

MINUTES OF THE

Meeting of the Commonwealth Transportation Board VTrans2035 Subcommittee

Patrick Henry Building

1111 E. Broad Street

Richmond, VA 23219

Conference Room 3 (1st floor)

October 29, 2009

9:00 – 5:00

Members in attendance:

Kenneth White, Chair, Peter Schwartz, James Bowie, James Davis, Dana Dickens, Douglas Koelema

Staff in attendance:

Ralph Davis, Mary Lynn Tischer, Katherine Graham, Linda Carpenter, Nick Donohue, Kevin Farrelly

Others in attendance:

Amy Inman, Ben Mannell, Keith Martin, Bob Chase

1. Welcome

Mr. Kenneth S. White, Subcommittee Chairman welcomed the subcommittee and reviewed the agenda.

2. Public Comment

Mr. Bob Chase made the following comments:

- Don't feel constrained by the sixty days left before the report is due – need to get it right
- Need to create a Strategic Transportation Fund with a dedicated revenue stream
- All Corridors of Statewide Significance are important but have different context
 - Should tier according to context
 - Need to talk about mobility
 - Need to talk about capacity
 - Need to deal with growing population statewide, not just urban growth
 - Need to do more strategic transportation planning

Ms. Amy Inman made the following comment:

- The Department of Rail and Public Transportation wants to be actively involved in land use conversations surrounding transit funding allocations.

3. Roundtable Discussion of Current Thoughts

Mr. White noted that the agenda is verbatim Secretary Homer's charge to the subcommittee.

Mr. White reviewed the Statewide Plan state legislation. Mr. Nick Donohue noted that sections D- 2, 3, 4, and 5 are enactment clauses. This means that they do not go into the Code but are requirements. Deputy Secretary Ralph Davis noted that the language in italics was added in July when the long range plan was at least half way through the process; therefore, these requirements will be addressed though the concepts may be further fleshed out in future plans.

Mr. Peter Schwartz asked that the long range plan include performance measures. Mr. Ralph Davis said that they are part of the Performance Report. Dr. Mary Lynn Tischer told the committee that goals and measures were developed as part of VTrans2025, confirmed by the Transportation Accountability Commission and are the foundation for VTrans2035. Mr. Schwartz suggested there is a need to revisit those measures. He said that implicit in the list of performance measures is prioritization.

- By prioritizing safety and maintenance and saying we do not have enough money to take care of these basic duties, we are not actually doing long-range planning.
- Safety and maintenance should not be the top priorities
- The CTB should recommend to the General Assembly that they change the law to say that funds not necessarily be spent first on safety and maintenance.

Mr. Ralph Davis distributed a list of performance measures used in the 2008 Transportation Performance Report. He noted that the measures relate to the seven VTrans goals that drive the long range planning process.

Dr. James Davis mentioned that the wording on the priorities were of concern. Saying "maintain economic competitiveness" indicates that we are happy with the way things are. Also "manage metropolitan congestion" is too narrow and leaves out the majority of the state. It should be to "enhance economic competitiveness" and "minimize congestion".

Mr. Bowie suggested that it might be wise to include safety in all priorities rather than making it a separate priority. He stated that these priorities are implicit in the others.

Mr. Koelemay noted that there is an erosion of a steady revenue stream. As population continues to grow more quickly than ever, transportation needs arise very quickly. Regarding CoSS, the term significance needs to have very strict criteria, and he suggested that the term significance might be removed. Mr. Ralph Davis reminded him that the word significance is written in law.

The committee agreed that they like the Minnesota Statewide Transportation Policy Plan for several reasons:

- It focused on ranking regional trade centers
- It included the entire state
- The corridors served many purposes

Although the subcommittee liked the Minnesota Plan, no action was taken to adopt its methods.

Discussion focused on the need to make recommendations in the plan on how to use additional funds when they become available. We should not write the plan to reflect current conditions. The plan should go beyond maintaining the current situation. This is not reflected in the Priorities as written.

4. Discussion of Committee's Charge from Secretary Homer

A. Corridors of Statewide Significance.

The discussion followed the question of "Are the Corridors right?", then discussed how to allocate resources to the Corridors. The Corridors need to be multimodal, connect activity centers and move freight. The subcommittee recognized the work previously done on the Corridors but noted that more work needs to be done in the future.

