

RICHMOND AREA
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
MINUTES OF MEETING

April 14, 2005

MEMBERS PRESENT

REPRESENTING

Russell E. Holland, Chairman	County of Powhatan
Malvern R. Butler, Vice Chairman	County of Goochland
Jack E. Apostolides (Non-voting)	VDRPT
Viktoria Badger (Alternate)	City of Richmond
Robert Berry	RMA
Linda Broady-Myers (Non-voting)	EDAC
Rebecca Draper	County of Hanover
Gary A. DuVal (Alternate)	City of Richmond
Ralph J. "Joe" Emerson	County of Henrico
E. Todd Eure	County of Henrico
Paul E. Fisher	RRPDC
Michael Holmes	County of Charles City
George Homewood	County of New Kent
R. M. "Dickie" King	County of Chesterfield
Angela LaCombe	Town of Ashland
Joseph T. Lacy	County of Goochland
John M. Lewis (Alternate)	GRTC Transit System
Sherman W. Litton	County of Chesterfield
Eugene A. Mason	City of Richmond
Patricia O'Bannon	County of Henrico
William Pantele	City of Richmond
Mark Riblett (Alternate)	VDOT
Ivan Rucker (Non-voting)	FHWA
Robert R. Setliff	County of Hanover
Barbara K. Smith (Alternate)	County of Chesterfield
Brandon Stidham (Alternate)	County of Powhatan
Von Tisdale (Non-voting)	RideFinders
Stran L. Trout	County of New Kent
Joseph E. Vidunas (Alternate)	County of Hanover
David T. Williams (Non-voting)	Citizen Appointee

MEMBERS ABSENT

REPRESENTING

Richard W. Ayers	County of Powhatan
Edward Barber	County of Chesterfield
Robert Bredehoft (Non-voting)	CTAC
Cliff Burnette (Non-voting)	VDA
John Gordon	County of Hanover

MEMBERS ABSENT (Cont.)

REPRESENTING

Thomas A. Hawthorne VDOT
Robert Hodder GRTC Transit System
Pat Kampf (Non-voting) FTA
Jon Mathiasen CRAC
John McCracken County of Chesterfield
Frank Thornton County of Henrico

OTHERS PRESENT

REPRESENTING

Dan Lysy, **Secretary** (Alternate) RRPDC
Jameson Auten RideFinders
Dick Beadles Virginia Rail Policy Institute
Bill Britton (Alternate) County of Charles City
Scott Clark GRTC
Debbie Cutright Richmond Area Safe Kids Coalition
Nancy Finch Virginians for High Speed Rail
Laurie Henley VDOT
John M. Lewis (Alternate) GRTC Transit System
Yolanda Savoy Richmond Area Safe Kids Coalition
Stephen Story James River Bus Lines
Michael Testerman Virginia Association of Railway Patrons
Kristin Tew VDOT
Nick Britton RRPDC
Mike Clements RRPDC
Geleene Goffena RRPDC
Larry Hagin RRPDC
Jin Lee RRPDC
Sharon Robeson RRPDC
Patricia Villa RRPDC

CALL TO ORDER

MPO Chairman Russell Holland called the April 14, 2005 meeting of the Richmond Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to order at approximately 2:00 P.M. in the large conference room of the Richmond Regional Planning District Commission (RRPDC).

I. ADMINISTRATION

A. Certification by MPO Secretary of Meeting Quorum –

Dan Lysy reported that a quorum was present. Mr. Lysy then reported on a request from VDOT to add a Transportation Improvement Program

(TIP) amendment request to the agenda. Mr. Lysy advised that the proposed TIP amendment had been e-mail to TAC and there were no objections. Mr. Lysy requested this item be added to today's agenda as item III.B.3. On motion of Rudy Butler, seconded by Bill Pantele, the MPO voted to add this item to the MPO agenda as requested.

B. Minutes of the March 10, 2005 MPO Meeting –

On motion by Malvern Butler, seconded by Michael Holmes the April 14, 2005 MPO meeting minutes were unanimously approved as presented.

C. Open Public Comment Period –

No public comments were offered.

D. MPO Chairman's Report –

1. Introduction of New MPO Member and Alternate –

Chairman Holland welcomed Mr. John M. Lewis, GRTC Transit System Chief Executive Officer, as that organization's new MPO alternate member. Chairman Holland also reported that Mr. Robert Hodder, Director of Planning at GRTC, who was absent from the meeting, will become GRTC's new MPO member and noted a correction to the agenda which identified Mr. Hodder as an alternate MPO member.

