2025 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and FY 2025 Small Area Study Proposal. Ms. Cundy stated that the HRMPO is developing the FY 2025 UPWP, which is the annual work program and budget for the HRMPO. She noted that the UPWP details the administrative and planning activities to be undertaken during the fiscal year, and the federal, state and local funds used for these activities. Ms. Cundy reviewed the comparison of the FY 2024 UPWP with the Draft FY 2025 UPWP. She reviewed the next steps, noting that once the

UPWP is developed, it will be presented to the TAC and Policy Board for release for public comment and approval.

Ms. Cundy presented the FY 2025 Small Area Study Proposal. She noted that HRMPO staff works collaboratively with member jurisdictions to identify needed transportation studies in the region, and to equitably allocate study funding across the region. Ms. Cundy noted that following a FY 2024 study in the vicinity of Mt. Crawford and Bridgewater in Rockingham County, the City of Harrisonburg proposes a Small Area Study in FY 2025 at the intersection of Port Republic Road and Peach Grove/Neff Avenue. Ms. Yancey gave a review on the study, noting that the goal of the study would be to create a holistic plan for accommodating traffic in the area under short- and long-term build-out scenarios. She noted that the study would include operational and safety analyses for multiple intersections, and development of alternative concepts for managing the expected growth, and reviewed the Study benefits. It was the consensus of the members present to document the HRMPO's intent to fund a Small Area Study in the City of Harrisonburg in the FY 2025 UPWP, and request that City staff share the proposal with the Policy Board as well.

HRMPO and VDOT Transportation Study Updates (TAC Memo #24-5)

Chairperson Blessing presented the HRMPO and VDOT Transportation Study Updates. Ms. Ansley Heller gave a report on the Updates, noting that HRMPO, VDOT and Rockingham County are currently developing two transportation studies in the HRMPO planning area. She reported on the Dinkel Avenue/Friedens Church Road Corridor Study, noting that the Study Team developed an online survey to understand how travelers use the corridor today, and their concerns about its current and future needs. Ms. Heller gave a review on the MetroQuest survey, noting that 924 responses were received. She reported on the next steps, noting that HRMPO staff will present the analysis and draft typical sections as part of a Rockingham County Comprehensive Plan Open House meeting in April.

Mr. Brad Reed gave a review on the VDOT Route 704 to 257 Connector Analysis, noting that the purpose of the Connector Analysis is to look at the travel demand effects associated with constructing a new connector roadway between Route 704/Cecil Wampler Road and Route 257/Frieden's Church Road. He stated that the new connection seeks to improve connectivity to and from I-81 for ~~the County of Rockingham~~Rockingham County and the City of Harrisonburg's industrial growth area. Mr. Reed reviewed the 2023 travel time estimates, vehicle and truck travel patterns, future land use, and the users for the new connection.

Agency Updates

Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)

Mr. Adam Campbell gave an update on SMART SCALE Round 6 pre-applications, noting that the window to submit the preapplications is currently open and the deadline is April 1, 2024. He reported on the SMART SCALE training session that was held by the Office of Intermodal Planning and Investment (OIPI) on February 28, 2024, noting that the video for the training and other resources are currently available on their website. He noted that if any jurisdictions needed assistance regarding their applications, to please contact VDOT.

Mr. Komara reported on the following:

- Reported that the Route 33 bridge project is progressing, with a completion date of 2025;
- Reported on the status of the widening of Route 33 west towards West Virginia, noting that the project is scheduled for completion in June 2025;
- Reported on the purchasing of rights-of-way for Route 11 four-lane project, with advertisement for construction to begin in the summer of 2024;
- Reported on the Barterbrook Road Route 635 bridge replacement project; and
- Gave a status update on the Interstate 81 Weyers Cave truck climbing lanes project.

Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT)

Ms. Grace Stankus announced that the Federal Railroad Administration Draft AMTRAK Daily Long Distance Service Study is open for public comment until Friday. The Study will evaluate the restoration of daily intercity passenger rail service and the potential for new Amtrak long-distance routes. Ms. Stankus stated that the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) announced two open grant opportunities: the Low or No Emission Grant (Low-No) Program, and Grants for Buses and Bus Facilities Competitive Program, both due April 25, 2024.

City of Harrisonburg Department of Public Transportation (HDPT)

Ms. Cheryl Spain gave an update on the transit rebranding, noting that HDPT was in the name selection phase. She announced that HDPT received two electric school buses in February and staff is currently receiving training on the new buses before they are assigned to a school route and put into services.

Localities

City of Harrisonburg

Mr. Tom Hartman reported on the following:

- Reported on the Federal Street Shared Use Path project in downtown Harrisonburg, noting that construction will begin in mid-April;
- Reported on the public hearing for the South Main Street Safety Improvement Project that was held on February 22, 2024. He noted that the survey for the Project will remain open till March 25th;
- Reported that the City of Harrisonburg is currently working on an ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) Transition Plan for the public right-of-way to document current accessibility deficiencies, and establish policies and procedures to make transportation facilities in Harrisonburg accessible to all, regardless of ability. Mr. Hartman announced that the Harrisonburg Public Works Department will hold an open house on the ADA Transition Plan on March 14, 2024, in order for citizens to learn about current efforts, ask questions, and provide feedback on ADA accessibility in Harrisonburg. He noted that a questionnaire will be available at the open house to collect public thoughts/questions and will be available digitally until March 28.
- Mr. Jakob zumFelde reported on the Northend Greenway Brookside Phase project. He announced that the City of Harrisonburg Public Works Department will hold an open house public hearing on the project on March 19th at Harrisonburg City Hall.

Rockingham County

Mr. Dylan Nicely stated that Rockingham County has announced it will be working with VDOT and local law enforcement to mitigate the negative impacts of commercial truck traffic in residential ~~the~~ areas just north of Harrisonburg. He noted that the main concern is the volume of truck traffic from large industrial trucks in residential areas along the two roads, and the problems for residents that come with it.

Other Business

Under Other Business, Ms. Heller announced she has resigned her position as Transportation Planner with the Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission (CSPDC) effective March 15th, and this would be her last HRMPO meeting. She expressed her appreciation and gratitude to the HRMPO while providing staff services.



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Upcoming Meetings

Chairperson Blessing announced that the HRMPO Policy Board will hold a meeting on March 21, 2024, at 3:00 p.m.; and the next HRMPO TAC meeting will be held on April 4, 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 3:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ann W. Cundy".

Ann Cundy
Director of Transportation