

APPENDIX C

DRAFT 2026 LRTP FINAL PUBLIC REVIEW DOCUMENTATION

March 11 through March 25, 2004

Public Review Comments Received and Staff Response Comments

Comments from various MPO, LRTP Advisory Task Force, and CTAC Members

Comment 1: GRTC reminded staff of the discussion by the Advisory Task Force to include the list of Task Force members in Chapter 1. GRTC also requested that the park-and-ride symbols on Map 9-1 be changed to designate which locations are transit park-and-ride lots and which are carpool park-and-ride lots.

(Staff Response: The list of Advisory Task Force members will be included on the back of the front cover of the document as in the 2018 LRTP document and referenced in Chapter 1 and Chapter 4. There was brief discussion by the Task Force to include the list in the appendix rather than in the chapters. Removing the membership list from the Appendix will result in changing titles and contents of the appendices. Staff agrees with the requested changes to Map 9-1. In addition, the title of the map will be changed to read “Existing Transit and Park-and-Ride Network”.)

Comment 2: Marty Moynihan, Executive Director of the Port of Richmond, requested the following text changes to Chapter 11 – Intermodal System, section titled Inland Port Facilities on pages 5 and 6.

In the first paragraph, add “Virginia’s Mid-Atlantic Multi-modal Freight Center” at the end of the first sentence and add “appointed by Richmond City Council,” to the third sentence.

The second paragraph should read as follows: “The 121-acre facility is a domestic and international multi-modal freight and distribution center located on the James River, approximately 100 miles from Cape Henry. The port acts as a transportation hub serving waterborne, rail and truck shippers throughout the mid-Atlantic states. It has an excellent inland geographic location alongside I-95 with easy access to I-64, I-85, and Foreign Trade Zone #207... Independent Carrier Line, Inc., (ICL) the port’s principal carrier and a leader in ocean transportation, operates four container vessels on a weekly schedule that serve Chester, PA, Richmond, VA, Liverpool, England and Antwerp, Belgium. ICL also supports the Supply Chain requirements of companies needing waterborne, rail and trucking transportation warehouse services. Partnered with METALNET and TRANSMODE, the Port of Richmond is part of a comprehensive Supply Chain Network of over 600 warehouses.”

The third paragraph should be replaced as follows: “The port of Richmond handles close to half a million tons of cargo annually through its facilities. Major cargoes handled at the port are tobacco, tobacco products, steel, steel products, forest products, chemicals, pharmaceuticals, textiles, project cargo, aplite and livestock. The port handles over 35,000 truckload equivalents (TLEs) annually.

The fourth paragraph should be replaced as follows: “The port has spent almost \$4 million for infrastructure improvements since 2000 to continue its planned rehabilitation and expansion

of the port's facilities and capabilities. Major projects completed in the past several years include the South Side Development Plan which provided an additional 25 acres for additional cargo lay down and construction of future warehouse space, a Rail Loading Area upgrade and the Wharf Rehabilitation Project.

In paragraph 4 remove the sentence that reads "The port would like a comprehensive study ... determining the feasibility of the project." Remove the last sentence of paragraph 4.

Remove Koch Petroleum and Cedarcrest Marine from the list of other marine terminals and include the following:

*City of Richmond
Intermediate Terminal
Department of Public Works
Richmond, VA 23219*

*Flint Hills Resources
4110 Deepwater Terminal Road
Richmond, VA 23234*

(Staff Response: Staff agrees with the requested changes and recommends updating Map 11-1 to reflect the changes to the list of other marine terminals.)

Comment 3: Dennis Carney, Powhatan County, requests that the Huguenot Trail (VA 711) widening project from Route 288 to the Chesterfield County Line be added in to the Vision Plan list.

(Staff Response: Staff agrees with the requested change. This project should have been included in the original Vision Plan list of projects but was unintentionally removed from the list. The project includes widening to 4 lanes for approximately 1.2 miles at an estimated cost of \$7.8 million. Note that the Vision Plan is not financially constrained, therefore, this change will not affect the results of the Plan. Prior to this project moving forward into construction, it will need to be included in the financially constrained portion of the plan. If the schedule for construction of this project arises prior to the next LRTP update in three years, the LRTP will need to be amended to include the projects and update the air quality conformity analysis.)

