



**Virginia's Long-Range Multimodal
Transportation Plan
2007-2035**

**REGIONAL AND LOCAL DECISION
MAKING**

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**Prepared by:
Cambridge Systematics**

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AAA	American Automobile Association
ART	Arlington Transit
BRT	Bus Rapid Transit
CTAC	Citizens Transportation Advisory Commission
CTB	Commonwealth Transportation Board
DRPT	(Virginia) Department of Rail and Public Transportation
EDAC	Elderly and Disabled Advisory Commission
FAA	Federal Aviation Administration
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
FRED	Fredericksburg Regional Transit
GRTC	Greater Richmond Transit Company
HRTA	Hampton Roads Transportation Authority
HOT	High Occupancy/Toll Lane
HOV	High Occupancy Vehicle Lane
HRTPO	Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization
HRPDC	Hampton Roads Planning District Commission
HRT	Hampton Roads Transit
HRTA	Hampton Roads Transportation Authority
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization
MWCOG	Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
NET	Norfolk Electric Transit
NJDOT	New Jersey Department of Transportation
NVRC	Northern Virginia Regional Commission
NVTA	Northern Virginia Transportation Authority
NVTC	Northern Virginia Transportation Commission
PDC	Planning District Commission
PRTC	Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission
RRPDC	Richmond Regional Planning District Commission
RTC	Regional Transportation Commission
RTID	Regional Transportation Investment District
RTP	Regional Transportation Plan
RTPA	Regional Transportation Planning Agencies
RTPO	Regional Transportation Planning Organization
TDCHR	Transportation District Commission of Hampton Roads
TDM	Transportation Demand Management
TIP	Transportation Improvement Program
TMA	Transportation Management Area
TPB	Transportation Planning Board of the National Capital Region
TBD	Transportation Benefit District
UGB	Urban Growth Boundary
VDOT	Virginia Department of Transportation
VMT	Vehicle Miles Traveled
VRE	Virginia Railway Express

VRT
WATA

Virginia Regional Transit
Williamsburg Area Transit Authority

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

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ADDRESSING SHORTCOMINGS OF EXISTING REGIONAL AND LOCAL DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES

Transportation decision making in Virginia suffers from an inability to marshal the resources and the authority to make transportation funding and investment decisions that both offer the appropriate nexus of decision making and provide an appropriate level of funding to address regional transportation challenges.

There is no lack of organizational entities that could be created to address transportation issues of regional significance. The problems remain:

1. Limitation on the powers of such entities to raise revenue, since the Virginia constitution requires direct election of representatives to any body that has the ability to levy taxes;
2. Issues relating to the Federal mandate for a "continuing, comprehensive and coordinated" transportation planning process, which has heretofore been satisfied through metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs);
3. The disconnect between the powers of local government to control land use and the need for regional action to direct growth in ways that minimize sprawl and congestion; and
4. Local agencies currently lack the capacity, in terms of financial resources and expertise, to take responsibility for the ongoing maintenance and management of roads and bridges (devolution).

DEFINITION OF THE ISSUE

“In Virginia, land use is the prerogative of local governments, while transportation planning and funding decisions are generally made at the state level. Improving the coordination between transportation and land-use planning is essential for ensuring mobility throughout the commonwealth.”

This quote from the VDOT website¹ presents a major issue in transportation decision making, but the situation is much more complicated than this statement would suggest. Planning for both transportation and land use is an extremely complex and contentious challenge, with a large number of stakeholders.

Coordination of land use with transportation applies not just to surface transportation, but with other modes as well. With respect to aviation, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) defines the airspace, the localities control the land-use and permitting process. The state, in this case the Virginia General Assembly has passed legislation *Code of Virginia 15.2-2294*, that mandates cities, counties and towns provide for the regulation of height restrictions of structures and natural growth where there are airports and/or under the approach surfaces of an airport. In itself, land use goals with regard to aviation interests may often conflict with those to mitigate issues of other modes.

¹ <http://viriniadot.org/projects/landuse.asp>

Virginia is also unusual in the extent to which the State government has responsibility for constructing and maintaining the road network. VDOT is responsible for over 79 percent of the highway network in the Commonwealth of Virginia; only North Carolina and West Virginia control a similar proportion of the roadway system within their respective borders.² While VDOT controls 95 percent of rural lane miles, it is responsible for only about 47 percent of lane-miles in urban areas.

WHY IS THIS ISSUE IMPORTANT?

The disconnect between land use decision making authority and regional planning for transportation presents a fundamental challenge to the Commonwealth of Virginia. Accessibility – the ease of moving from point A to point B – is a function of mobility and proximity. Mobility is a measure of the level of service (road capacity, transit operations, or service provided by private entities such as railroads) available to move people and goods; the means for providing mobility rest primarily with the state. Proximity, however – the patterns of settlements, location of industry and of commercial and retail development – is an arrangement between local governments and private developers. From the perspective of the state (and of regional agencies charged with making transportation investment decisions), the patterns of proximity agreed to between property holders and local governments may require high or sometimes cost-prohibitive levels of mobility investments.

The “Dillon Rule,” which extends to local government only those powers explicitly granted by the legislature, has in effect denied the ability of local and regional agencies to impose taxes and fees that would pay for transportation programs at the regional level.

As of 2002, Virginia had 95 counties and 229 municipal governments, as well as 196 special districts.³ In general, counties are governed by elected boards of supervisors, with a county administrator or executive handling day-to-day affairs; other typical county officials are the clerk of the circuit court (chief administrator of the court), county treasurer, commissioner of the revenue, commonwealth's attorney, and sheriff. Incorporated towns have elected mayors and councils. Cities elect their own officials (typically including council members who may in turn appoint a city manager), levy their own taxes, and are unencumbered by county obligations. Incorporated towns, on the other hand, remain part of the counties.

Cities in Virginia are independent from counties. In some cases, such as Winchester and Staunton, a city may be surrounded by a county - but they are totally separate jurisdictions despite geographic proximity. Residents of Virginia cities vote for city councils and mayors, pay city real estate and personal property taxes, and get business/professional licenses from city officials. City residents do not get to vote for county supervisors, and city residents do not pay county taxes. If a Virginia city annexes land from a Virginia county, then the residents in the annexed area become residents of the city – they lose the right to vote for

² Texas and North Carolina each operate a larger network of state-owned roadways, but Virginia ranks third in the percentage of all roadways operated by the state. Source: Highway Statistics 2007, Table PS-1; Federal Highway Administration, Office of Policy Information, Washington, DC, October 2008

³U.S. Census Bureau 2002 Census of Governments, Vol. 1, No. 2; Individual State Descriptions: 2002; CG02(1)-2; U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington DC, 2002 (Issued July 2005)

county officials, but gain the right to vote for city officials (but no longer have to pay county taxes either).⁴

Towns are different from cities. In Virginia, towns are not independent from counties. Residents of towns are still residents of the county in which the town is located. For example, residents of the towns of Haymarket, Quantico, Dumfries, and Occoquan are also residents of Prince William County. Residents of the towns of Rural Retreat and Wytheville are also residents of Wythe County. Town residents pay town taxes and vote for town councils, but the residents also pay county taxes and vote for county officials.

