

Harrisonburg-Rockingham Metropolitan Planning Organization Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Minutes August 7, 2025, 2:00 p.m.

Meeting conducted at Rockingham County Administration Center and virtually via Zoom

	City of Harrisonburg		VDOT		Staff
✓	Tom Hartman, Chair	✓	Adam Campbell	✓	Paula Melester
✓*	Kyle Lawrence		Don Komara	✓	Garreth Bartholomew
✓	Thanh Dang	✓	Burgess Lindsey	✓	Zach Beard
✓	Cheryl Spain	✓*	Shane McCabe		Others
✓	Jakob zumFelde		DPRT	✓	Kim Sandum
✓	James Polhamus	✓*	Grace Stankus	✓*	Sam Steyers
	Rockingham County			✓	Andrea Troyer
	Rachel Salatin		Non-Voting Members		
✓	Dylan Nicely, Vice Chair		Kevin Jones, FHWA		
	Julia Cottrell		Bill Yates, JMU		
	Town of Bridgewater		Rusty Harrington, DOAV		
✓	Alex Wilmer		Valerie Kramer, JMU		
	Town of Dayton				
✓	Gary Corder				
	Town of Mt. Crawford				
✓*	Libby Clark				

***Virtual attendance**

Call to Order

The Harrisonburg-Rockingham Metropolitan Planning Organization (HRMPO) Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) convened at the Rockingham County Governmental Center on August 7, 2025. The meeting was called to order at 2:01 p.m.

Minutes

Chair Tom Hartman presented the minutes from the June 5, 2025, TAC meeting.

Ms. Thanh Dang motioned to approve the minutes; seconded by Ms. Cheryl Spain. Motion carried unanimously.

Public Comment

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

FY 2024-2027 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Administrative Modification (TAC Memo #25-06)

Mr. Zach Beard presented two administrative modifications to the Transportation Improvement Program, noting that no action was required. The Department of Rail and Public Transit (DRPT) requested adjustments to FY25 funding amounts for paratransit vehicles serving two human service transportation providers: The Arc of Harrisonburg-Rockingham and Pleasant View. Both modifications allocated funding for FY25 where none had previously existed, aligning the regional TIP with recent updates to the state's transportation improvement program. Staff noted that adjustments frequently occur at this time of year due to differences between federal and state fiscal year calendars. The updated document has been posted to the HRMPO website and transmitted to DRPT.

Resolution of Support for Transportation Alternative Program Application (TAC Action Form #25-05)

Mr. Bartholomew presented the request for a resolution of support for the City of Harrisonburg's Safe Routes to School Program application to the Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program (TAP), explaining that all applications located within an MPO boundary for TAP require MPO endorsement. Chair Hartman provided background on the program's history, noting that Safe Routes to School funding had previously been administered through a nonprofit partnership with Sentara RMH before transitioning to TAP. Following a two-year hiatus, the City successfully applied for a program restart two years ago.

Ms. Andrea Troyer, the City's Safe Routes to School Coordinator, introduced herself to the Committee and outlined her work since being hired in November 2024. Ms. Troyer described her efforts reconnecting with all ten city public schools, working with administrators and teachers to reestablish programs that had lapsed during the funding gap. Ms. Troyer detailed her collaboration with city schools on bicycle safety education, teaching children both how to ride safely and proper road behavior.

Ms. Troyer reported that spring programming included a successful Bike and Roll to School Day event engaging over 200 students across the school system. Ms. Troyer explained her role as liaison between the City planning division, public works, and the schools to identify pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure needs. Looking forward, Ms. Troyer expressed enthusiasm for piloting walking school buses and bike trains in the fall semester to normalize active transportation to school.

Chair Hartman noted this represents the final opportunity for the City to apply for Safe Routes to School funding through TAP, as the program will sunset after two more cycles. If successful, the grant would fund the program for four years before responsibility transitions entirely to local funding.

Ms. Cheryl Spain made a motion to recommend the resolution of support to the Policy Board; seconded by Mr. Dylan Nicely. The motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Travel Demand Model Transportation Analysis Zone Demographic Data (Action Form #25-06)*

Mr. Garreth Bartholomew presented the draft Transportation Analysis Zone (TAZ) demographic adjustments for the Travel Demand Model update. Mr. Bartholomew began by providing context on the federal requirements for travel demand modeling as part of metropolitan regulations, explaining how the model satisfies both Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) planning requirements and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) requirements for transit ridership analysis. Mr. Bartholomew outlined the model's applications for long-range planning, including evaluating transportation project impacts and simulating policy changes such as parking fare adjustments or new infrastructure development over a 25-year period.

Mr. Bartholomew explained that TAZs serve as the fundamental geographic units for the model, smaller than census block groups, containing assigned population, demographic, and employment data for both residents and commuters. The update expanded the region's TAZs from 270 to 349, providing enhanced granularity for modeling specific improvements and their impacts on level of service and mode share. Mr. Bartholomew detailed the 65 demographic categories analyzed using 2022 as the base year, with data sources including Weldon Cooper Center, Census American Community Survey, Data Axle, and Woods and Poole employment projections extending through 2060. Mr. Bartholomew noted the modeling team utilized a combination of data sources and ground-truthing to verify allocations, including direct coordination with James Madison University for specific facilities like parking capacity assessments.