2. MPO Nominating Committee Report –

At Chairman Holland's request, Stran Trout presented the MPO Nominating Committee report noting that he, Pat O'Bannon and Bill Pantele had met, reviewed the bylaws, and agreed on the Nominating Committee's recommendation for Malvern R. "Rudy" Butler from Goochland to serve as the FY 06 MPO Chairman and Robert Setliff from Hanover County to serve as the FY 06 MPO Vice Chairman. On motion of Stran Trout, seconded by Pat O'Bannon, the MPO unanimously voted to accept the slate of officers presented by the Nominating Committee. Mr. Lysy said if there are no objections, that this action also will authorize the MPO Chairman-Elect to establish the FY 06 MPO Executive Committee. Mr. Lysy noted that the MPO Executive Committee is not a standing committee under the MPO bylaws and therefore the Committee must be reestablished each year. No objections were voiced.

3. Other Business –

Chairman Holland had no other business items to report.

E. RRPDC Transportation Director’s Report –

Mr. Lysy had no business to report.

II. OLD BUSINESS

No old business was brought forward for consideration.

III. NEW BUSINESS

A. “Richmond Is for Safe Kids”

Dan Lysy introduced Ms. Yolanda Savoy, Program Coordinator with the Richmond Area Safe Kids Coalition. He said Ms. Savoy would provide a presentation on improving pedestrian safety for school age children and noted that the PowerPoint presentation slides are included under tab 3 of the agenda package. Ms. Savoy informed the MPO that the PowerPoint presentation slides illustrate programs they have accomplished with various schools in the north, east, west and south in Richmond. Ms. Savoy introduced Ms. Debbie Cutright of Bon Secours Richmond Health Systems, a sponsor of the Richmond Area Safe Kids Coalition. Ms. Savoy provided an informative PowerPoint presentation with the following slides:

- Richmond is for Safe Kids – title page
- Statement by C. Everett Koop, M.D., Sc.D.
- Richmond SAFE KIDS Mission
- The problem
- Who can make a difference?
- Pedestrian Injury
- Safe Kids Walk This Way sponsor logos
- Goals
- Program Objectives
- Program Model – Flow Chart
- Program Objectives
- School-based activities
- School-based activities – Participating Schools 2000 – 2004 –photos
- Map showing location of participating schools
- School-based activities – PhotoJourney 2004

- School-based activities (two slides)
- Data Collection – list of data components
- Data Collection – Parent’s Checklist
- Data Collection – Stop Sign Survey
- Data Collection – Speed Survey
- Data Collection – Observation of Behavior
- Data Collection – Intersection Assessment
- Data Collection – Walking and Bicycling Suitability Assessment (WABSA)
- AARP Active for Life Campaign – Walkability Audit Results, East End, Richmond (VA) – diagram
- Pedestrian Task Force – participants list
- Pedestrian Task Force – Local Impact
- Pedestrian Task Force – “Wish List”
- Pedestrian Task Force – Safe improvements based on school “Wish List”:
- PhotoVision 2004
- You can make a difference!
- How you can get started!
- Photo montage
- Richmond is for Safe Kids – closing page

Ms. Savoy offered to answer questions and Angela LaCombe asked if the Program is limited just to City of Richmond, Henrico and Chesterfield counties or if it might be available to other localities. Ms. LaCombe indicated that the Town of Ashland has just tried to implement sidewalks to every school and would be very interested in a Safe Kids project. Ms. Savoy indicated that they would look forward to working with any jurisdiction with that need. Federal Highway representative Ivan Rucker noted that safety projects are a priority with FHWA and offered to be of assistance. Ms. Savoy thanked Mr. Rucker for his offer and, hearing no additional questions, Ms. Savoy thanked the MPO for having her. Both Dan Lysy and Chairman Holland thanked Ms. Savoy for her presentation.

B. Consent Action Items –

Mr. Lysy noted that items one and two on the consent agenda were included in the agenda package and there were no requests to pull either item for discussion.

1. FY 05 UWP Task Budget Amendments

On motion of George Homewood, seconded by Gary DuVal, the Richmond Area Metropolitan Planning Organization unanimously approved the following resolution:

RESOLVED, that the Richmond Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) amends the Fiscal Year 2005 Unified Work Program (UWP) to shift Federal Highway Administration PL and Richmond Regional Planning District Commission (RRPDC) Overmatch funds among various RRPDC staff work tasks as presented in the revised staff budget.