Today, smart growth advocates contend that the issues of sprawl and regional growth are tightly connected to political decisions on funding highways, rail, and airport transportation improvements. The assumption on the part of many local and state political leaders is that "more roads and more transit" is the basic solution, and the best answer for the state is to increase the supply of transportation infrastructure. Few discussions about transportation solutions focus on how local land use decisions regarding where to locate new subdivisions and shopping centers, will shape the demand for new transportation infrastructure. Far-flung development may require a larger investment in transportation infrastructure to provide an adequate level of accessibility. The limited proximity created by the distance between destinations requires that the transportation network provide extremely high levels of mobility. As an area develops in this disjointed way, providing adequate levels of vehicular mobility becomes increasingly expensive and often cost prohibitive.

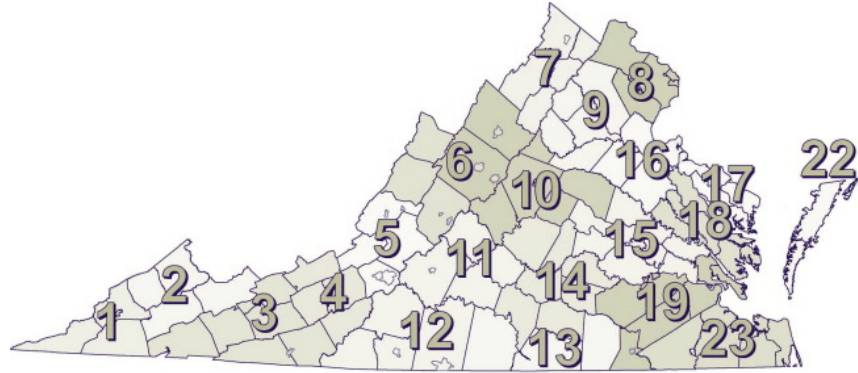
Airports also face such disjointed relationships as the airspace may lie in surrounding jurisdictions while the airport may be located in another jurisdiction. The decision of one locality may also negatively affect the ability of the airport to exist, grow or develop to its fullest potential to insure safety and compatibility with the development goals of each community.

⁴ In 1987, the General Assembly, recognizing the controversy surrounding annexations in Virginia, placed a moratorium on future annexations of any county by any city. In 2007, a Bill to extend the existing moratorium against annexations by cities from 2010 to 2020 passed both houses of the Virginia General Assembly, but was vetoed by Virginia Governor Tim Kaine. The Virginia Municipal League reported: "The governor said that there was no rush on this extension, and that the legislature should study the impact of the annexation moratorium on cities. The moratorium applies only to a limited number of cities. Many cities are barred from annexation by either geography or by other laws establishing the ability of counties to obtain complete or partial immunity from annexation." (Update, Virginia Municipal League, April 6, 2007)

EXISTING DECISION-MAKING AGENCIES

Regional Planning District Commissions

In 1968, Virginia was divided into planning districts based on the community of interest among its counties, cities, and towns. A Planning District Commission (PDC) is a political subdivision of the Commonwealth chartered under the Regional Cooperation Act by the local governments of each planning district. As such they are a creation of local government encouraged by the state. The Virginia Association of Planning District Commissions helps its members meet their responsibilities to local and state government and coordinates inter-PDC functions.



Virginia Figure XX. Virginia Planning Districts

There are 21 PDCs in Virginia.⁵ They are made up of elected officials and citizens appointed to the Commission by the member local governments. The Commission selects an Executive Director responsible for managing daily operations. Commission offices are located generally in a central location for the region as determined by the Commission charter.

The purpose of Planning District Commissions, as set out in the Code of Virginia, Section 15.2-4207, is "...to encourage and facilitate local government cooperation and state-local cooperation in addressing on a regional basis problems of greater than local significance. The cooperation resulting from this chapter is intended to facilitate the recognition and analysis of regional opportunities and take account of regional influences in planning and implementing public policies and services. The planning district commission shall also promote the orderly and efficient development of the physical, social, and economic elements of the district by planning, and encouraging and assisting localities to plan, for the future."

Within their region PDCs may serve to build regional approaches to issues like economic development, solid waste management, and legislative priorities. Initially, PDCs were not granted the authority to operate programs for the provision of services to member jurisdictions. However, the law has been amended over subsequent years so that now it authorizes PDCs to operate and provide general government programs and services, at the request of their members. PDCs may not, however, operate programs or provide services within any jurisdiction which opposes such an action. Among the services provided by PDCs are grant application assistance, management services for program implementation,

⁵ See Appendix, List of PDCs and MPOs

land use planning services, and mapping. Transportation planning is another role for PDCs, which may deal with highway development, airport planning, and specialized transit. Some PDCs currently operate some type of commuter services program made possible through annual Transportation Demand Management (TDM) funding for the purpose of coordinating regional rideshare efforts (ridematching, carpool, vanpool, emergency ride home, and employer outreach and related activities), in an effort to reduce area congestion levels, promote reduced consumption of fossil fuels, and mitigate adverse environmental impacts, among other demonstrated benefits.

In other states, organizations like PDCs are known as regional councils, regional commissions, and councils of government. Virginia's PDCs provide a variety of technical and program services to member local governments. PDCs are the regional contact for the Commonwealth Intergovernmental Review Process and provide input for a host of agencies and commissions. Transportation planning is another role for PDCs, who may deal with highway development, ridesharing, airport planning, and specialized transit. In some instances, the PDC staff serves as a secretariat for a Metropolitan Planning Organization.

Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs)

Formal regional transportation planning began in the United States with the passage of the Federal Highway Act of 1962. This federal landmark legislation required the formation of Metropolitan Planning Organizations, and the development of a "3 C" (continuous, coordinated, and comprehensive) planning process as a condition for receiving federal funds in urbanized areas. Urbanized areas are defined as areas with a population of 50,000 or greater. More stringent planning requirements apply to urbanized areas with a population greater than 200,000

MPOs participate in a federal certification review of the transportation planning process every four years. MPOs must be certified in order to receive federal aid for transportation projects. The transportation planning process must result "in plans and programs that consider all modes of transportation and support metropolitan community development and social goals. These plans and programs shall lead to the development and operation of an integrated, intermodal transportation system that facilitates the efficient, economic movement of people and goods." (23CFR450.300 and 49CFR450.300)

There are thirteen MPOs in Virginia, all but two of which are administratively housed in a PDC. Northern Virginia is part of a 14th MPO, the Transportation Planning Board for the National Capital Region, which is described below.

