

Harrisonburg-Rockingham Metropolitan Planning Organization Policy Board Meeting Agenda August 21, 2025, 3:00 p.m.

**Rockingham County Administration Center
20 East Gay Street, Harrisonburg, VA 22802**

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of Minutes of the July 17, 2025, Policy Board Meeting*
3. Public Comment
4. Resolution of Support for FY27 Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) Application (Board Action Form #25-07)*
5. Conditional Approval of Travel Demand Model Transportation Analysis Zone (TAZ) Demographic Data (Board Action Form #25-08)*
6. Presentation: Traffic Garden Design and Implementation; Fionnuala Quinn, Director of Discover Traffic Gardens
7. Agency Updates
 - VDOT
 - DRPT
 - HDPT
 - Localities
8. Other Business
9. Upcoming Meetings
 - September 4, 2025 – Technical Advisory Committee Meeting at 2:00 p.m.
 - September 18, 2025 – Policy Board Meeting at 3:00 p.m.
10. Adjournment

* Action Required

Harrisonburg-Rockingham Metropolitan Planning Organization Policy Board Minutes July 17, 2025, 3:00 p.m.

Meeting Conducted Virtually

Voting Members		Alternates	Staff
City of Harrisonburg	✓*	Dylan Nicely, Rockingham	✓* Ann Cundy
Laura Dent, Chair		Rachel Salatin, Rockingham	✓* Paula Melester
Dany Fleming		Cheryl Spain, Harrisonburg	✓* Garreth Bartholomew
✓* Gerald Gatobu		Tom Hartman, Harrisonburg	
Nasser Alsaadun	✓*	Alex Wilmer, Bridgewater	
Ande Banks		Robert Taylor, Mt. Crawford	
	✓*	Libby Clark, Mt. Crawford	Others
Rockingham County		Gary Corder, Dayton	✓* Kyle Lawrence
✓* Sallie Wolfe-Garrison		Jeff Lineberry, VDOT	✓* Kim Sandum
✓* Casey Armstrong	✓*	Adam Campbell, VDOT	
Town of Bridgewater	✓*	Don Komara, VDOT	
Jay Litten		Jeremy Mason, VDOT	
Town of Dayton		Non-Voting Members	
✓* Brian Borne	✓*	Rusty Harrington, Aviation	
Town of Mt. Crawford	✓*	Grace Stankus, DRPT	
✓* Neal Dillard, Vice Chair		Bill Yates, JMU	
VDOT	✓*	Valerie Kramer, JMU	
Todd Stevens	✓*	Shane McCabe	

*Indicates virtual attendance

Call to Order

The July 17, 2025, Harrisonburg-Rockingham Metropolitan Planning Organization (HRMPO) Policy Board meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m. by Vice Chair Neal Dillard. The meeting was conducted virtually with no in-person option.

Approval of Minutes

Vice Chairperson Dillard presented the minutes from the May 22, 2025, Policy Board meeting.

Mr. Casey Armstrong moved to approve the minutes; seconded by Ms. Sallie Wolfe-Garrison. The motion carried unanimously.

Public Comment

Vice Chair Dillard opened the floor for public comment. There were no public comments.

HRMPO Internal Process Review (Board Memo #25-05)

Ms. Paula Melester presented information about internal tasks that staff will be working on over the next six to eight months. Ms. Melester explained that HRMPO staff conducted a staff retreat in April, and one central topic of discussion was how to best navigate changing federal and state funding priorities. In response, the team will be conducting an internal review of processes, procedures, and update governing and planning documents to identify areas for improved efficiency and ensure compliance with changing federal and State requirements while also better serving local and regional transportation needs.

The first step will be meeting with each locality and agency to get feedback on priorities and how staff can best support them. After receiving feedback, staff will examine process and policy documents and update the Title VI Plan, public participation plan, and bylaws, and incorporate new processes and procedures as necessary.

Presentation: Shenandoah Rail Trail Update – Brad Reed, VDOT Staunton District Planning

Mr. Brad Reed from VDOT provided an update on the Shenandoah Valley Rail Trail assessment covering the 50-mile Norfolk Southern-owned right-of-way between Broadway and Front Royal. Recently, elected leaders expressed renewed support for the rail-to-trail alternative to the Commonwealth Transportation Board, calling it the highest and best use of the corridor.

The General Assembly allocated \$35 million for trail development following a 2021 feasibility study, but included language requiring consideration of options to maintain rail transportation before funds can be accessed. Rail transportation is not currently active on the 49-mile corridor with no current customers, and Norfolk Southern has expressed interest in selling the line.