The Corridors represent the spokes of the Commonwealth's hub-and-spoke transportation system. This system consists of corridors to help people and goods move between regions of the Commonwealth and to areas outside of the Commonwealth. The Corridors are transportation facilities that must be protected to ensure appropriate levels of mobility to allow for long distance travel.

Dr. Tischer added that there is a next step planned for VTrans that looks at Regional Accessibility.

Dr. James Davis suggested additional criteria for the Corridors:

- Provides access from home and work
- Contributes to the economic development within the state
- Play a significant role in the flow of interstate commerce
- Contribute to environmental stewardship and quality of life

Mr. White stated that a benefit of the corridors is that they provide guidance to the localities in their long range planning and the protection of the Corridors. Mr. Schwartz suggested that localities currently have incentives to do the opposite of what the state needs for Corridor protection.

The subcommittee discussed that new and improved Corridors can provide positive and negative impacts. This relates to the form, location and design of improvements to a Corridor. In particular, when a new highway is built or an existing highway is improved steps need to be put in place to ensure that it is designed and located so that it will serve long distance travel. Corridors can help provide mobility improvements to promote economic competitiveness. In addition, improperly developed and designed corridors can spur local growth along the corridor turning it into a "main street" – reducing the benefit from the Commonwealth's

investment and perpetuating development patterns that increase demand for transportation capacity.

The Committee recognized that not all Corridors provide the same function and that in the future the Commonwealth will need to develop master plans for each Corridor - examining investment needs and policies to protect the Corridor so that it can fulfill its role.

The subcommittee decided not to prioritize the Corridors, but established that there is the need to identify what the corridors should and should not be. The subcommittee also decided not to change the criteria.

Mr. Ralph Davis reminded the subcommittee that law states that localities must recognize the Corridors of Statewide Significance in their long range plans.

Dr. James Davis suggested that in lieu of prioritizing the Corridors, VTrans carefully define the current status of the Corridors by criteria but also ask for proposed changes in those Corridors that are in the state's benefit. Mr. Schwartz added that there should be a mandate for corridor studies as a follow-up exercise to VTrans2035.

In summary, the subcommittee's responses to Secretary Homer's charges are as follows:

- Tiering or prioritization of Corridors?
 - Subcommittee recommendation:
 - *No tiering or prioritizing*
- How will or should Corridor designations influence future funding decisions?
 - Subcommittee recommendation:
 - *The Corridors should be a consideration, but not the only consideration when making funding decisions.*
 - *The extent to which a locality's land use plans protect the functionality of the Corridor should be considered in funding allocations.*
- How will we add or remove Corridors?
 - Subcommittee recommendation:
 - *Do not remove any of the existing Corridors.*
 - *Use the existing criteria to designate new Corridors.*
 - *The CTB should periodically review the Corridors and consider the need to add or delete them based on the original criteria.*

B. Key Investments

Mr. Douglas Koelemay suggested the need to recognize that congestion is a huge cost to Virginia. He cited a recent study which stated that congestion costs Virginia \$3.5 billion a year.

The Subcommittee recognized that maintenance of existing infrastructure is a responsibility of the Commonwealth and will continue to be a major priority in the future. However, a long range transportation plan needs to consider the Commonwealth's future needs as well as its maintenance responsibilities. VTrans2035 must focus not only on maintenance responsibilities but also on needs that will help the Commonwealth continue to enhance its economic competitiveness and quality of life for citizens. Based on this recognition the Committee recommends that a new priority category be included in VTrans2035. This category will consist of a discrete number of critical, game-changing investments that the Commonwealth *must* complete in the next 25 years. The planning for these projects should be completed out of existing resources and the construction of these projects should come from a new Strategic Investment Fund and, to the extent possible, private funding.

Mr. Schwartz offered some suggestions for these critical investments such as Metrorail in the I-95 corridor and High Speed Rail to Hampton Roads; freight rail in the I-81 corridor; and the tunnels in Hampton Roads. He also suggested that Virginia create a Strategic Investment Transportation Fund to pay for these investments but to the extent that no new funds are forthcoming the Commonwealth should fund these projects out of existing revenue.

Dr. James Davis added that a subheading should be included stating "to fund preliminary planning from existing resources and seek strategic new resources".

Mr. Ralph Davis indicated that the Priority "To Complete Unfinished PPTA Projects" was included at the request of Secretary Homer, who felt that since the state has already heavily invested in these projects that they should be completed. The subcommittee questioned the importance of some of the projects and elected to delete this as a Priority.

