

Harrisonburg-Rockingham Metropolitan Planning Organization Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Minutes February 5, 2026, 2:00 p.m.

Meeting conducted virtually via Microsoft Teams

	City of Harrisonburg		VDOT		Staff
✓*	Tom Hartman, Chair	✓*	Adam Campbell	✓*	Paula Melester
✓*	Kyle Lawrence	✓*	Don Komara	✓*	Garreth Bartholomew
✓*	Thanh Dang	✓*	Jeremy Mason	✓*	Zach Beard
	Cheryl Spain	✓*	Shane McCabe		Others
✓*	Jakob zumFelde		DPRT	✓*	Kim Sandum
✓*	James Polhamus	✓*	Grace Stankus	✓*	Brad Reed, VDOT
	Rockingham County			✓*	Sam Styers
	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

Chair Tom Hartman called the meeting of the Harrisonburg-Rockingham Metropolitan Planning Organization (HRMPO) Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) to order at 2:00 p.m.

Minutes

Chair Hartman presented the minutes from the January 8, 2026, TAC meeting.

Mr. Dylan Nicely motioned to approve the minutes; seconded by Ms. Thanh Dang. Motion carried unanimously.

Public Comment

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

Travel Demand Model 2050 Projections (TAC AF #26-03)

Mr. Garreth Bartholomew presented the Travel Demand Model (TDM) 2050 Transportation Analysis Zone (TAZ) demographic projections for TAC consideration. Mr. Bartholomew explained that this

represents the final step in the TDM demographic review process. The Policy Board previously approved the 2022 base year demographics in November 2024 and the TAZ-level 2022 base year demographic distributions in August 2025. The modelers have incorporated 2050 projections for each TAZ based on locality feedback, with all requested revisions documented in a corrections tracker and transmitted to the VDOT modeling team.

Population-based Adjustments

Mr. Bartholomew summarized the key categories of adjustments incorporated following coordination meetings with the City of Harrisonburg, Rockingham County, and the Towns. For population-based adjustments, Rockingham County's projected annual growth rate for the MPO area was revised from 0.73% to 1.25%, reflecting asymmetric growth concentrated within the MPO boundary where the Stone Spring Urban Development Area (UDA) and primary growth areas are located, rather than distributed uniformly across the entire county as the Weldon Cooper data had assumed. Likewise, several approved residential developments in both the City and Rockingham County that were not previously captured were also incorporated.

Employment-based Adjustments

For employment-based adjustments, retail employment growth projections were reduced to reflect e-commerce trends, with growth redistributed to manufacturing, warehousing, and food service sectors. Employment projections for the US 11 Technology Park were revised upward across multiple sectors including administrative and governmental categories. Employment associated with Buc-ee's and the full build-out of the Exit 240 interchange was updated to better reflect anticipated development activity. Land use changes in the Route 33 and Stone Spring area were also incorporated.

Education-based Adjustments

For education-based adjustments, a number of K-12 schools were reassigned to correct TAZs, and several private schools not previously captured were added. Growth rates for Eastern Mennonite University (EMU) and Bridgewater College were adjusted to differ from the JMU growth rate. Bridgewater College, the only university located entirely within the County's MPO portion, was assigned a 0% growth rate given the national demographic cliff facing private colleges. University parking locations across the HRMPO area were reallocated to reflect known parking facilities.

Regional Summary

Mr. Bartholomew reviewed the projected regional totals. The combined annual growth rate for total HRMPO population is 0.84%, growing from approximately 86,000 in the base year to 108,000 by 2050. Total employment is projected to grow at a comparable rate, with retail employment growing minimally. The City's population growth rate is 0.57%, with household growth outpacing population growth due to approved residential developments. The County's MPO-area population is projected to grow at 1.25%, with off-campus student housing nearly doubling from approximately 2,600 to 4,400 units. Two-thirds of zero-vehicle household growth is projected to occur within the City. University enrollment growth is primarily driven by JMU, with approximately two-thirds of off-campus student housing growth expected in Rockingham County.

Mr. Bartholomew said that following TAC recommendation, staff will request Policy Board conditional approval at the February 19, 2026, meeting. The modeling team will provide updated demographic totals incorporating all locality corrections the following week. Model calibration and validation will proceed over the next several months, with model completion and training for interested users targeted for April 2026.

Ms. Thanh Dang motioned to recommend conditional approval to Policy Board, pending all locality requested changes; seconded by Ms. Libby Clark. Motion carried unanimously.

Harrisonburg Liberty Street Streetscape and Mobility Transformation Update, City of Harrisonburg Public Works Staff

Mr. Jakob zumFelde and Mr. James Polhamus of the City of Harrisonburg Department of Public Works presented an update on the Liberty Street Streetscape and Mobility Transformation Project.

Mr. zumFelde described the project corridor, which extends along Liberty Street and Noll Drive through downtown Harrisonburg from Martin Luther King Jr. Way to the intersection of Main Street and Noll Drive. The project's primary transportation improvement replaces one southbound vehicle lane with a two-way separated cycle track throughout the corridor length. At the southern end of the corridor, the cycle track transitions to a shared-use path for one block between Groton Street and Martin Luther King Jr. Way, where it connects to the Bluestone Trail through JMU's campus.

Mr. zumFelde noted that a public open house held approximately two months prior drew over 100 in-person attendees and several hundred additional online survey respondents reviewing 30% design plans. A public hearing is planned for April or May 2026 to present any design adjustments. Staff anticipates completing right-of-way discussions with adjacent property owners by year-end, with a construction advertisement targeted for 2027 and construction beginning in 2028.