The current three-phase rail-with-trail assessment examines engineering considerations and costs for delivering a trail beside the rail line. Phase one included stakeholder interviews and typical section development. Phase two, expected for public release at the end of July, includes environmental details, structure reviews, rail status evaluation, and public engagement summaries. Phase three will focus on cost estimates comparing both alternatives, updating the rail-to-trail cost estimate from 2023.

Public engagement in April included three meetings with 550 attendees and an online survey with 5,000 participants. Results showed 54% preferred rail-to-trail, 31% preferred rail-with-trail, 13% supported both options, and 5% opposed any action. Safety ranked as the highest priority issue, followed by environmental impacts and costs. Phase three public engagement is expected in late summer with three in-person meetings and an online survey.

Agency Updates

Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)

Mr. Adam Campbell provided the following updates:

- Vine Street STARS Study: Work session held with consultant ATCS and Harrisonburg Public Works staff to refine corridor improvement alternatives. The next study team meeting to review

improvement alternatives and determine which to advance for public engagement is scheduled for August 19 at 2:00 p.m.

- Route 42 Pipeline Study from Gay Street to Northern City Limits: Phase one report presenting existing conditions analysis and findings is under review by the study team. The study team alternative screening meeting is scheduled for 10:00 a.m. on July 18.
- VDOT I-81 Corridor Improvement Plan: VDOT conducted two meetings in the Staunton District to outline the I-81 Plan. Candidate projects for the next round of I-81 Capital Improvement Plan funding have been identified based on performance measures matching those used for the first corridor improvement plan in 2018.
 - The second round of public outreach is currently ongoing through an online survey for feedback on candidate projects. Between Staunton and Harrisonburg, numerous proposed improvements would fill gaps between the current Staunton widening under construction, the Weyers Cave truck climbing lanes, and the southern end of the upcoming Harrisonburg widening.
 - The next funding round expects \$2.2-2.25 billion, which will not address all candidate projects. After receiving public input, candidate projects will be refined and prioritized using measures similar to Smart Scale. Final recommendations will be presented at public meetings this fall with another opportunity for public participation.
- Smart Scale feedback: The Staunton district hosted the July CTB meeting in Winchester. An update from the Office of Intermodal Planning and Investment (OIPI) presented findings from a Round 6 Smart Scale survey conducted over the spring. The presentation covers applicant feedback on the process and previews Round 7.

Mr. Donald Komara provided the following updates:

- I-81 Staunton Project: Three-year project currently 42% complete after slightly over one year.
- I-81 Weyers Cave project: Construction progress continues through Weyers Cave with barriers installed on both sides and narrowed lanes requiring 60-mph speed limit compliance. Speed enforcement planned for this fall.
- I-81 Harrisonburg Project: Project from mile marker 242 to Route 33 scheduled for advertisement this late fall/early winter, with contractor expected by this time next year.
- Route 33 Mountain Project: The project is nearly complete and assists commuters from West Virginia into Virginia.
- Route 11 Four-Lane Fairgrounds Project: Fall advertisement is planned, and letters to remaining property owners will be sent with tentative meetings scheduled with the property owners.
 - Ms. Wolfe-Garrison asked how many condemnation letters would need to be sent for properties that have been in negotiation for 3-4 years. Mr. Komara responded that one letter has already been sent, with three additional properties still in negotiation, including a restaurant that recently sold, a church, and several others. Mr. Komara indicated condemnation letters would likely need to be sent soon.
 - Ms. Garrison asked for clarification about the Village Inn acquisition, specifically whether the sale meant restarting conversations with the new owner. Mr. Komara confirmed that the Village Inn would settle with VDOT before completing their sale.

- **Flooding and Maintenance:** Significant flooding due to heavy rainfall caused infrastructure damage, including a lost pipe on Spring Creek in Staunton requiring road closure and pipe replacement. Other maintenance activities include debris removal, ditch cleaning, pipe clearing, patching, and mowing completion. Staff preparing areas around Bridgewater and Mount Crawford for upcoming community events.

Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT)

Ms. Grace Stankus provided the following updates:

- DRPT is hosting an annual post-award webinar for FY 2026 grant recipients on July 23 at 11:00 a.m. MPO staff and HDPT have registered, with the registration link provided in the chat.
- DRPT is hosting a second National Transit Institute course covering state and metropolitan planning on September 15-16 at PlanRVA in Richmond. DRPT received positive feedback from the previous NTI course held earlier this month. The course is free with travel expenses reimbursable through 5303 funding.

Harrisonburg Department of Public Transportation (HDPT)

Mr. Gerald Gatobu provided the following updates:

- HDPT concluded their triennial review after months of preparation. A final exit interview is scheduled.
- HDPT is preparing for fall semester operations for both JMU and Harrisonburg City Schools.

Locality Updates

Town of Bridgewater

The Town had no updates.