Alternative Mechanisms

Virginia State law offers several additional mechanisms for addressing "interlocal concerns."

Transportation districts: These districts are responsible for preparation of transportation plans and for the provision of transit facilities. Examples include the

Accomack-Northampton Transportation District (ANTDC) and the Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation District (RTDC – Prince William and Stafford Counties, and Manassas, Manassas Park, and Fredericksburg). The General Assembly has levied an additional 2% tax on gas sold within the counties and cities which are members of the Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation District and of the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission (established by special action). The revenues from this tax are to be used for any transportation purpose for the former organization and for the operating deficit and debt service of the mass transit system of the latter. The ANTDC operates local public transportation services (Star Transit) and administers a rail preservation program on the Eastern Shore of Virginia.

Local transportation improvement districts: These districts are responsible for construction, expansion, improvement, and operation of transportation improvements in the district. An example of this mechanism is the Route 28 Improvement District (Fairfax and Loudoun Counties).

Regional Transportation Program: At the request of the localities involved, the General Assembly has established the Northern Virginia Transportation District Program. Under the terms of this program, designated State funds, most of which would otherwise be paid directly to the member localities, are transferred to the State Transportation Trust Fund and used to pay the debt service on bonds issued by the Commonwealth Transportation Board to construct various transportation projects in the region. The actual projects included in the program are selected by the localities. The State funds which are used are the local share of the State recordation tax and local public rights-of-way use fees collected by the Virginia Department of Transportation, as well as general fund appropriations. The jurisdictions involved are the Cities of Alexandria, Fairfax, Falls Church, Manassas, and Manassas Park and the Counties of Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun, and Prince William.

Regional Governments: While there are no provisions presently in the Code of Virginia which provide for the establishment of regional governments, the State's Constitution authorizes their creation. Article VII, Section 2 of the Constitution states that the General Assembly may provide for regional governments by general law or special act. The Constitution states that no regional governments may be established without approval by the voters in each county or city, or part thereof proposed for inclusion in the regional government. Thus, the General Assembly could set forth by general law a form of regional government that could be adopted by localities; or localities could develop a regional government tailored to their particular needs and request the General Assembly to authorize such by special act. For example, in 1990, the General Assembly authorized the creation of the Roanoke "regional" government to serve the City of Roanoke and Roanoke County. However, the establishment of the regional government was defeated in the required referendum.

Special Legislation for Authorities and Districts: In some instances, the general statutory authorization cited in the previous section either did not meet the needs of localities seeking to establish regional special purpose districts/authorities or did not exist

at the time. In such cases, the General Assembly enacted special legislation authorizing the establishment of a mechanism to effect the regional provision of a service:

Richmond Metropolitan Authority--Construction and operation of toll roads and parking facilities; construction and operation of minor league baseball facility. (Ch. 178, *1986 Acts of Assembly*.) [City of Richmond and the Counties of Henrico, Chesterfield, and Hanover.]

Northern Virginia Transportation Commission--Preparation of plans for transportation facilities; operation of transit system. (Ch. 630, *1964 Acts of Assembly*.) [Fairfax and Arlington Counties and the Cities of Alexandria, Fairfax, and Falls Church.]

There is no lack of organizational entities that could be created to address transportation issues of regional significance. The problem remains:

- Limitations on the powers of such entities to raise revenue, since the Virginia constitution requires direct election of representatives to any body that has the ability to levy taxes
- Issues relating to the Federal mandate for a "continuing, comprehensive and coordinated" transportation planning process, which has heretofore been satisfied through metropolitan planning organizations;
- The disconnect between the powers of local government to control land use and the need for regional action to direct growth in ways that minimize sprawl and congestion; and
- Local agencies currently lack the capacity to take responsibility for the ongoing maintenance and management of roads and bridges (devolution).

CURRENT ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR REGIONAL AND LOCAL DECISION MAKING FOR TRANSPORTATION

Transportation funding decisions at the state level in Virginia are governed by the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB). Chaired by the Secretary of Transportation, the CTB is the state transportation policy board. The CTB apportions state and federal funds using state formulas and, in the case of some state and federal programs, uses discretionary allocations. The CTB approves a six-year plan with specific projects and funding sources each year. It also recommends to the Governor approval of the state Transportation Improvement Program (STIPs) and regional TIPs.

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) is directed by the Commissioner of Transportation, who sits on the CTB. Statewide transportation planning is performed by VDOT. VDOT serves as staff to the CTB. VDOT is divided into nine districts, each of which oversees maintenance and construction on the state-maintained highways, bridges, and tunnels in its region.

Northern Virginia

There are 10 distinct agencies providing public transit regionally and locally in Northern Virginia, including:

- the Washington Metropolitan Area Transportation Authority (WMATA), which provides Metrorail and Metrobus service in Virginia, the District of Columbia, and Maryland;
- the Virginia Railway Express (VRE), which provides commuter rail service to the District of Columbia from Manassas and Fredericksburg;
- Alexandria DASH, serving the City of Alexandria and connecting to Metrorail and VRE stations;
- Arlington Transit (ART) operates within Arlington County, Virginia, supplementing Metrobus with smaller, neighborhood-friendly vehicles and providing access to Metrorail and VRE;
- Arlington STAR Service, providing specialized transit for Arlington residents;
- Virginia Regional Transit (VRT), serving the counties of Augusta, Clarke, Culpeper, Fauquier, Highland, Loudoun, Page and Shenandoah, and the towns of Culpeper, Front Royal, Gordonsville, Leesburg, Orange, Staunton, Warrenton, and Waynesboro cities;
- Fredericksburg Regional Transit (FRED), serving the City of Fredericksburg, and the counties of Caroline, King George, Spotsylvania, and Stafford; and
- the Fairfax Connector, Falls Church City's GEORGE transit service, and FASTRAN, providing human service transportation for Fairfax County and the Cities of Fairfax and Falls Church.

There are eight additional regional and state agencies with some role in planning for transportation in Northern Virginia.

Northern Virginia Regional Commission (NVRC)

The Northern Virginia Regional Commission (NVRC) is a regional council of fourteen member local governments in the Northern Virginia suburbs of Washington DC. According to Virginia's Regional Cooperation Act, as with all Virginia PDCs, NVRC is a political subdivision within the Commonwealth. Among other duties, it is responsible for state planning reviews with coordinated comments on federally funded projects. NVRC also provides a forum for resolution of land use and environmental issues.