In response to a question from Mr. Bartholomew, Mr. zumFelde identified the primary themes from public feedback as concerns about intersections and locations where vehicles cross the cycle track, including private entrance crossings. Staff is evaluating options such as consolidating or closing private entrances and redirecting traffic to side streets, as well as intersection-specific design adjustments to improve clarity and safety for people biking.

Agency Updates

Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)

Mr. Adam Campbell provided the following updates:

- District Planning continues discussing Smart Scale Round 7 with localities. The pre-application window opens March 2 and closes April 1. OIPI has scheduled a virtual pre-application training for February 24, with a registration link available on the smartscale.virginia.gov homepage. District Planning has conducted initial coordination meetings with both the City of Harrisonburg and Rockingham County to review potential application concepts.

- Several application ideas are tied to the active Route 42 Project Pipeline study and the Vine Street STARS study, both of which have identified preferred alternatives. Consultant ATCS is finalizing concepts and cost estimates for both studies in preparation for upcoming Smart Scale submissions
- An update on the CTB-approved next round of I-81 Corridor Improvement Plan (CIP) projects can be found on the Improve I-81 Website: <https://improve81.vdot.virginia.gov/get-involved/2025-cip-update/>

Mr. Don Komara provided the following updates:

- I-81 Staunton widening project (MM 221–225): The project is approximately 60% complete. Kokosing continues to make good progress. Speed enforcement cameras are anticipated for an April–May timeframe, pending coordination with Virginia State Police and associated signage installation.
- I-81 Weyers Cave project: The project is approximately 35% complete. Branch Highways has completed significant earthwork and is progressing on bridge work.
- Route 33 bridge project: The project is making good progress and is on schedule. It leads directly into the I-81 widening corridor from Exit 243 to Exit 248.
- I-81 Harrisonburg widening project (MM 242–248): Triton Construction was awarded the contract at \$218 million, with five bidders. The pre-construction conference has not yet been held. Construction is anticipated to begin in spring, starting in the Stone Spring area in the southern section, then proceeding to the northern section, before completing the middle section last. The project includes nine bridges.
- Route 11 sidewalk project (north of Harrisonburg): The project will install sidewalk on the west side of Route 11 from the cemetery to the trailer park at Mount Clinton Pike. It is scheduled to go to advertisement this spring with construction anticipated in summer 2026.
- Route 11 widening project (south of Harrisonburg, near the Fairgrounds): Right-of-way certificates have been filed. Advertisement is now anticipated for April–May 2026.
- Route 33 and Route 276 intersection improvements: A public hearing was held at the Keezletown Ruritan Club with approximately 80 attendees. The project will make permanent improvements current temporary R-cut configuration at the recreation center. As a result of public feedback the Route 276 intersection will receive a more traditional improvement rather than an R-cut,.
- Snow removal: The region experienced 8–10 inches of snow accompanied by an unusual 2–3 inches of sleet in the preceding two weeks, presenting significant operational challenges for snow removal crews.

Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT)

Ms. Grace Stankus provided updates:

- The FY27 grant application window closed February 1. Scoring is now underway, with a draft funding scenario expected to be released in mid-April.

- The FY27 Section 5303 (Metropolitan Planning) application is now open in WebGrants through May 1. FTA apportionment information is not yet available; MPOs are encouraged to use prior-year dollar amounts when drafting UPWPs for DRPT review.
- DRPT will release the 2026 Coordinated Human Services Mobility Plan on February 17. This federally required four-year plan identifies needs, gaps, and opportunities for transportation services for seniors and individuals with disabilities funded through FTA's Section 5310 program.
- DRPT welcomed two new leadership appointments: Director Mariia Zimmerman, who brings over 30 years of transportation experience, and Chief Deputy Director Allan Fye, who joins from the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission.

City of Harrisonburg Department of Public Transportation (HDPT)

There were no HDPT updates at this meeting.

Locality Updates

Town of Mount Crawford

Ms. Libby Clark provided the following update:

- The Town recently received new wayfinding signage, installed in coordination with VDOT to ensure appropriate spacing for road conditions. Ms. Clark expressed appreciation for VDOT's assistance.
- During the recent snow event, plow operations pushed snow over a fire hydrant in a cul-de-sac, requiring the Town to hire contractors to excavate it. Ms. Clark requested that VDOT crews redirect snow away from hydrant locations at cul-de-sacs where possible.
- The Town's park project is scheduled to begin in early spring.

City of Harrisonburg

Chair Hartman provided the following update:

- University Boulevard construction is continuing. Due to recent snow accumulation, crews are using dozers to clear snow and access the subgrade, while continuing lane closures to advance grading operations.

Mr. zumFelde also provided the following update:

- The North Mason Street Small Area Study public open house is scheduled for Tuesday, February 24, from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. at the Lucy F. Simms Continuing Education Center in Harrisonburg. MPO and City staff are coordinating on the study and encourage TAC members to attend.

Other Business

Mr. Bartholomew announced that staff is conducting UPWP coordination meetings with localities over the coming weeks regarding the FY27 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) update. Localities

are encouraged to identify potential study opportunities and areas where MPO assistance would be valuable for inclusion in the coming year's work program.

Chair Hartman noted that Ms. Cheryl Spain is retiring from the City of Harrisonburg at the end of February after a distinguished career. Chair Hartman encouraged TAC members to reach out to Ms. Spain with congratulations.

Upcoming Meetings

Chair Hartman announced the following meetings:

- February 19, 2026 – HRMPO Policy Board Meeting, 3:00 p.m., virtually via Teams
- March 5, 2026 – HRMPO TAC Meeting, 2:00 p.m., in-person at Rockingham County Administration Center

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Zach Beard, Program Manager