Town of Dayton

The Town had no updates.

City of Harrisonburg

The City had no updates.

Town of Mount Crawford

Ms. Libby Clark reported the following update:

- Zach Beard met with Royce Hilton and the Timmons Group to work on stormwater management issues along Route 11 and Parsons Street, with VDOT's approval.

Rockingham County

The County had no updates.



Other Business

There was no other business.

Upcoming Meetings

Vice Chair Dillard noted that the next TAC meeting is scheduled for August 7, 2025, at 2:00 p.m. and the next Policy Board meeting is scheduled for August 21, 2025.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 3:43 p.m.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Paula Melester", is positioned below the word "Respectfully,".

Paula Melester, Director of Transportation

A small, faint handwritten signature or mark is visible on a horizontal line in the center of the page.

TO: Harrisonburg-Rockingham MPO Policy Board
FROM: Zach Beard, Program Manager
MEETING DATE: August 21, 2025
RE: **Board Action Form #25-07: Resolution of Support for FY27
Transportation Alternatives Program Application**

RECOMMENDATION

Recommend that the HRMPO Policy Board endorse the Resolution of Support for a Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program (TAP) project being submitted by the City of Harrisonburg.

BACKGROUND

VDOT requires that TAP applications for projects in the HRMPO area have a resolution of support from the MPO. The TAP application cycle opens August 15, 2025, and applicants have until September 15, 2025, to submit final applications. There is one TAP application in the HRMPO area this cycle for a Safe Routes to School Program staff-funding request by the City of Harrisonburg.

Harrisonburg Safe Routes to School Program Staffing

This project will continue funding for a full-time Safe Routes to School Coordinator (SRTS) position within the City's Public Works Department and serve all 10 public schools in Harrisonburg. The SRTS Coordinator will lead citywide programming and outreach initiatives to encourage and increase active transportation among students to promote safe walking and biking to school. Working directly within Public Works, the coordinator will expand partnerships and collaboration between City departments, Harrisonburg City Public Schools staff and teachers, and other local stakeholders.

REFERENCE

[Resolution of Support for Harrisonburg SRTS Program](#)

TO: Harrisonburg-Rockingham MPO Policy Board
FROM: Zach Beard, Program Manager
MEETING DATE: August 21, 2025
RE: **Board Action Form #25-08: Conditional Approval of Travel Demand Model Transportation Analysis Zone Demographic Data**

RECOMMENDATION

Recommend that the Policy Board conditionally approve the HRMPO Travel Demand Model Transportation Analysis Zone (TAZ) level demographic distributions pending all locality edits are incorporated into the final model.

BACKGROUND

The HRMPO utilizes a Travel Demand Model (TDM) to estimate future traffic generation over a 25-year period for projects in transportation studies and for the Long Range Transportation Plan. VDOT requested that the HRMPO update the TDM base year demographic data from 2015 to 2022 to better reflect current traffic conditions and improve model functionality. The HRMPO began updating the model in fall 2025 with VDOT and a consultant, and the model is scheduled to be complete in spring 2026.

TAZ DEMOGRAPHIC UPDATE

The TDM incorporates base year demographic data to inform future year traffic projections. HRMPO staff conducted a baseline demographic review of total population, total number of households, and total employment based on 2022 data, and the Policy Board approved the 2022 base year data at the November 2024 Board meeting. The TDM Modeling Team then further segmented the demographic data into 64 different categories.

The next phase requires distributing the data from the 64 different demographic categories across the MPO's 349 Transportation Analysis Zones (TAZs), which are small, geographic areas similar to U.S. Census tracts used in transportation planning models to analyze travel patterns and forecast future transportation needs. While there are 64 demographic categories, the current TAZ demographic review focuses on four core priority demographic categories for each TAZ based on 2022 estimates: total population, household population, households, and total employment, along with 10 other high priority categories including educational enrollment, zero car households, and retail and food service worker populations, among others.

The 2022 base year numbers will serve as the starting point for projecting TAZ demographic data through the 2050 planning horizon, enabling the model to forecast future transportation needs and evaluate and simulate potential infrastructure improvements. The TAC has reviewed the TAZ demographic data and recommended conditional approval of the data based on all locality input being incorporated into the model at the August 7, 2025 TAC meeting.

NEXT STEPS

The TDM Project Team is reviewing and incorporating locality input for the TAZ demographics. HRMPO staff are requesting that the Policy Board approve the TAZ demographic data pending all

locality comments are addressed and incorporated into the model. The conditional approval will allow the TDM Project Team to move forward with the next steps of the modeling process.

REFERENCE

- [HRMPO TAZ Demographic Map](#)
- [HRMPO TAZ Attribute Spreadsheet](#)