Comment 4: CTAC members requested that a footnote be added to Map 1-1 to indicate "The MPO study area does not include portions of Charles City, Chesterfield, Goochland, New Kent, and Powhatan Counties". A similar footnote should be added for Figures 6-3 through 6-6 and Figures 6-8 through 6-10.

(Staff Response: Staff recommends adding the footnote to Map 1-1; changing the footnote for Figure 6-1 to the same footnote as Map 1-1; changing the title of Figures 6-3 through 6-6 to contain the word "MPO study area" before the words population and households; change titles of Figures 6-9 and 6-10 to have the word "MPO Study" placed before the word "Area".)

Comment 5: Bill Nelson, CTAC member from Powhatan, requested that Powhatan's locations for Share the Road signs as described on page 10-7 be updated to include the section of Judes Ferry Road (VA 614, from Huguenot Trail (VA 711) to Norwood Creek.

(Staff Response: Staff agrees with the requested change.)

Citizen comments on Draft Long-Range Transportation Plan

Comment 6: Mr. Rodney Sobin writes via e-mail: Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft 2026 Long-Range Transportation Plan.

I am pleased to see the inclusion of a dedicated chapter on pedestrian and bicycle modes of transportation. I concur with the chapter's analysis and findings and I am particularly disappointed to read of Henrico County's failure to perform any sort of comprehensive pedestrian or bicycle planning.

A dedicated chapter brings prominence to the subject. However it also allows the reader to skip the subject if it is not also integrated elsewhere in the plan. Therefore I hope you will explicitly mention pedestrian and bicycle accommodation elsewhere in the plan, particularly in discussing and listing planned or proposed road widening and road construction projects.

One particular textual edit that I would suggest is to include wording on the need for pedestrian accommodation for crossing roads, not only sidewalks along roads. For instance, Strategy 2.1.2 (on page 3-2) encourages pedestrian and bicycle accommodation alongside roads but does not mention crossing roads.

The inadequacy of the current wording of the strategy can be illustrated by the situation in Short Pump along the US-250 (Broad St.) corridor where sidewalks are present along the road but there are no crosswalks, pedestrian signals, or overpasses to allow safe pedestrian passage across the road (except at Broad and Pump/Pouncey Tract--where crosswalks exist but pedestrian access is very dangerous due to inadequate signals). So we have the situation of thousands of residents in close proximity to major retail locations who are forced to drive because it is unsafe to walk across the street. The problem also applies to area employees, shoppers, and others who are forced to drive to cross Broad (or Pouncey Tract or Pump) to, say, shop or have a meal. Discouragement of walking and bicycling increases traffic congestion, noise, pollution, and stress.

While I have focused on the Short Pump area I am sure that many parts of our region display the same inadequate accommodation of walking and bicycling as modes of transportation.

I was heartened to see that VDOT developed bicycling and pedestrian policy that promotes accommodation of those modes along roads, to cross roads, and to include adequate signaling as well as crosswalks and bicycle lanes. The key will be to put this into practice. (Recently I received a letter from the VDOT Sandston residency rejecting pedestrian crosswalks and signals across US-25-/Broad St. at the Short Pump Town Center mall because of insufficient number of pedestrians--truly a chicken-and-egg problem. Few walk across because it's unsafe and VDOT doesn't want to make it safe to cross because not enough are already crossing!!)

I am sorry that I have not had enough time to review all chapters of the draft plan. I hope that there will be opportunities with future plan iterations.

**Regards,
Rodney Sobin
13204 Autumn Chase Place
Richmond, VA 23233-1061
sobinfamily@aol.com**

(Staff Response: Staff recommends that the word “crosswalk” be added to Strategy 2.1.2 between the words sidewalk and shoulders. A bicycle and pedestrian plan is currently being developed for the Richmond region and is anticipated to be completed by the end of 2004. The comments received regarding bicycle and pedestrian improvements will be transmitted to the Study Advisory Committee and consultants developing the bicycle and pedestrian plan.)

***Comment 7: Citizen at March 24, 2004 Public Review Meeting held at the Children’s Museum of Richmond writes:
I would like to see maps that include the City of Richmond Master Plan.***

More synergy and accountability with city and local officials. Where was the city and Airport Commission?