2. VDOT TIP Amendments Request; Projects 2005-27 and 2005-28 –

On motion of George Homewood, seconded by Gary DuVal, the Richmond Area Metropolitan Planning Organization unanimously approved the following resolution:

RESOLVED, that the Richmond Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) revises the FY 2005-2007 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to reflect the two TIP amendments individually numbered 2005-27 through 2005-28 and summarized in the table presented for MPO review and approval: *Richmond Area MPO Fiscal Year 2005-2007 TIP Amendment Proposals: 2005-27 and 2005-28.*

3. FY 2005-2007 TIP Amendment Request; Amendment 2005-34 –

Mr. Lysy distributed the handout on this item and asked Gary DuVal to provide a brief summary of the project. Mr. DuVal said the project would provide for signal improvements on Cowardin Ave. and four intersections, would bring radio communication into place, and provides for the addition of pedestrian signals and new crosswalks. There were no questions on this project.

On motion of Bill Pantele, seconded by Rebecca Draper, the Richmond Area Metropolitan Planning Organization unanimously approved the following resolution:

RESOLVED, that the Richmond Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) revises the FY 2005-2007 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to reflect the TIP amendment individually numbered 2005-34 and summarized in the table presented for MPO review and approval: *Richmond Area MPO Fiscal Year 2005-2007 TIP Amendment Proposals: 2005-34.*

C. MPO Elderly and Disabled Advisory Committee (EDAC) Meeting Report –

Dan Lysy noted that CTAC Chairman Robert Bredehoft phoned earlier today that he would be unable to attend the MPO meeting and Mr. Lysy

provided a brief report of the March 10 CTAC meeting noting the full report in tab five of the agenda package. Mr. Lysy said there were two major items discussed, one, a follow-up to information requests from CTAC at its previous meeting concerning various highway projects and programs. Mr. Lysy said one of these items of interest to the MPO is a report on the various new traffic patterns emerging as a result of Route 288 being open. He said VDOT had conducted traffic counts sometime ago (before the opening of Route 288) and it is doing traffic volume counts this spring. These two counts should provide a clear before and after picture of traffic patterns and the VDOT report should be available sometime this summer or early fall.

Mr. Lysy said the second major CTAC discussion item was the draft MPO resolution supporting continued funding of Amtrak which is presented in today's MPO agenda package. He said that CTAC Chairman Bredehoff had requested that Mike Testerman, a CTAC member representing the Virginia Association of Railway Patrons, provide the MPO a brief report. Mr. Testerman reported that CTAC was very interested in the crisis facing Amtrak. Mr. Testerman pointed out that our region is not only served by the Staples Mill Road Station but also by three other stations, Main Street Station in downtown Richmond, the Ashland station in Hanover County, and the Ettrick station in Chesterfield County. Being blessed with four stations, we have a good choice of daily train opportunities for traveling elsewhere and for travelers to come to our region. He said after extensive discussion, most of which was favorable, CTAC took action to recommend support of the City's proposed resolution in support of continued funding for Amtrak at the current federal level of about \$1.2 billion to \$1.5 billion. This would provide for continuation of all trains serving Richmond and Virginia and of long-distance trains that connect the rest of the nation. Mr. Testerman said funding at this level would also preserve the opportunity for us, over time, to add incrementally to the system and to facilitate the TransDominion express which will be coming to Richmond from southwest Virginia. Mr. Testerman thanked the MPO for the opportunity to present CTAC's action and Chairman Holland called for questions or comments addressing Mr. Testerman's remarks. One comment was deferred until consideration of the next agenda item dealing with the MPO's consideration of a resolution on this matter. There being no further comment, Chairman Holland thanked Mr. Testerman for his report.

D. Draft MPO Resolution Supporting Continued Funding for Amtrak

Bill Pantele presented the City of Richmond's resolution seeking MPO support for continued funding of Amtrak. He noted that transportation is infrastructure and that Amtrak should not be evaluated as if it were a stand-alone business any more than primary or secondary highways

should be evaluated in that manner, but rather, they should be evaluated with an understanding of the value they have to the entire community. Mr. Pantele said that with the Chairman's permission, he would like to have Dick Beadles with the Virginia Rail Policy Institute speak to the MPO about the implications of zero budgeting for Amtrak and then he would like to ask for the MPO's support for the proposed resolution. Chairman Holland recognized Mr. Beadles.