Mr. Ralph Davis reminded the subcommittee that a letter had been included in their packet from Mr. Trip Pollard. The subcommittee decided to accept Mr. Pollard's recommendation to include environment while crafting the Priorities. The priority to "Use Sustainable and Environmentally Sensitive Methods" will be included in the Address Safety and Maintenance Needs category.

The original list of key investments is as follows:

- Address Safety and Maintenance Needs
- Maintain Economic Competitiveness
- Manage Metropolitan Congestion

In summary, the Subcommittee's responses to Secretary Homer's charges are as follows:

- Should there be more or other categories?
 - Subcommittee Recommendation :
 - *Current economic and financial situation cannot be dismissed but should not constrain the future*
 - *The priorities should be more visionary*

- *The first priority should be a small number of strategic game-changing mega-projects*
- *A Strategic Infrastructure Investment Fund should be established to fund the mega-projects*
- How should investments in each of these categories be focused?
 - Subcommittee Recommendation:
 - *The first priority should be a small number of strategic game-changing mega-projects*
- Should we prioritize within key investment categories?
 - Subcommittee Recommendation:
 - *No*

Subcommittee recommendations to overall Priorities:

- Make Strategic Investment in Infrastructure for the Future
 - High speed rail between Washington DC and Hampton Roads and extend WMATA along I-95 Corridor
 - I-81 Freight Rail
 - Tunnels in Hampton Roads
- Address Safety and Maintenance Needs
 - *Added* Use Sustainable and Environmentally Sensitive Methods
- Enhance Economic Competitiveness
 - Deleted Complete Unfinished PPTA Projects
 - *Added* Develop Master Plans for Needs of Corridors of Statewide Significance
 - These master plans will recognize the role and function of each corridor analyzing level of protection needed for corridor and appropriate investments to allow corridor to fulfill role
- Minimize Congestion (*deleted Metropolitan*)
 - *Changed* Integrate Regional Land Uses and Transportation Capacity to Integrate Regional Land Uses and Highway Capacity

C. Land Use.

Mr. Nick Donohue presented the concept of incentivizing localities to do good land use planning. He suggested this could be achieved by providing grants or withholding allocated funds. Mr. Dickens suggested providing “incentives to encourage density around the transportation improvements the state invests in”. The following issues were discussed and recommendations were made:

- Regional transportation and land use performance measures
 - Subcommittee Recommendations:

- *Develop regional performance measures and goals*
- *Prioritize funding for improvements that help meet the goals*

The Committee recommends that the Office of Intermodal Planning and Investment develop regional transportation and land use performance measures and goals for urban areas as required by the Code of Virginia.

Primary funding and discretionary funds within each VDOT district would be allocated to projects that help meet goals. For example, prior to considering whether or not to fund a capacity expansion in locality X the Board would receive a report from the Office that states whether or not the improvement will allow growth that helps reduce the job-to-housing balance that exists in locality X

- What incentives can the state provide to 'leverage' supportive land uses and promote regional land use planning?

- Subcommittee Recommendations:

- *Develop a competitive grant program and/or use secondary and urban formula allocations to leverage local land use commitments that will reduce the demand for additional transportation capacity*

The Commonwealth should take steps to use its transportation funds to leverage local land uses that reduce the demand for transportation capacity. This can be accomplished through two methods – one that functions as a carrot and another that functions as a stick.

Under the carrot approach the Commonwealth would create a competitive grant program in each of the nine districts. Grants would be awarded annually to projects with local land use commitments for development patterns that reduce the demand for transportation capacity. Each grant would be for the full cost of a particular improvement.

Another option would be to modify the criteria for the award of secondary and urban formula funds. Localities would only be eligible to receive their formula funds if they (i) developed a comprehensive plan that promoted development patterns that reduced the demand for transportation capacity and (ii) approved zoning proposals to allow such patterns to be built.

- *Provide grants to MPOs/PDCs to coordinate regional land use planning policy. Grants would help local governments and regional entities analyze the impacts of various development patterns on future quality of life for citizens.*
- *Develop a competitive grant program for the expansion of rapid transit service – heavy rail, light rail, commuter rail, and bus rapid transit. The program would require that local governments make commitments to*

provide supportive development patterns along corridors where expansion occurs.

5. Other Matters

A second meeting of the subcommittee was scheduled for November 9th if needed.