(Staff Response: Numerous transportation plans and studies were reviewed to ensure consistency with the plans of local government agencies. The Richmond Master Plan (2000-2020) was one of the plans and studies reviewed. It is not practical to map out each local jurisdiction’s or transportation provider’s comprehensive and transportation plan recommendations. Local government officials and administrative staffs were notified of the public review meetings. However, for future public meetings efforts will be increased to encourage representation from local government jurisdictions at the meetings to better address questions/comments from citizens regarding LRTP consistency with local plans.)

***Comment 8: Citizen at March 24, 2004 Public Review Meeting held at the Children’s Museum of Richmond writes:
Good text, nice data gathered & displayed, great maps.***

Glad to see greater share of dollars spent on mass transit, new rail initiatives. But in future growth areas, need transit to relieve congestion. Still not enough emphasis of need to move people and goods, instead of SOVs. Still too much sprawl in localities highway build lists.

Region about to be found non-attainment and top 10 goals of LRTP should be air quality improvement. Disconnect between goals & objectives and way funding directed, and inter-relating transportation dollars and land use and road dollars used as incentive for good land use strategies.

[Requested] Executive Summary (2 – 3 pages) total dollar allocations on 1 or 2 pages.
(Staff Response: The 2026 LRTP update has made significant strides in the emphasis on alternatives modes of travel to the single-occupant-vehicle (SOV) and in the percentage of funding available for non-highway projects/programs compared to previous long-range plans.)

Staff will continue to consider alternative ways to relieve congestion other than new and expanded roadways in future plans. Staff recommends that efforts be made by local area governments to consider the link between land planning and transportation. The LRTP includes examples of alternative land development techniques that include compact and in-fill development as well as transit oriented designs. Staff has also recommended the preparation of a LRTP Executive Summary document as part of the FY05 UWP.

Comment 9: T. Bryan Byrne, citizen at March 24, 2004 Public Review Meeting held at the Children's Museum of Richmond, writes:

I was disappointed that so much emphasis is on road-building and so little on walkways, bike routes, bus and rail. The more cars that we have on the road, the more we degrade the environment and diminish the quality of life. If pedestrians are given priority, then more people will walk which means that there will be fewer cars on the road. The same applies to bikes. It is a healthier means of transport too, particularly if the walkers and bikers are separated from traffic. This can be done in part with power line rights of way and designating connecting residential roads as bikeways during commute times.

Light rail can be installed with existing rights of way: I-95, I-195, I-64 for example. Tunnels under the roadways can provide passengers access at stops. Buses and streetcars could connect with these stops. I think that more sprawl + more roads + more traffic and aggressive driving = a diminished quality of life for all. We need to start moving in another direction.

(Staff Response: Staff appreciates Mr. Byrne's comments and would like to reiterate the previous response that the 2026 LRTP update has made significant strides in the emphasis on alternatives modes of travel to the single-occupant-vehicle (SOV) and in the percentage of funding available for non-highway projects/programs compared to previous long-range plans. Staff shares Mr. Byrne's concerns and will continue to promote a balanced emphasis of relieving congestion between highway expansion and alternative modes of travel in future plans.)

Comment 10: Citizen at March 25, 2004 Public Review Meeting held at the Bon Air Library writes:

Would like to see graphics comparing Richmond's transit system with other cities of similar size. Ridership, per capita transit expenditures, route miles per capita, etc..

Meetings could use more publicity. Advertise on GRTC, RideFinders, mailer in utility bills.

(Staff Response: Staff will consider adding additional measures and comparisons of other comparable sized cities' transit systems in preparation for the next update of the LRTP. In addition, staff is continually looking for new and better ways of advertising for public input and will consider the suggestions provided.)

Comment 11: Citizen at March 25, 2004 Public Review Meeting held at the Bon Air Library writes:

All seemed excellent and adequate. The presentation indicated that they[propose projects and programs] seemed appropriate, but I have not had a chance to read the report yet.

Would like to see the entire Richmond metropolitan area place greater emphasis on bike paths. People will not start to use bicycles in a serious way to commute until there is an

interconnecting network of safe bike paths. Bicycle use at appropriate times of the year could take a lot of cars off the road. Also strongly consider some form of light rail as soon as possible.