Mr. Bartholomew presented the timeline for model development, indicating that base year transportation network assessment and university-specific modeling would continue through year-end, with model validation and forecast scenarios planned for 2026. Mr. Bartholomew emphasized the importance of locality review, particularly for primary categories including total population, households, and employment, requesting comments by August 15, 2025. Staff noted the modeling consultant would attend the Policy Board meeting to address methodological questions.

Following discussion about review procedures and timelines, Ms. Thanh Dang made a motion for conditional approval pending comments; seconded by Mr. Dylan Nicely. The motion carried unanimously.

Agency Updates

Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)

Mr. Adam Campbell provided the following updates:

- Revenue Sharing and Transportation Alternatives application windows open August 15 with submissions due September 15.
- The I-81 Corridor Improvement Program update held public meetings in July at Blue Ridge Community College and Shenandoah University where VDOT presented the top 25% one-mile segments based on four performance measures: number of fatality and injury crashes, crash rates, person hours delayed, and person hours delayed due to incidents. The draft update has identified significant needs between Staunton and Harrisonburg, though

available funding (approximately 2 – 2 ¼ billion dollars) would not address all highlighted areas. The state will now incorporate public comments and proceed through a performance-based prioritization process similar to SMART Scale to recommend projects for funding.

- The Virginia Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) application process typically opens August 1, but will not open this year as multiple years of funding are being combined for program restart next year.
- There is a locally administered projects workshop scheduled for September 16-18 in Norfolk, where Mr. Campbell will be presenting. Committee members who did not receive information about the workshop were encouraged to contact VDOT for details.

Mr. Burgess Lindsey provided the following update:

- There is significant construction activity throughout the MPO area, including both land development and highway construction projects, and vigilance and awareness in work zones throughout the region is encouraged.

Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT)

Ms. Grace Stankus provided the following update:

- DRPT announced a new engagement requirement for Smart Scale Round 7, requiring consultation with Paige Lazar by October 31 for projects primarily focused on rail or transit. Roadway projects with minor transit elements remain exempt from this requirement.

City of Harrisonburg Department of Public Transportation (HDPT)

Ms. Cheryl Spain provided the following updates:

- HDPT is planning for JMU's return with successful driver recruitment efforts enabling the addition of at least one route for the upcoming academic year. The training staff has expanded to six members, improving capacity for new driver preparation.
- HDPT awaits quotes for five new transit buses, with vendors delaying pricing due to uncertainty about potential tariffs.

Localities and Stakeholders

Town of Dayton

Mr. Gary Corder provided the following update:

- The Dayton Police Chief is coordinating with VDOT and Cargill to address deep road divots near the Cargill entrance. Mr. Corder noted VDOT does not yet have a contractor for the repairs, with timing dependent on Cargill's availability.

Town of Bridgewater

Mr. Wilmer provided no updates.

James Madison University

Ms. Valerie Kramer provided the following update:

- The Duke's Ride campaign, which is in the second year, encourages students to ride buses instead of driving. Despite distributing 2,000 welcome packets to apartment complexes with bus information, challenges remain with low ridership except for the Green Line. New tactics include reaching out to parents to emphasize the free service and inability to receive parking tickets while on the bus. HDPT has provided statistics to track ridership trends.

Rockingham County

Mr. Nicely provided the following updates:

- Rockingham County has installed radar speed signs on Gravel Road to address speeding concerns from quarry truck traffic.
- The County continues developing a Smart Scale project for an R-cut intersection at Route 276 and Route 33 near the Rockingham Park entrance, with construction anticipated around 2029. In the interim, the County is working with VDOT on a temporary R-cut configuration using delineators to provide similar traffic patterns until full funding becomes available.

City of Harrisonburg

Chair Hartman and Mr. Jakob zumFelde provided the following updates:

- University Boulevard construction progresses, with tree clearing complete and excavation underway along the new road alignment visible from Port Road. The Country Club Road sidewalk project expects to begin construction within the week following resolution of initial contracting matters. Multiple Smart Scale projects are advancing through engineering toward right-of-way acquisition phase, affecting approximately 150 properties throughout the city with negotiations anticipated next year and construction projected for 2027-2030.
- The Erickson Avenue Small Area Study bounded by Main Street and Route 42 east-west and Pleasant Hill Road and Mosby Road north-south completed land use analysis, transportation generation modeling, and current year and forecasted traffic analysis with new roadway connections incorporated. A public meeting is scheduled for September 18, 2025, from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. at the new Public Works facility. Mr. Hartman noted concerns for intersection operations projections for 2040 if growth proceeds without intervention, with innovative solutions under consideration including an echelon intersection design for left-turn displacement.
- The North Mason Street demonstration project included a community block party attended by 400-500 residents featuring activities, history lessons, and recreational events. Mr. Hartman summarized data showing 85th percentile speeds reduced from 34 mph to 26 mph during the temporary configuration, achieving the posted speed limit. While vehicle traffic decreased by 15%, bicycle usage notably increased at intersections and along the corridor. Pedestrian crossing volumes remained consistent. The public survey remains open through the end of the month for feedback on the demonstration configuration.

Other Business

There was no other business discussed.

Upcoming Meetings

The Policy Board will meet August 21, 2025, at 3:00 p.m. The next Technical Advisory Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, September 4, 2025, at 2:00 p.m.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:51 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Zach Beard, Program Manager