Each member jurisdiction appoints one or more representative(s) from its governing body to serve on NVRC's board of 25 Commissioners. Only elected officials may be appointed, and the number of representatives per jurisdiction is population-based. The Commission is served by a professional staff, which includes a demographer and research analyst, regional planners, a civil engineer, human services professionals, technicians, and administrative support personnel. NVRC's chief roles and functions have focused on providing information, performing professional and technical services for its members, and serving as a mechanism for regional coordination. As the "Voice of Northern Virginia", NVRC is the primary representative of the Northern Virginia perspective, relating the region's interests to state

government, to other geographic areas of Virginia, and to the metropolitan area. A 1971 contract with the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG) recognizes the Transportation Planning Board's official transportation responsibilities and avoids duplication of effort with other regional bodies.

The work of the Commission is supported by annual contributions from its member local governments, by appropriations of the Virginia General Assembly, and by a variety of grants, contracts and fees from both governmental and private sector sources.

Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA)

The NVTA, created by Virginia General Assembly in 2001, consists of 16 members, including one local government official from each of its nine localities. NVTA completes and updates Northern Virginia's unconstrained multi-modal transportation plan, the most recent through 2030. NVTA also sets priorities for Northern Virginia's desired transportation projects and regional funding (e.g. CMAQ). Each year, the NVTA forwards Virginia's portion of TIP to TPB for approval.

The Virginia legislature attempted in 2007 to address Northern Virginia's funding needs by granting the power to levy taxes and fees to the NVTA. Taxes and fees authorized by HB 3202 included a Grantor's Tax of 40¢ per \$100 valuation (a tax on property sold in the region); a Motor Vehicle Rental Tax of two per cent of total rental rate; a Transient Occupancy Tax of two per cent of total rental rate for hotel rooms in the region; a Safety Inspection Fee of \$10/year for annual safety inspections conducted in the NVTA region; a sales tax on auto repairs of five per cent of parts, materials, and labor associated with auto repairs performed in the region; a Regional Registration Fee of \$10/year for registration of motor vehicles in the NVTA region; and a one-time Initial Vehicle Registration Fee on the purchase of vehicles, based on the purchase price, or of vehicles registered for the first time in Northern Virginia, of one per cent of the value of the vehicle.

The Hampton Roads area was permitted to establish its own transportation authority which was authorized to enact the same seven taxes and fees. In addition, HB 3202 allowed Northern Virginia and Hampton Roads localities to enact a commercial real estate assessment. Certain high-growth localities were also given impact fee authorities in certain circumstances. If NVTA adopted all of the taxes and fees, it would have raised more than \$300 million annually for transportation projects.

Local taxes and fees, not including impact fees, could have generated about \$100 million annually, based on all jurisdictions implementing the commercial property tax at a \$.10/\$100 valuation rate. Together, the local and NVTA taxes and fees could raise more than \$400 million per year, but still short of the \$700 million needed, according to the regional plan developed by NVTA.

On February 29, 2007 the Virginia Supreme Court ruled that the code granting authority to the NVTA to collect taxes was unconstitutional. All NVTA transportation taxes collected after January 1, 2008 were returned to the individual tax payers.

Northern Virginia Transportation Commission (NVTC)

NVTC, created in 1964 by Virginia's General Assembly, has six member jurisdictions covering 1,000 square miles with a population of 1.6 million. The 20-member NVTC board of state and local elected officials allocates up to \$200 million of transit assistance annually; it also appoints two voting and two alternate members of Washington Metropolitan Area Transportation Authority's Board of Directors. NVTC collects and manages a regional 2% gas tax dedicated to WMATA. The Commission also serves as a forum for resolving transit issues and coordinating services. NVTC is co-owner of VRE (with the Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission) and issues bonds for VRE. In addition, NVTC conducts transit demonstration projects and manages state and federal grant-funded projects.

Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission (PRTC)

The PRTC is the public transportation service provider in Prince William and Stafford Counties, VA, also serving the cities of Manassas, Manassas Park, and Fredericksburg. Located in Virginia about 25 miles southwest of Washington, D.C., PRTC provides commuter bus service along the I-95 and I-66 corridors to points north (OmniRide, and Metro Direct), and local bus services in Prince William County and the cities of Manassas and Manassas Park (OmniLink and Cross County Connector). OmniMatch, also operated by PRTC, offers free ridesharing services. The PRTC also jointly owns the Virginia Railway Express, in conjunction with the NVTC. The board comprises locally-elected officials from Prince William County, Stafford County, and the independent cities of Manassas, Manassas Park, and Fredericksburg. Three of the commissioners are appointed from the General Assembly (one Senator and two Delegates). The other commissioner represents the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (VDRPT). Membership in PRTC allows for the collection of a 2% Motor Fuels Tax which is used for transportation improvements in the region. PRTC focuses on transportation planning and operating initiatives with its bus, rail, and ridematching services, as well as transportation planning studies, capital project management, policy analysis, and regional coordination.

Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOCG)

MWCOG serves as policy forum for suburban Maryland, Virginia, and D.C. on issues such as transportation and air quality. The Council provides modeling and databases for population, employment, and transportation forecasts. In addition, MWCOG operates the Ride Finders Network, which facilitates carpooling and vanpooling. In 1966, MWCOG was recognized by the federal government as the agency responsible for comprehensive regional planning, and agreed with TPB to use that agency as its Transportation Policy committee.

Transportation Planning Board of the National Capital Region (TPB)

The TPB serves as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the National Capital region as defined in federal transportation planning regulations, and includes representatives of 17 cities and counties, plus several state and regional transportation agencies. MWCOG's Director of Transportation leads the staff of TPB. The TPB produces long-range vision plans and assembles the constrained long-range plan (CLRP) with input

from Virginia, Maryland, and the District of Columbia. The TPB has statutory responsibility for the constrained long range plan and for periodic assessments of available funding resources. In addition, the TPB approves and updates 6-year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP); maintains technical and other committees (including regional bus operators); and provides air quality analyses. In this role, the TPB provides transportation input to the Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee, which in turn produces the region's clean air plans and conformance strategies. Violations of the region's air quality improvement plans could jeopardize federal transportation funds.

Northern Virginia District of the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)

The Northern Virginia District of VDOT provides funding for regional planning efforts through MWCOG, and has its own modeling staff emphasizing multi-modal involvement. The District funds annual mode share corridor studies including transit, and also maintains the regional ITS architecture. Together with the headquarters office of VDOT, the District maintains Northern Virginia's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and statewide STIP necessary to qualify for federal funding. The Northern Virginia District manages HOV lanes used by transit systems and by vehicles carrying a lawful number of passengers, and serves as a member of the TPB, PRTC, and NVTA.

Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT)

DRPT, formerly a division of VDOT, was created July 1, 1992. The Department provides formula and discretionary funding for transit throughout the Commonwealth through its Richmond and Northern Virginia offices. For FY 2008, DRPT provided funding for NVTC, VRE, and WMATA totaling \$136 million, or about 22% of the \$622 million total cost of these agencies' operations and capital budgets. DRPT audits compliance and performance of transit systems, and developed an online asset management system for local and regional operators. In addition, DRPT has worked with transit agencies to help each agency develop a six-year capital improvement program.

DRPT is currently working on a statewide transit plan due in spring, 2009 and also is completing a state rail plan and transit ITS plan. DRPT also conducts corridor transit studies such as Route 29, Bus Rapid Transit (BRT - SJR 122) and I-95/395 High Occupancy Toll (HOT) lanes. The DRPT is a member of TPB, NVTA, NVTC, PRTC, and VRE boards, and is a member of the Commonwealth Transportation Board (which allocates funds available from the state).

Hampton Roads

While institutional arrangements are less complex in the Hampton Roads region, there is still a split between transportation planning and land use planning responsibilities.

Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization (HRTPO)

The HRTPO serves as the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for the Virginia Beach-Norfolk-Newport News, VA-NC Metropolitan Statistical Area, including Gloucester, Isle of Wight, James City, Mathews, Surry and York Counties, the cities of Chesapeake,

Hampton, Newport News, Norfolk, Poquoson, Portsmouth, Suffolk, Virginia Beach, and Williamsburg, plus Currituck County in North Carolina.

Voting members of the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization include representatives from the Cities of Chesapeake, Hampton, Newport News, Norfolk, Poquoson, Portsmouth, Suffolk, Virginia Beach, and Williamsburg, and the Counties of Gloucester, Isle of Wight, James City, and York, as well as the Transportation District Commission of Hampton Roads, Williamsburg Area Transit Authority (WATA), the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation, Virginia Port Authority, and four General Assembly representatives (two Senators and two Delegates). Non-voting members include the Virginia Department of Aviation, Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration, and Federal Aviation Administration and the Chief Administrative Officers for all member localities; the Chair of the Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee, the Chair of the Freight Transportation Advisory Committee, and the Peninsula Airport Commission and Norfolk Airport Authority.

The HRPDC provides staffing for the MPO to assist them in carrying out their responsibilities and to coordinate efforts with the Transportation District Commission of Hampton Roads, Williamsburg Area Transit Authority (WATA), and VDOT. The MPO's Transportation Technical Advisory Committee (TTAC) provides review and recommendations to the MPO on all regional transportation planning efforts.

Hampton Roads Transportation Authority

The Hampton Roads Transportation Authority (HRTA) was a regional authority created by the Virginia General Assembly during its 2007 session. When signed by Governor Kaine, House Bill 3202 (HB 3202) created the Hampton Roads Transportation Authority along with other transportation initiatives statewide. HB 3202 also spelled out what projects the HRTA is responsible for funding and the taxes and fees the HRTA is able to impose.

On February 29, 2008, the Virginia Supreme Court ruled the HRTA's ability to levy taxes and fees unconstitutional. As a result, the HRTA did not start collecting the taxes and fees outlined in General Assembly legislation (HB 3202). A bill abolishing the HRTA became law in 2008.

Hampton Roads Transit (HRT)/Transportation District Commission of Hampton Roads (TDCHR)

The Transportation District Commission of Hampton Roads is the governing body for Hampton Roads Transit. Members of the Commission include representatives of the seven cities served by HRT (Portsmouth, Hampton, Suffolk, Chesapeake, Newport News, Norfolk, and Virginia Beach); the Chairperson of the Commonwealth Transportation Board (Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) is the designee); and two members of the Virginia General Assembly.

Services include 54 local bus routes, four shuttle routes, and seven MAX express (limited stop) routes; carpool and vanpool park-and-ride lots; Guaranteed Ride Commuter Checks;

Computer Match Van Leasing; a Paddlewheel Ferry serving Downtown to Old Towne; and the Handi-Ride demand-responsive service for persons with disabilities.

Williamsburg Area Transit (WAT) provides a transportation system to residents of James City County, the City of Williamsburg, and the Bruton District of York County. The agency's objective is to ensure services meet the social and business needs of the community by providing a seamless, coordinated regional transit system serving residents, visitors and students through fixed routes and transportation services for the disabled.

Richmond

While the transportation issues facing the Richmond area are less complex than those facing the Hampton Roads and Northern Virginia regions, many of the themes are similar in nature. In fact, the Richmond area was an innovator in the use of revenue bonds from toll facilities to finance construction of transportation facilities. The Richmond Metropolitan Authority was formed in 1966 by the Virginia General Assembly; the RMA was empowered to design, acquire right-of-way, construct, operate, collect tolls, and maintain the Richmond Expressway System. The RMA built and opened the Powhite Parkway in 1973 and the Downtown Expressway in 1976 as toll roads. The RMA also acquired the Boulevard Bridge, and operates a downtown parking deck, and opened the Powhite Extension in 1988. The Richmond expressway system is now part of the Smart Tag/E-Z Pass network, which also includes the Pocohantas Parkway in Chesterfield and Henrico County, and the Dulles Toll Road in Northern Virginia.

Transportation decision makers in the Richmond area are pursuing the creation of a Regional Transportation Authority (RTA). A bill (HB2158) authorizing the creation of such a body passed in the most recent General Assembly session, but a companion bill (HB2161) that would have authorized a referendum on paying for the RTA was not approved. The MPO is currently considering whether to create an RTA using other sorts of funding.

Richmond Regional Planning District Commission

The Commission is a regional planning agency with major emphasis in the areas of transportation, local technical assistance, and information services including demographic, economic, and geographic information systems. RRPDC serves the Town of Ashland; the counties of Charles City, Chesterfield, Goochland, Hanover, Henrico, New Kent, and Powhatan; and the City of Richmond.

The Commission, which was formed by local governments August 14, 1969 under the authority of the Virginia Area Development Act—revised and retitled the Regional Cooperation Act in 1995—comprises elected officials and citizens who address mutual problems and work out solutions for the local governments which benefit from intergovernmental cooperation.

The RRPDC's Urban Transportation Planning Division provides technical expertise that is needed for the development of transportation models, plans, and programs for the region as implemented by the Richmond Area Metropolitan Planning Organization.

The Richmond Area MPO's voting members include The Town of Ashland, the counties of Charles City, Chesterfield, Goochland, Hanover, Henrico, New Kent, Powhatan, the City of Richmond, Capital Region Airport Commission, the Greater Richmond Transit Company (GRTC) transit system, Richmond Metropolitan Authority, Richmond Regional PDC, and VA Department of Transportation. Non-voting members include: Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee (CTAC), Elderly and Disabled Advisory Committee (EDAC), Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration, Citizen Appointees, Ridefinders, Inc., VA Department of Aviation, VA Department of Rail & Public Transportation.