The television and radio stations, and the newspapers (particularly the Richmond Times-Dispatch) should have offered public service advertisements.

(Staff Response: As mentioned in previous responses, a bicycle and pedestrian plan is currently being developed for the Richmond region and is anticipated to be completed by the end of 2004. Comments received regarding bicycle and pedestrian improvements will be transmitted to the Study Advisory Committee and consultants developing the bicycle and pedestrian plan. Provisions for light rail transit are in the financially constrained projects list in four different projects – Electric Streetcar Study, Downtown Electric Streetcar (Phase 1), Light Rail and Streetcar on Broad Street, and Light Rail Transit. Although the projects and limited funding are accounted for in the LRTP, implementation of the projects is a local government responsibility.)

Comment 12: John Cacciotti, citizen at March 25, 2004 Public Review Meeting held at the Bon Air Library, writes:

Any commuter bus routes must cost each rider anywhere between \$5 - \$8 each way for express routes. \$1.25 per trip for express is not cost effective.

RMA maintenance should be taken over by VDOT, thereby reducing RMA's debt sooner to rid the tolls.

Any road built should have sidewalks, gutters and bus pullouts. Design for the future and not the past.

(Staff Response: Design, maintenance and fare issues are responsibilities of local governments and transportation providers. This level of detail is generally not included in long-range plans. However, these comments will be presented to the local governments, GRTC, VDOT and the RMA for their consideration. As pointed out in Chapter 10 of the LRTP, VDOT's revised bicycling and pedestrian policies include "bike lanes, sidewalks, shared-use paths or other accommodations should be included in the design of all new highway and major reconstruction projects, unless special circumstances exist that prevent the inclusion of such accommodations or a local governing body has formally requested that bike lanes or other access not be included in a particular project.")

Comment 13: Citizen at March 25, 2004 Public Review Meeting held at the Bon Air Library writes:

Very impressive document!

I would like to see a formal park and ride lot established on the southside of Richmond. For example, at the Stony Point Shopping Center or Fashion Mall.

(Staff Response: The LRTP list of financially constrained projects contains several projects for Park and Ride facilities south of the James River. This comment will be presented to the City of Richmond, Chesterfield County and GRTC for their consideration.)

Comment 14: Mr. Urchie Ellis addressed the March 23 CTAC meeting during the public comment period and provided comments which are summarized as follows (staff response follows each comment):

- 1) Mr. Ellis made several remarks dealing with the adequacy of public participation and the need for CTAC to voice their concerns to the MPO.***

(Staff Response: Chapter 4 documents the public participation process for the LRTP which has been an extensive on-going process. CTAC members were also free to voice their concerns on an individual basis to area local elected officials, many of which are MPO members.

- 2) Mr. Ellis believes that the public is not being heard from given the current structure of the MPO's public participation process.***

(Staff Response: During the three series of public input and review meetings, attendance was 74 citizens at 11 public input/review meetings (6.7 citizens per meeting). In addition, members of CTAC and EDAC participated in the LRTP Advisory Task Force, the draft LRTP document was presented to both CTAC and EDAC for their review comment and recommendations (both CTAC and EDAC unanimously recommended the draft 2026 LRTP as presented). Staff also conducted a citizen survey as part of the initial series of public input meetings (also posted on the RRPDC website, available in 14 local libraries, and distributed with meeting notices). A total of 466 surveys were returned to staff indicating a very high number of citizens taking time to review, complete, and return the survey. In summary, staff's extensive efforts to obtain citizen input was well received and staff believes the structure for citizen input on the LRTP was much more than adequate.

- 3) Mr. Ellis does not believe that the LRTP gives adequate attention to funding for the Huguenot Bridge project.***

(Staff Response: Huguenot Bridge is shown in the Existing and Committed Projects List (Figure 13-2) which is the list of projects that the LRTP anticipates will be completed first.

- 4) Mr. Ellis expressed concern over the need to repaint the rails of the Huguenot Bridge.***

(Staff Response: This is a maintenance issue and the LRTP does not address maintenance needs for individual projects.

