

## Harrisonburg-Rockingham Metropolitan Planning Organization Policy Board Minutes September 19, 2024, 3:00 p.m.

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

	Voting Member		Alternates		Staff
	<b>City of Harrisonburg</b>	✓	Dylan Nicely, Rockingham		Ann Cundy
✓	Laura Dent, Chair		Rachel Salatin, Rockingham	✓	Paula Melester
	Dany Fleming		Cheryl Spain, Harrisonburg	✓	Garreth Bartholomew*
✓	Gerald Gatobu		Meggie Roche, Dayton	✓	Zach Beard
	Deanna Reed	✓	Alex Wilmer, Bridgewater		
	Ande Banks		Robert Taylor, Mt. Crawford		<b>Others</b>
	<b>Rockingham County</b>		Libby Clark, Mt. Crawford		Kim Sandum, Shen. Alliance
✓	Leila Longcor		Jeff Lineberry, VDOT	✓	Jeremy Mason, VDOT
✓	Stephen King	✓	Adam Campbell, VDOT	✓	Shane McCabe, VDOT*
✓	Casey Armstrong	✓	Don Komara, VDOT	✓	Tom Hartman, Harrisonburg
	<b>Town of Bridgewater</b>		Matt Dana, VDOT		
	Jay Litten		<b>Non-Voting Members</b>		
	<b>Town of Dayton</b>		Kevin Jones, FHWA		
✓	Brian Borne		Chelsea Beytas, FTA		
	<b>Town of Mt. Crawford</b>		Rusty Harrington, Aviation		
✓	Neal Dillard, Vice Chair	✓	Grace Stankus, DRPT*		
	<b>VDOT</b>		Bill Yates, JMU		
	Todd Stevens	✓	Valerie Kramer, JMU		

\*Indicates virtual attendance

### Call to Order

The September 19, 2024 Harrisonburg-Rockingham Metropolitan Planning Organization (HRMPO) Policy Board meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m. by Chairperson Laura Dent. Pursuant to §2.2-3708.2 of the Code of Virginia, HRMPO Board members and attendees may participate in HRMPO meetings through electronic communication. Those who attended virtually are indicated by an asterisk; all others attended in-person.

### Minutes

Chairperson Dent presented the minutes from the August 15, 2024 Policy Board meeting.

*Mr. Neal Dillard moved, seconded by Ms. Leila Longcor, to approve the minutes. Motion carried unanimously.*

## **Public Comment**

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

## **VDOT Functional Classification Resolution of Support (Board Action Form #24-08)**

Mr. Zach Beard presented proposed changes to the Federal Highway Administration's federal functional classification system. The classification system designates public roads into classes based on purpose, capacity, speed, and traffic volume. Most changes within the MPO region were from the City of Harrisonburg, including:

- Neff Avenue requested to be upgraded to arterial status
- Several local roads proposed to be designated as minor collectors
- Mason Street/Gay Street downtown loop proposed to change from arterial to major collector

Mr. Beard noted that upon Board approval staff would submit the approval letter to VDOT.

*Mr. Neal Dillard moved, seconded by Ms. Leila Longcor, to approve the minutes. Motion carried unanimously.*

## **Travel Demand Model Base Year Update (Board Memo #24-08)**

Mr. Beard provided an overview of the HRMPO Long Range Transportation Plan Travel Demand Model base year update process. Mr. Beard explained that the Travel Demand Model is developed by VDOT to estimate future traffic generation over a 25-year period based on population and employment data inputs into the model. The current HRMPO TDM utilizes 2015 as a base year for data, and VDOT is requesting that the MPO update the base year to reflect growth that has occurred in the region since then.

Mr. Beard said that the update process would take about one year, and that MPO staff will be coordinating with locality staff and VDOT to validate model data.

## **2024-2025 MPO and VDOT Transportation Studies in the HRMPO Region (Board Memo #24-09)**

Mr. Beard presented information about three transportation studies beginning this fall in the MPO region. The HRMPO is conducting a study of Port Republic Road and Peach Grove Avenue and Neff Avenue, working with consultant VHB to study improvements near the intersection to accommodate planned and future development in the area. The study aims to provide a comprehensive vision for the transportation network over the next 20 years.

VDOT is conducting two additional studies. The Vine Street corridor study will examine the segment from US 11 to US 33, which is expected to reach capacity by 2045. The study will address high-crash intersections, walking and biking improvements, and operational issues. A kickoff meeting is scheduled for October 1.