Mr. Beadles said in his long association with rail in general and some association with the 35-year troubled life of Amtrak, he believes transportation is a tough business whether it's in the public realm or the private sector noting the troubled airlines, the struggling trucking industry, and even the difficulties he had getting necessary federal funds as Chairman of the Port of Richmond. He asked the MPO to consider the Amtrak situation as part of a greater rail problem that has been building for 50 years and which will not be solved in one fiscal year of the federal budget. He said that Amtrak is severely limited and much of its poor performance is attributable to the declining condition of the privately owned freight rail network. Mr. Beadles cited page 12 of the current CSX annual report which provides a self-critique of their declining operating performance over the last several years. Mr. Beadles noted that Amtrak is busing passengers for miles over several months due to heavy track maintenance work south of Petersburg to Rocky Mount and the impact of serious maintenance which conflicts with the movement of trains. Mr. Beadles said he believes strongly that the MPO ought to be very concerned about the rail mode of transportation, a vital piece of the transportation network for the Richmond region and the Commonwealth, and that the MPO ought to take a stand to support Amtrak and the rail mode of transportation. He cautioned that there is great danger in precipitous action proposed by the U.S. Department of Transportation's current budget, which does not fund Amtrak, and he urged the MPO to be supportive of the City's resolution. There were no questions of Mr. Beadles and Chairman Holland thanked him for his comments.

Angela LaCombe requested an amendment to the City's resolution in support of continued Amtrak funding that would include the ridership numbers for the three other stations in the Richmond region in the fifth Whereas paragraph and in the last Whereas paragraph to add the word "region" after "Richmond" in the first line. Mr. Pantele said he would accept that amendment and Mr. Apostolides said he was certain that someone at VDRPT could provide the ridership numbers. On motion of Bill Pantele, seconded by Angela LaCombe, the MPO unanimously approved the following resolution (includes final language inserted following the MPO meeting):

WHEREAS, America needs a balanced, integrated transportation system, and the American people need diverse transportation choices; and

WHEREAS, passenger rail is a critical component of a modern multi-modal transportation system and needs to have financial support, unified policy development and oversight similar to that afforded to our air, highway and mass transit modes; and

WHEREAS, the residents, business persons and visitors of the Richmond region need an improved and guaranteed passenger rail system to link Richmond to other destinations along the east coast of the United States; and

WHEREAS, Amtrak operates more than twenty trains daily at nineteen stations in the Commonwealth of Virginia with over 800,000 riders in fiscal year 2004; and

WHEREAS, over 33 percent of Amtrak's ridership in Virginia is from the Richmond region with 271,136 riders from the Staples Mill Road, Main Street, Ashland, and Petersburg/Ettrick stations in fiscal year 2004; and

WHEREAS, Amtrak provides alternatives to the congested I-95 and I-64 interstate corridors and improves air quality in the urbanized areas of Richmond and Virginia; and

WHEREAS, Commonwealth and community business leaders have formed the Virginians for High Speed Rail and the Richmond Friends of Rail to promote enhanced passenger rail service throughout Virginia, especially along the rail corridor from Washington D.C. to Richmond; and

WHEREAS, tourism is a major Virginia industry and one million additional visitors are expected to visit Virginia in 2007 for the 400th anniversary of the settlement of Jamestown; and

WHEREAS, improved passenger rail service and the Main Street Station development has been one of the top Priority Projects of the Richmond Area Metropolitan Planning Organization; and

WHEREAS, the Richmond region's passenger rail corridors are included in the federally designated high speed rail corridors; and

WHEREAS, if the budget proposed by the administration prevails, the Richmond region could lose all or significant portions of Amtrak funding with the burden of intercity passenger rail funding placed on the states;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Richmond Area Metropolitan Planning Organization supports continued federal funding for Amtrak to be funded to the degree that services will be improved for the benefit of the citizens of the Richmond region and the Commonwealth of Virginia and that this resolution be forwarded to the Richmond area Congressional delegation.