Comment 15: Diana Parker, Conservation Chair of Falls of the James Group of the Virginia Chapter Sierra Club, writes:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Richmond Regional Long Range Transportation Plan. The Falls of the James Group membership includes 1600 individuals from counties making up this commission: Hanover, Richmond, Chesterfield, Henrico among these. We have more than a regional interest in this plan. We consider sprawl's roadbuilding, and its impacts on Virginia State and locality budgets a major component to environmental impacts and Virginia's lack of funding for environmental protection and restoration. Judgements made in this plan for transportation improvements, safety, inter-modal and mass transit will last for decades to come in a global environment.

We look for this plan to provide a comprehensive transportation network that will integrate and promote many transportation modes. Highway funds must be applied first to safety and improving efficiently of existing roads (limited widening, reducing congestion, addressing bottlenecks, etc.). New roads and significant widening open up new areas for development, generating sprawl, fiscal and environmental impacts to stream crossings, habitat, and air quality. Additionally, urban blight and environmental injustice occur when the urban ring is left behind for development of farmlands and forests in our fastest growing counties. We lose our historic and scenic resources and community character.

We look for 2026 LRTP to allocate more funding to transit, and we need Chesterfield to stop resisting transit service. More equity must be made in the Plan to make progress towards environmental justice areas, by identifying low & moderate income population areas, and areas where car ownership is low, and allocating proportionate amount to enhance transit service in these areas.

The Plan devotes a portion to bike and pedestrian activities, ride-sharing and park n ride lots, and small steps toward rail and trolley. Please continue a plan for greater commitment and push for quicker realization. Decisions must be made to define high speed rail corridors, commuter rail corridors to service the smaller Virginia counties in this Region, and most important, we need to address security, vulnerability for our people and corridors. Main Street station's multi-modal connections, and connections to airport, port, and freight yards are critical elements of the region and it's future economic success.

We have issues involving goals and objectives for air quality in this region. The fiscally constrained 2026 plan was tested for Air Quality conformity, and passed. It is probable that the Richmond region will lose its AQ "maintenance" status and be designated a non-attainment area (jeopardizing federal funding). It is critically important to acknowledge immediate problems, and begin solving them. The original 2023 LRTP set measurable targets for Plan's Goals Objectives and Strategies section (ie 10% reduction in this, 30% increase in that..) This 2026 Plan does not do this in critical areas, which "pulls some of the teeth out " of enforcing and attaining desired goals. The most egregious omission is lack of balance in road spending vs transit spending in plan. 2023 LRTP said move from 10-11% transit allocation to 17.5% allocation in 20 years. This plan 2026 LRTP is pretty vague: "...balanced transportation system (goal 3.0)..." and" encourage use of mass transit (objective 3.1). Very weak in comparison.

We consider that the major deficiency in region's transportation planning is absence of interrelation with current and future land uses. For example, 2026 LRTP examined growth areas in region, identified that Chesterfield plans for roughly 100,000 new residents in southwest portion of county in 20 years. Roads are inadequate for demand now - in the next 2 decades, just how wide can they make roads? (Chesterfield already excluded mass transit!) How can they afford this sprawl, its impacts, the losses on so many levels? Congestion and air quality problems will increase, and these drift across the locality's boundaries. One locality's self-serving decisions harm its neighbors and the region as a whole.

Land use planning and transportation planning should work hand in hand, like higher density areas and transit facilities, and matching employment centers with labor pools and their housing areas. Looking at Chesterfield from another angle, its 2026 road building plans dwarf the other localities. Many of the road projects on its 2026 constrained list show significant private development proffers matching road costs, when in reality, they won't be as large and the county is inflating the match to list more road projects.

Conclusions

This 2026 LRTP not really a comprehensive regional transportation plan because its main objective was to develop a list of future road building projects. Important questions about the sustainability of sprawl, the limits to carrying capacity and highway widening, and the need for coordinating land uses and transportation funding were not addressed. Moving people and good efficiently, not just single occupant vehicles, was not addressed in this plan, nor was it a serious part of discussions pertaining to mass transit. Too often, and in this 2026 LRTP (more so than in the 2023 LRTP) mass transit gets the funding "crumbs left on the table."

The "regional" plan is fragmented, with little concern for externalities and spill-overs into adjacent localities (EJ, air quality, job locations job access and affordable housing, etc) and it was driven by parochial politics. With the regions transition into Non-Attainment status, regional transit should become a priority.