The division's staff, along with staff from the PDC's other two divisions, provides administrative support to the MPO board and its committees, and prepares technical studies related to the region's urban transportation planning efforts.

Greater Richmond Transit Company

GRTC is a non-profit service provider jointly owned by the City of Richmond and Chesterfield County. The GRTC Transit System Board of Directors consists of six members – three appointed by the City Council of Richmond and three by the Chesterfield County Board of Supervisors. In addition to fixed-route service, GRTC offers services for the elderly and disabled, welfare-to-work transportation, vanpool and carpool development, regional taxicab oversight, and the University Pass Program for Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) students and employees. GRTC Transit System serves the City of Richmond, Henrico County, and a small portion of Chesterfield County. There are also two Extended Express Service routes that service the City of Petersburg and the City of Fredericksburg.

Planning for Small Urban Areas

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) has initiated a program to update the transportation plans for small urban areas across the Commonwealth. The program includes updates to 44 "small urban areas" (those towns and cities with populations less than 50,000 people). The plans address transportation issues and identify travel needs in each community through the year 2020. Although the primary focus of each plan is the "thoroughfare highway system", those arterial and collector roads and highways that connect urban areas, the plan will also address local needs and other modes of transportation.

The program serves many purposes. It identifies future transportation needs in each locality to the year 2020; helps to prioritize future funding requirements; coordinates local needs with state highway improvement plans; and it involves the public in the transportation planning process.

Once the updates of these plans have been completed, the information will become a resource not only to VDOT, but to localities, organizations, and the public as well. Moreover, this resource can become an important component of local comprehensive and transportation

plans. The information in these studies could help illuminate the linkage between future land use and transportation needs.⁶

Some of Virginia's local are pursuing interesting and innovative planning initiatives that offer real promise for the future. One example is the Jefferson Area Eastern Planning Initiative. In January 2000 the TJPDC launched the Jefferson Area Eastern Planning Initiative (EPI) with a grant from the Federal Highways Administration (FHWA) Transportation & Community & System Preservation (TCSP) Program. The EPI Advisory Committee, made up of elected officials, residents, and leaders from business, development, environmental and community groups, met eleven times and hosted four public workshops during the two-year study, focusing on three key questions:

- How will we live? - In what types of communities do we want to live and work by the year 2050?
- Where will we live? - What areas in the region are suitable for urban development and what areas are off limits?
- How will we get there? - What steps are needed to move the region from where it is now to the desired types of communities and growth patterns?

In order to develop effective regional solutions, the United Jefferson Area Mobility Plan (UnJAM 2025) combines the Charlottesville-Albemarle Regional Transportation (CHART) Plan for the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) area with the Rural Area Transportation Long-Range Plan, for the five-county Thomas Jefferson Planning District. The Rural County Plans serve more of a coordinating function for major projects, and as a "shopping list" for annual negotiations between Boards of Supervisors and VDOT to set project priorities. The MPO (CHART) plan, as required under federal regulations, is a fiscally constrained listing of the most important projects for the Charlottesville/Albemarle MPO area over the next 20 years. Each of the local jurisdictions in the Thomas Jefferson Planning District has identified a broad vision and enumerated more specific transportation goals. This Plan supports these local visions while achieving a regional consensus on priority projects and strategies.

Due to severe budget constraints, the Plan also focuses on a practical set of improvements that maximizes the effectiveness of existing transportation investments. The recent Eastern Planning Initiative study compared the effect of continued dispersed development in the region versus a strategy of infill and compact growth around existing town centers. The more compact, village-scaled development patterns had far less impact on fields, forest, farmland, air, and water quality, while potentially saving \$500 million in transportation project costs.

The overarching goal is to create a balanced, multi-modal transportation network, by 1) Improving connections throughout the region; 2) Improving mobility within neighborhoods, towns, and counties; and 3) Making transportation choices which help foster livable communities.⁷

⁶ VDOT Website: http://www.virginiadot.org/projects/sm_urbanplans/sua_index.asp

⁷ <http://www.tjpd.org/transportation/unjam.asp>

Rural Regional Long-Range Plans

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) and 20 planning district commissions (PDCs) throughout the commonwealth with rural transportation planning responsibility are partnering to evaluate the state's rural transportation system and to recommend a range of transportation improvements that best satisfy existing and future needs.

It is intended that these partnerships will result in development of uniform regional long range plans that identify needs based upon goals and objectives established by each region. Improving the transportation system remains vital to improving the quality of life and continued economic growth and prosperity in Virginia. Local benefits of the ongoing regional long-range planning process include:

- Identification of transportation deficiencies and recommendations of remedies
- Assistance with comprehensive plan updates and traffic impact studies (Chapter 527)
- Programming of transportation improvements
- Effects of land use and development
- Placement of regions in question on more standardized planning-related footing with statewide metropolitan planning organization counterparts.

WHAT OPTIONS OR LESSONS FROM OTHER STATES MIGHT BE USEFUL FOR THE COMMONWEALTH?

There are many innovative approaches that have been implemented by other states and regions that would appear to hold promise for Virginia.

State of New Jersey – Cross Acceptance and Plan Endorsement

The state’s approach to growth management operates as both a top-down and bottom-up process. There is a statewide plan developed through a cooperative process between the state and municipalities, with mandatory public participation. The purpose of the State Plan is to “*coordinate planning activities and establish Statewide planning objectives in the following areas: land use, housing, economic development, transportation, natural resource conservation, agriculture and farmland retention, recreation, urban and suburban redevelopment, historic preservation, public facilities and services, and intergovernmental coordination.*” The plan defines centers—areas of compact growth—as the best way to direct and organize new growth and redevelopment in the state. Each planning area has different types of centers.

The State Plan acts as a policy guide and is not regulatory. Local and regional governments are strongly encouraged by cross-acceptance and incentives to have plans consistent with the State Plan. Cross-acceptance is a process where various government agencies compare plans to assure compatibility and consistency between different levels of government. In New Jersey, local and regional governments are encouraged to use cross-acceptance as a means of ensuring accordance with the State Plan. The notion of cross-acceptance began in the late 1970s and by 1986 evolved into a “state development guide plan” that identifies areas of growth, limited growth, agriculture, and conservation.

New Jersey offers incentives and technical assistance for regionally coordinated planning consistent with the State Plan through the “plan endorsement” process (previously known as the centers designation process). The Office of Smart Growth and the State Planning Commission review a local, county, or regional plan, and its accompanying development regulations, for consistency with the guidelines for plan endorsement adopted by the State Planning Commission. If the commission finds the plan to be consistent with the State Plan, the plan becomes “endorsed.” Jurisdiction(s) with endorsed plans receive many benefits, such as higher priority for grant money, enhanced coordination with state agency services, and streamlined state permitting review. The endorsement process also includes designation and delineation of centers (compact areas in which growth should be focused, which are mentioned but not officially identified in the State Plan).