The Gravels Road study will examine the corridor from Gravels Road to US 11, conducting a high-level planning assessment to evaluate the effects of two conceptual connector roadways to bypass Gravels

Road. This study aims to minimize the impacts of industrial traffic and is scheduled for completion in January 2025.

**Presentation: Rockingham County Urban Development Area (UDA) Transportation Goals, Priorities, and Projects Overview – Dylan Nicely, Rockingham County**

Mr. Dylan Nicely presented an update on the recently revised Stone Spring Urban Development Area plan, which was updated as part of the Comprehensive Plan update. The plan maintains the same goals established in 2020 when the UDA was first formed. The UDA, located southeast of the City of Harrisonburg, aims to balance growth pressures with agricultural preservation by designating specific areas for more compact, higher-density development where infrastructure already exists.

Mr. Nicely reviewed the ten guiding principles of the Stone Spring UDA plan, which include compact mixed-use development with buildings placed closer to streets, parking in the rear, and complete streets designed for both pedestrian and vehicular traffic. The 2024 update included adjustments to UDA boundaries, including the incorporation of an area north of Route 33 that was previously in the county's urban growth area but not included in the UDA. The boundaries generally extend to Cross Keys Road and Route 33, which have historically served as the bounds of the Stone Spring development area.

Transportation aspects of the UDA plan include shared-use paths planned for Port Road, Boyers Road, and Stone Spring Road. The plan emphasizes public streets and interconnectivity to preserve capacity on major arterials like Port Road and Route 33. Several recent developments were highlighted as examples of successfully implementing the UDA principles, including projects that appropriately transition between different density levels and incorporate planned transportation improvements.

**Agency Updates**

***Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)***

Mr. Don Komara reported the following:

- The East Market Street project near the interstate is moving forward, with significant work occurring on the railroad bridge.
- The project over the mountain is ahead of schedule, with plans to get most of it under pavement this fall and complete in spring.
- A turn lane project at Cross Keys has been completed by North Construction Company, which included extending the left turn lane and adding a straight/right turn lane.
- The Route 11 widening project near the fairgrounds is still in right-of-way acquisition, with advertisement planned for late fall and construction to begin in spring.
- The I-81 project through Staunton is making significant progress, with substantial earth moving and median work ongoing. Speed cameras will be implemented this fall in the construction zone, with speed limits reduced to 60 mph.
- The Weyers Cave project is currently out for advertisement, with bids opening in October. The I-81 widening project through Harrisonburg is scheduled for advertisement in late fall 2025, with potential mobilization beginning in summer 2026.

### ***DRPT***

Ms. Grace Stankus reported that DRPT will host the Transit Service Delivery Advisory Committee (TSDAC) meeting on October 8th at 10 AM virtually. The discussion will focus on the operating assistance formula. Meeting information and registration links are available on the DRPT website.

### ***City of Harrisonburg Department of Public Transportation (HDPT)***

Mr. Gerald Gatobu reported that HDPT is working on EPA grant requirements and has ordered an activity bus for the new high school. The department is expecting delivery of approximately 15 new buses, which will arrive in groups of five. Recent activities have included completing DRPT and drug/alcohol audits.

### **Localities**

#### ***Mount Crawford***

Mr. Neal Dillard reported that the Sheetz project is progressing well, with road painting completed on Parsons Court. The town's Fall Festival is scheduled for the following day from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

#### ***Dayton***

Mr. Brian Borne reported the Town's inaugural 5K and final concert are upcoming on September 21, along with Dayton Days on October 5.

#### ***Harrisonburg***

Mr. Tom Hartman reported the following:

- Staff reported that downtown traffic cabinets have been wrapped with art in a collaboration between Harrisonburg, HDR, and the Arts Council.
- The Mountain View shared use path is approximately 80% paved with grass growing well. Night paving is scheduled for the following week.
- An Erickson Avenue small area study is being initiated to examine the corridor between Stone Spring and Route 42, and from Moseby to Pleasant Hill, in response to increasing traffic volumes from 8,000 to nearly 20,000 vehicles per day.

### **Other Business**

Chairperson Dent reported on a meeting she attended earlier that day regarding the Community Development Finance Initiative (CDFI) Coalition. The initiative focuses on enabling small private lenders to assist with housing and small business development. While transportation is not the primary focus of CDFI, Ms. Dent noted the potential for larger regional collaboration opportunities between the City and County.

### **Upcoming Meetings**

Chairperson Dent noted that the next TAC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 3, at 2:00 p.m., and that the next Policy Board meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 17.



**Harrisonburg  
Rockingham**  
Metropolitan Planning  
Organization

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**Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 3:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Paula Melester".

Paula Melester, Director of Transportation

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