Ultimately, the region must commit to a diversified, more efficient transportation network, and over time, each locality must amend its land use policies to take advantage of transit and reduce the many costs and impacts of sprawl. Cooperative localities should receive additional funding and those causing disproportionately large negative impacts should be curtailed. The region's long-term prosperity, extending far beyond the LRTPs 20 year horizon, depends on growing along "smart growth principles, and much, much more regional cooperation.

Sincerely,

*Diana C. Parker, Conservation Chair
Falls of the James Group of the Virginia Chapter Sierra Club
10700 Chalkley Road, Richmond Virginia 23237
erthshr@comcast.net*

(Staff Response: The 2026 LRTP addresses environmental justice issues in Chapter 14. Low income and minority populations are identified in Map 14-1 as well as in Maps 6-4 and 6-5 in Chapter 6. This update of the LRTP has actually taken the environmental justice analysis a step further than the previous plan by also identifying areas with car ownership less than one per household. As described in the text of Chapter 14, concentrated areas of low auto ownership generally coincide with concentrated areas of low-income and minority populations. This spatial analysis illustrates the necessity for considering the transportation needs of low-income and minority concentrations. Approximately \$792, 949,000 of the total expenditures in the LRTP (\$2,142,219,000), or approximately 37 percent of the expenditures, are for projects located within census tracts identified as concentrations of minority and low-income populations. Looked at another way, 153 of the 374 projects (41 percent) included in the financially

constrained list of projects are located within census tracts identified as concentrations of minority and low-income populations. Generally, projects that benefit low-income and minority groups, as well as groups with low auto ownership, are transit related or bike and pedestrian projects. These types of projects along with roadway reconstruction and rehabilitation projects describe most of the projects listed in low-income and minority areas. Note: reconstruction and rehabilitation projects are more common in these areas than new roadway or roadway widening projects given that low-income and minority populations are generally located in older urban areas of the region that tend to be already developed limiting right-of-way for roadway expansion.

Staff, as well as the local jurisdictions comprising the MPO, recognizes the importance of providing alternative forms of transportation to the private automobile as well as the need to address security, freight movement, and the economic impact of the transportation system on our region. Staff will continue to plan for and promote greater commitment to these issues.

The intent of updating the Goals and Objectives section of the 2023 LRTP was to add strategies and to make progress towards attaining goals more measurable. However, there were goals included in the 2023 plan that either did not have full support of all the MPO jurisdictions or were impractical to measure, and needed to be changed. For example, the objective referred to by Ms. Parker regarding the 82.5 % and 17.5 percent split between roadway improvements and transit alternatives was an objective that was heavily debated in developing the 2023 plan and was not supported by the financially constrained project list developed for that plan (note: the 2023 project list was closer to a 90 % roadway improvements and 10 % transportation alternatives split). In addition, tracking the funding splits on a year-to-year basis is difficult and unrealistic considering that the split between roadway projects and non-roadway projects can vary dramatically from year-to-year. The LRTP Advisory Task Force felt that it was better for the goal to be non-controversial and receive greater support from the local jurisdictions than to be a polarizing topic as well as an impractical measure. Note: the split between highway and non-highway transportation expenditures over the 23-year life of the plan is approximately 75 percent highway and 25 percent non-highway, far greater than the split in either the goals or the actual project list of the 2023 LRTP.

Chapter 6 of the 2026 LRTP addresses land use and includes examples of alternative land development techniques that promote compact and in-fill development as well as transit oriented designs. However, land use policies and decisions are made at the local government level. The MPO can only make recommendations regarding land use policy and work with local jurisdictions to inform them of the impacts that their policies and decisions have on neighboring jurisdictions. Comments regarding land use and sprawl and their impact on transportation and air quality are being considered by local governments as part of its review of these comments. Staff will continue work showing the land use and transportation link as part of future LRTP updates.

Projects listed in the financially constrained list (Figures 13-2 and 13-3) are planned to be financed using state and federal funds with the exception of 26 projects listed as private/locally funded, of which 18 were submitted by Chesterfield County. Private/locally funded projects are generally assumed to be paid for with proffers applied to new developments. If the development

does not materialize, then the funding is not available and generally the need for the improvement is also diminished as a result of less development. Staff feels that this type of land use control via proffers is responsible and the transportation funding estimated to be available in Chesterfield County from private developments over the 23-year life of the plan is actually conservative and reasonable.