There are also policy statements in the Transportation section of the Statewide Policies. The section heading states: “*Improve transportation systems by coordinating transportation and land-use planning; integrating transportation systems; developing and enhancing alternative modes of transportation; improving management structures and techniques; and utilizing transportation as an economic development tool.*”

The Centers of Place grants are available only to municipalities that have endorsed plans. This grant is administered by the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT), in consultation with representatives from the New Jersey Economic Development Authority and Downtown New Jersey (a downtown advocacy group that is not a state agency). The grant funds nontraditional transportation improvements that support smart growth objectives, such as bike and pedestrian improvements, parking and circulation management, landscaping, and rehabilitation of transportation structures. Applicants must have completed a strategic revitalization plan and program approved by the State Planning Commission. Funding levels have varied from \$750,000 to \$3 million, depending upon appropriations by the legislature.

California Regional Blueprint Planning Program

Regional transportation planning in California began with the passage of AB 69, (Government Code Chapter 1253, statues of 1972). This state landmark legislation required the establishment of regional agencies to include all areas of California and to prepare Regional Transportation Plans (RTPs) as a condition for receiving State transportation funds. In the RTPs, agencies were to develop transportation goals, address transportation issues and needs of the community, identify system options and alternatives, and finally develop actions and financing necessary for recommended projects. The legislation required the agencies to prepare RTPs for use in the State policy development and allocation of resources for transportation infrastructure and operations. The State legislation established an annual funding commitment to support this regional transportation planning process. Development of RTPs became the responsibility of MPOs in urbanized areas, while Regional Transportation Planning Agencies (RTPAs) were responsible for smaller, rural areas characterized by lower population density. Of 44 regional transportation planning agencies in California, 18 are MPOs, while 26 are RTPAs.

The vast majority of the regions in California are facing rapid population growth, which places increased demand on the transportation system. Vehicle miles traveled (VMT) is increasing at an even faster rate than population growth, resulting in substantial stress on the transportation system in the cities and suburbs, and even some fast-growing rural areas. Many rural as well as all urban areas face the dual challenge of improving mobility for travelers, while meeting air quality goals. An additional challenge to rural RTPAs includes the lack of adequate funding due to lower population densities and longer travel distances.

Another major issue, especially in the rural areas, is that maintenance of the transportation system has not been considered part of the transportation planning process. Planning is considered "future oriented". With the decreasing percentage of funds available for the transportation system and more concern with air quality as a constraint on new projects, there is now a greater focus on looking at maintenance as an integral part of transportation planning. With the aging transportation system in all areas of California, maintenance priorities and the cost of maintenance are both becoming an integral part of the planning process.

The Regional Blueprint Planning Program is intended to better inform regional and local decision-making, through pro-active engagement of all segments of the population as well as critical stakeholders in the community, business interests, academia, builders, environmental

advocates, and to foster consensus on a vision and preferred land use pattern. It is anticipated that the regional blueprint planning grants will build capacity for regional collaboration and integrated planning that will in turn enable regions to plan to accommodate all their future growth, thereby reducing need for sprawl.

The grants for regional collaborative decision-making will lead to adoption of blueprint plans that will:

1. Foster a more efficient land use pattern that (a) supports improved mobility and reduced dependency on single-occupant vehicle trips, (b) accommodates an adequate supply of housing for all incomes, (c) reduces impacts on valuable habitat, productive farmland, and air quality, (d) increases resource use efficiency, and (e) results in safe and vibrant neighborhoods.
2. Provide consumers more housing and transportation choices.
3. Improve California's economic competitiveness and quality of life.
4. Reduce costs and time needed to deliver transportation projects through informed early public and resource agency involvement.
5. Secure local government and community support, including that of under-represented groups, to achieve the resulting comprehensive vision through including innovative computer models and public involvement activities.
6. Establish a process for public and stakeholder engagement that can be replicated to build awareness of and support for critical infrastructure and housing needs.

The regional blueprint efforts will include development of regional performance measures that can measure progress toward the region's own vision for future land use and transportation. Each region will also select several statewide performance measures to measure progress toward statewide transportation system and housing goals.

Puget Sound Regional Transportation Improvement District

The Puget Sound Regional Council is the Seattle, Washington region's designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) under federal law, and Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO) under state law. Its role is to work with local communities, government entities, and citizens to develop and plan for implementation of a joint vision for land use, transportation, and economic development in the region. It regularly updates three plans, Vision 2020, Destination 2030, and the Regional Economic Strategy, to achieve these goals. PSRC also distributes federal transportation funds to the region.

The Regional Transportation Commission was created by the Washington State Legislature in 2006 to look at how regional transportation is planned and funded in Central Puget Sound. The Commission was asked to evaluate existing governance structures and to make recommendations on the type of organization that should be making these priority and

funding decisions. The RTC put out a draft recommendation in December. Their final recommendations were completed in January, 2007.

Another act of the 2006 Legislature was to require the Regional Transportation Investment District (a special district created by the Legislature in 2004) and Sound Transit to develop a joint ballot to request funds for Road and Transit projects in Snohomish, Pierce, and King Counties. Over the past year, the two organizations worked on identifying projects and related costs throughout the region, known as the “RTID Blueprint” and the “Sound Transit 2 Package.” Voters inside these two special district boundaries within Snohomish, King, and Pierce counties voted in November, 2007 on a joint ballot measure funding billions in transportation improvements. Voters in the proposed RTID district defeated the initiative by a vote of 56.16% to 43.84%. There are three potential options for pursuing funding for transportation improvements, none of which are exclusive of the others.

1. The RTID Planning Committee May Resubmit the Plan. RCW 36.120.040(8) authorizes the RTID Planning Committee to redefine the selected transportation projects, financing plan and ballot measure and submit the refined plan to the voters after approval by county legislative authorities. The Planning Committee has the authority to do this three times under the authorizing statute, but if a plan is not adopted by the third time, the Planning Committee is dissolved. There is no limit on how much time may pass between submissions.

2. The Counties Could Establish a Single County RTID. RCW 36.120.030(8) provides that if the voters do not authorize a multi-county Regional Transportation Investment District by December 1, 2007, each of the Counties has the option to form a single-county regional transportation investment district on an individual and independent basis.

3. The Counties Could Establish or Participate in a Transportation Benefit District (TBD). RCW 36.73.020 allows each County to form or participate in a transportation benefit district after December 1, 2007 for the purpose of acquiring, constructing, improving, providing, and funding transportation improvements.