E. FY 06 Unified Work Program (UWP) –

Dan Lysy informed the MPO that since the agenda package mail-out, staff had received from GRTC a description of work task 5.3, Downtown Circulator Study Phase III. Mr. Lysy said this work task was included in last year's UWP and that it is pending before Richmond City Council and the City Administration as to whether or not work on this task will proceed. He said this information is being passed out along with a sheet containing the State Planning Research funds from VDOT to be programmed into the UWP. Mr. Lysy explained that he had just received the VDOT figures about ten minutes before the meeting but said the amount of funds they've programmed looks acceptable. Mr. Lysy noted that VDOT has divided the funds between their central office staff and their district staff and they are shown for those UWP tasks involving significant VDOT state activity. Rudy Butler inquired if these were the funds discussed at the Executive Committee meeting earlier in the day and Chairman Holland responded affirmatively. Through discussion, it was determined that the VDOT SPR figures were expected about three weeks ago and that they had been requested at the March 17 TAC meeting. Following discussion, Rudy Butler made a motion, seconded by Bill Pantele, to have the RRPDC write VDOT to request that this information be submitted in a timelier manner in the future. There were no objections and the MPO Chairman noted approval of the motion.

On motion of Rudy Butler, seconded by Bill Pantele, the Richmond Area Metropolitan Planning Organization unanimously approved the following resolution:

RESOLVED, that the Richmond Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) adopts the *FY 06 Unified Work Program* as presented and including programming of FHWA State Planning Research (SPR) funds for VDOT staff work tasks as presented at the MPO meeting by the Virginia Department of Transportation, and including the incorporation of UWP task 5.3, Downtown Circulator Study Phase III as presented at the MPO meeting by GRTC Transit System.

F. Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Air Quality Conformity Analysis and Amendments –

Dan Lysy reported that on June 15 of last year, the new regulations for ozone air quality standards issued by EPA went into effect and that one year from that date, June 15, 2005, the MPO's Long-Range Plan and Transportation Improvement Program would need to meet these new requirements. He said staff has worked closely with VDOT staff since June of last year and he noted that Laurie Henley from the VDOT Environmental Division is in attendance at the meeting should there be any questions. He said as part of this process, staff also included several amendments to the Transportation Improvement Program and the Long-Range Plan which are shown on page one of the agenda package under tab eight. Mr. Lysy said the Air Quality Conformity Analysis and the TIP and LRTP amendments have all been reviewed and recommended by TAC. Mr. Lysy said that when VDOT and FHWA review the TIP and LRTP and find them to be in conformance with air quality standards, the Richmond Area MPO will have a valid TIP and LRTP.

On motion of Bill Pantele, seconded by Stran Trout, the Richmond Area Metropolitan Planning Organization unanimously approved the following resolution:

RESOLVED, that the Richmond Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) revises the *2026 Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)* and the *FY 2005 – 2007 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)* to reflect amendments to the LRTP and TIP as presented; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the MPO finds the 2026 LRTP and the FY 2005-2007 TIP as amended to be in conformance with all applicable air quality conformity analysis requirements.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

Stran Trout noted that George Homewood had just returned from a meeting in Williamsburg dealing with high speed rail and looking at two alternative routes to be taken, whether it would go down the peninsula to Williamsburg and Newport News or whether it would go near Rt. 460 south of the James River. Mr. Trout said that New Kent County's obvious preference would be the peninsula route and that the New Kent County Board of Supervisors passed a resolution on Monday night favoring the route down the peninsula and Mr. Homewood delivered it to the consultant at this morning's meeting. Mr. Homewood indicated that the meeting was heavily dominated by the group from Norfolk who strongly favor the Rt. 460 corridor south of the James River and that folks from the north side of

Hampton Roads had little opportunity to speak. He said there will be two follow-up meetings, first to look at the modeling that was in the preliminary report and then to come back and address some questions as to whether or not it is reasonable or practical to consider anything dealing with a third crossing of the James River and also to look at the what the impact might be on decisions made for 2025. Chairman Holland asked if Mr. Trout is looking for an MPO resolution and what the timeliness of that might be and Mr. Trout responded that New Kent County would appreciate MPO consideration of the issue and that the next couple of months would be timely. Todd Eure said that the study consultant and VDRPT offered at the meeting this morning to make presentations to the impacted MPOs. Dan Lysy said if there were no objections, that the matter could be referred to TAC for a recommendation which could be presented at the May MPO meeting when VDRPT and the study consultant have agreed to make a presentation. Chairman Holland requested that any jurisdictions with an interest in this matter to please provide that information to their TAC member so that information could be presented to TAC for consideration in making their recommendation.

V. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chairman Holland adjourned the meeting at approximately 2:50 P.M.