To say the main objective of the LRTP was to develop a list of future road building projects, that alternatives to travel by single occupant vehicles was not discussed, and that mass transit gets the funding “crumbs” left on the table, is a false and uninformed comment. The most debated and controversial issue of the LRTP update centered around finding a source of funds that could be designated for “regional projects” including transit improvements, light rail, James River bridge rehabilitation projects, bicycle and pedestrian projects, and roadway projects that cross jurisdictional boundaries and benefit the entire region. The decision was made by the Advisory Task Force to use Regional Surface Transportation Program (RSTP) funds for these regional projects. For other plans, these funds have historically been allocated to local jurisdictions based on formula and the individual jurisdictions have decided how to use the money. A majority of the Advisory Task Force members believed that looking regionally was the way to proceed. The RSTP funds were designated to regional projects and provided funding for projects such as light rail transit projects, the downtown electric streetcar projects, the Virginia Capital Trails project, park and ride projects, and carpool/vanpool TDM projects to be included in the plan. Several meetings were focused on this topic of regionally funded projects.

Comment 16: Diana Parker, Member of TIGR Advisory Council, writes:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Richmond Regional Long Range Transportation Plan as it compares to the TIGR Mission.

Promotion of Social Equity and Livable Communities

The transportation system should be socially equitable and strengthen civil rights; enabling all people to gain access to good jobs, education and training, and needed services. Whenever possible, personal transportation expenses should be minimized in ways that support wealth creation. Integrated with land use planning, transportation should also enhance the quality, livability and character of communities and support revitalization without displacement. The transportation system should allow every American to participate fully in society whether or not they own a car and regardless of age, ability, ethnicity, or income.

IN THE GREATER RICHMOND REGION: In order to achieve these principles of Social Equity and Livable Communities, we believe that the following challenges must be addressed:

- 1) expand public transportation systems to create greater access throughout the region;***
- 2) improve the efficiency, effectiveness, accessibility and convenience of public transit;***
- 3) improve public perception of the desirability of riding public transit and its benefits to the region;***
- 4) integrate land use and transportation planning to enhance the quality of life, sense of place, and economic vitality of existing communities, particularly the central urban core; and***

5) develop a broad based public awareness of the impact transportation planning has on individuals and the region and facilitate greater public involvement in local, regional, and state transportation and land use planning.

We have more than a regional interest in this plan. We consider sprawl's roadbuilding, and its impacts on Virginia State and locality budgets a major component to environmental impacts and Virginia's lack of funding for environmental protection and restoration. Judgements made in this plan for transportation improvements, safety, inter-modal and mass transit will last for decades to come in a global environment.

We look for this plan to provide a comprehensive transportation network that will integrate and promote many transportation modes. Highway funds must be applied first to safety and improving efficiently of existing roads (limited widening, reducing congestion, addressing bottlenecks, etc.). New roads and significant widening open up new areas for development, generating sprawl, fiscal and environmental impacts to stream crossings, habitat, and air quality. Additionally, urban blight and environmental injustice occur when the urban ring is left behind for development of farmlands and forests in our fastest growing counties. We lose our historic and scenic resources and community character.

More equity must be made in the Plan to make progress towards environmental justice areas, by identifying low & moderate income population areas, and areas where car ownership is low, and allocating proportionate amount to enhance transit service in these areas.

The Plan devotes a portion to bike and pedestrian activities, ride-sharing and park n ride lots, and small steps toward rail and trolley. Please continue a plan for greater commitment and push for quicker realization. Decisions must be made to define high speed rail corridors, commuter rail corridors to service the smaller Virginia counties in this Region, and most important, we need to address security, vulnerability for our people and corridors. Main Street station's multi-modal connections, and connections to airport, port, and freight yards are critical elements of the region and it's future economic success.

Sincerely,

*Diana C. Parker, Member
TIGR Advisory Council
10700 Chalkley Road, Richmond VA 23237
erthshr@comcast.net*

(Staff Response: Same as previous comments. See response to Comment #15.)