Although the RTID has the legislative authority to continue to exist, the current state funding for RTID expired at the end of 2007 given the unsuccessful election. Current plans for financing the expansion of transit will depend on other sources of funding, such as legislation now under consideration that would increase the taxing authority that King County can dedicate to transit by allowing existing (unused) Ferry District taxing authority to be used for buses and streetcars instead.

Portland Metro

The policies and plans enacted by the State of Oregon and the Portland metropolitan area governments have been nationwide models for pursuing smart growth objectives. Metro is a directly elected regional government that serves more than 1.3 million residents in Clackamas, Multnomah, and Washington counties, and the 25 cities in the Portland metropolitan area. Metro was established in 1979 when the Columbia Region Association of Governments combined with the Metropolitan Service District. Initial Metro functions

included solid waste management, transportation planning, zoo management, and oversight of the region's urban growth boundary. In 1992, residents of the Metropolitan Service District passed a home rule charter that began:

We, the people of the Portland area metropolitan service district, in order to establish an elected, visible and accountable regional government that is responsive to the citizens of the region and works cooperatively with our local governments; that undertakes as its most important service, planning and policy making to preserve and enhance the quality of life and the environment for ourselves and future generations; and that provides regional services needed and desired by the citizens in an efficient and effective manner, do ordain this charter for the Portland area metropolitan service district, to be known as Metro.

With its elected governing body, the Metro Council, Metro became the only elected regional government in the nation and the only regional government organized under a home-rule charter approved by the voters. Under state law and its home rule charter, Metro is required to adopt and implement regional planning goals and a long-range, regional framework plan that addresses everything from the urban growth boundary and housing affordability to transportation and natural resources protection. The 24 cities and parts of three counties within Metro's boundary must amend their local land use plans and regulations to conform to the Regional Framework Plan. Metro acts as the MPO for Federal transportation funding and project development.

The council has the ability to adopt enforceable ordinances governing land use and growth management within its jurisdiction, defined as the territory within the Metropolitan Service District and its annexes. Ordinances primarily address matters of the regional framework plan, such as

- regional transportation and mass transit systems;
- management and amendment of the urban growth boundary;
- protection of lands outside the urban growth boundary for natural resource, future urban, or other uses;
- housing densities;
- urban design and settlement patterns;
- parks, open spaces, and recreational facilities;
- water sources and storage;
- coordination of growth management and land use planning policies with those of Clark County, Washington;
- planning responsibilities mandated by state law.

The charter requires each city and county within Metro's jurisdiction to make local land use decisions consistent with the regional framework plan until its comprehensive plan has been determined to be consistent with the regional framework plan. The council can require changes in local land use standards and procedures if changes are necessary to remedy a pattern or practice of decision making inconsistent with the regional framework plan. Metro is responsible for establishing and maintaining the state-mandated urban growth boundary (UGB) for the Portland region. Revisions to Metro's UGB currently meet 20-year

The Regional Framework Plan, adopted in 1997 and amended in 2005, contains all of Metro's adopted land use planning policies and requirements that direct the region's growth. Metro's charter directs it to address a comprehensive list of issues, including mass transit, management of the UGB, urban design, open space, and housing densities.

Benchmarks are formulated for key indicators to gauge advancement toward the goals set forth in Metro plans and in the 2040 Growth Concept. Every two years, Metro gathers and analyzes data to determine the level of progress toward the goals. In recent years, the reports have included annual data updates. However, the performance measures reports avoid specific policy suggestions. The Metro Policy Advisory Committee and other committees use the reports to inform policy development and adjust the regional plans based on actual performance. These adjustments may include changes to funding requirements and the development of specific programs.

Another one of Metro Council's efforts to promote responsible land use planning is its New Look at Regional Choices policy. New Look is the Metro Council's collaborative effort to find new, creative ways to absorb the arrival of a million new residents in this region in the next 25 years while preserving the values of its long-term vision. It is a program and policy visioning process rather than a single program. The Metro Council works with leaders and practitioners from a broad cross-section of businesses, governments, and other interests to identify new growth management tools, potentially recommend changes to state law and local policies, and pursue financial investment strategies, all in order to make its desired vision for how the region should grow.

In general, the New Look is divided into three broad policy categories:

1. Community Investment: Steering growth into existing commercial areas and promoting vibrant mixed-use centers that use land most efficiently and provide more housing and transportation options for residents.
2. The Shape of the Region: Managing expansion of the urban growth boundary in a way that protects valuable agricultural land, but also allows for responsible growth in outlying areas.
3. The Regional Transportation Plan: Updating the plan to make it financially realistic and to support the region's growth management values.⁸

⁸ **Connecting Transportation Decision Making with Responsible Land Use: State and Regional Policies, Programs, and Incentives** Mineta Transportation Institute, College of Business, San José State University, San José, CA 95192-0219; FHWA/CA/OR-070862A, February 2008

Appendix:

Virginia Planning District Commissions and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs)

- PD 1 - Lenowisco PDC (Includes part of Kingsport [TN] MPO)
- PD 2 - Cumberland Plateau PDC
- PD 3 - Mount Rogers PDC (Includes part of Bristol [TN] MPO)
- PD 4 - New River Valley PDC (Contains Blacksburg-Christiansburg-Montgomery MPO)
- PD 5 - Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Council (Roanoke Valley Area MPO)
- PD 6 - Central Shenandoah PDC (Harrisonburg-Rockingham MPO)
- PD 7 - Northern Shenandoah Valley Regional Council (Winchester-Frederick MPO)
- PD 8 - Northern Virginia Regional Council (PD 8 is part of the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board, the MPO for the Washington, DC/MD/VA area)
- PD 9 - Rappahannock-Rapidan Regional Council
- PD 10 - Thomas Jefferson PDC (Charlottesville-Albemarle MPO)
- PD 11 - Region 2000 Local Government Council (Central Virginia MPO)
- PD 12 - West Piedmont PDC (Danville MPO)
- PD 13 - Southside PDC
- PD 14 - Piedmont PDC
- PD 15 - Richmond Regional PDC (Richmond Area MPO)
- PD 16 - George Washington Regional Council (Fredericksburg MPO)
- PD 17 - Northern Neck PDC
- PD 18 - Middle Peninsula PDC
- PD 19 - Crater PDC (Tri-Cities Area MPO)
- PD 22 - Accomack-Northampton PDC
- PD 23 - Hampton Roads PDC (Hampton Roads MPO)

Notes: Chesterfield County is a member of PD 15 & PD 19

Franklin County is a member of PD 5 & PD 12

Gloucester County is a member of PD 18 & PD 23

Surry County is a member of PD 19 & PD 23

Bedford County is member of the Roanoke & Lynchburg MPOs

Nottoway County is not a PDC or MPO member