

**Regional Mass Transit Study Advisory Committee Meeting  
Richmond Regional Planning District Commission  
July 20, 2007**

**MEETING ATTENDEES**

Lee Yolton - Richmond Regional Planning District Commission  
Dan Lysy - Richmond Regional Planning District Commission  
Archita Rajbhandary - Richmond Regional Planning District Commission  
Jin Lee – Richmond Regional Planning District Commission  
Barbara Nelson – Richmond Regional Planning District Commission  
Sarah Weisiger – Richmond Regional Planning District Commission  
Susan Anderson – DRPT  
Viktoria Badger – City of Richmond  
Meade Boswell – United Way Services  
William Britton – Charles City County  
Roy Bryant – NAACP  
Scott Clark – GRTC Transit System  
Tom Coleman – Goochland County  
Todd Eure – Henrico County  
Kelly Hickok – Resources for Independent Living  
Adel MacLean – VCN  
Liz McAdory – VDOT  
Olayinka Oke – VDOT  
Mark Riblett – VDOT  
Barbara Smith – Chesterfield County  
Joe Vidunas – Hanover County  
Lloyd Vye – RABA  
David Williams – Powhatan County  
John Zeugner – VCN  
David Anspacher– VHB (HNTB Consultant Team)  
Frank Spielberg – VHB (HNTB Consultant Team)  
Abi Lerner – HNTB (HNTB Consultant Team)  
Alan Tobias – HNTB (HNTB Consultant Team)  
Marie Travesky – Travesky & Associates (HNTB Consultant Team)

The sign-in sheet is attached to these meeting minutes.

**MEETING MINUTES**

The Consultant Team gave a presentation regarding the items covered in Technical Memorandum #2: Assessment of Influencing Factors. The following sections summarize the items discussed during the meeting.

**Review of Local Land Use Ordinances**

1. Mr. Tobias gave a presentation on the parameters used to analyze local land use regulations and on the results of the analysis. He stated that generally urban and village districts in local jurisdictions had zoning requirements that were supportive of transit by allowing higher densities, requiring less setback, allowing short block lengths and allowing mixed used development. Suburban and rural districts tend to be less supportive of transit with lower density requirements, larger setback requirements, and limitations on mixed uses. He stated that all of the jurisdictions set minimum parking requirement which tends to not be supportive of transit.
2. Mr. Williams stated that he thought the characteristics of Powhatan County's allowance of mixed uses in the Residential – Commercial district was incorrect. Business uses are allowed in this district, so it should be considered Supportive of transit. This change was noted.

3. Ms. MacLean asked how detrimental the minimum parking requirements were to the development of transit. Mr. Tobias said that further analysis would be needed to determine how much parking was required in each jurisdiction. He said that some of the minimum required levels of parking may be small and not much of a detriment to transit.

### **Comparison of Typical Highway and Transit Construction and Maintenance Costs**

1. Mr. Tobias presented a review of typical capital and operating costs for transit and highways. He stated that costs vary widely based on geography and right of way costs. Construction that requires tunneling or structures will be very expensive. He noted that a commuter rail operation would also require locomotives, which cost about \$3 million each. He said that the Springfield Interchange in Northern Virginia was recently completed at a cost of about \$700 million.
2. Mr. Vidunas stated that Hanover had recently constructed a lane-mile on Route 30 that had a cost of \$10 million. He said that this was a good number to use for typical construction costs of a suburban roadway.
3. Ms. MacLean asked if the long term costs of transportation, such as global warming and pollution, are taken into account. Mr. Yolton noted that the public health and welfare costs of transportation are discussed in Technical Memorandum #2. The marginal cost of air pollution and noise pollution are included in the calculations of typical highway operating costs.

### **Review of Funding Policies and Programs**

1. Mr. Anspacher presented information on the projected availability of transit capital and operating funds over the study period. He stated that these projections were based on historical DRPT data and project growth rates consistent with historical trends for continuously funded programs. He stated that there are several reasons why the Capital Revenue table shows a big drop in funds from 2001 to 2004, then a large increase in 2007. This is actual data and results from a high level of funding for major projects in 2001, particularly Main Street Station. The increase in 2007 results partly from the earmarks for the GRTC maintenance facility.
2. Mr. Spielberg pointed out that the projections are in constant 2006 dollars, so the table shows a steady rate of increase in capital funding.
3. Mr. Zeugner stated that this projection was extremely optimistic and that a constant level of funding with little or no growth is more realistic.
4. Mr. Anspacher stated that the projections for operating revenue do show little or no growth in farebox, state or local funding. The increases shown are all in local funding levels.
5. Ms. Badger asked if the changes in state funding as a result of the Transportation Act of 2007 were included in this analysis. Mr. Anspacher stated that it was not included, and the projections were based on the laws in place earlier this year when the analysis was conducted. He stated that this section would be revised to reflect the increased level of state funding.
6. Mr. Anspacher presented information on various potential organizational structures that could be used for the management, planning and oversight and for the operation of transit in the Richmond Region.
7. Mr. Bryant requested additional information on the current organization of GRTC. Mr. Lysy said that GRTC drivers and maintenance workers were employees of Old Dominion Transit Company, which is a subsidiary of the GRTC. He said this organization was created to separate the transit system from the local government so that the employees could be unionized.
8. Mr. Coleman asked about whether a Transportation Commission in the Richmond area could impose a gasoline tax. Mr. Spielberg referenced the Errata sheet that was distributed at the meeting which clarifies that current state law allows only the Transportation Commissions in Northern Virginia to levy a 2% gasoline tax. A change in state law would be required before a Commission in Richmond, or any other part of the state, could obtain taxing authority.

### **Transit Supportive Land Uses**

1. Mr. Spielberg presented information on land use development patterns in the Richmond region and the degree to which that development supports transit. He discussed projections for housing density over the study period.

2. Mr. Spielberg showed graphical guidelines for Transit Oriented Development. He also presented maps that showed which links in the highway network are projected to have high VC levels in 2031.

**Concepts Proposed for Testing**

1. Mr. Spielberg presented three concepts for regional transit service. Concept 1 represents existing service currently operated by GRTC.
2. Concept 2 is a Moderate Service Expansion which includes the existing service plus several expansions to local service and additional express service to Powhatan, Petersburg, New Kent, Mechanicsville and Ashland.
3. Concept 3 is a Major Service Expansion scenario that includes the Concept 2 service plus rail service from the Airport through downtown to Midlothian, a priority transit corridor along Broad Street (light rail or BRT) and additional local service in the Mechanicsville area of Hanover County, Western Henrico County and southern Chesterfield County. A circumferential route along 288 is also included.
4. Mr. Williams said that express service to Park and Ride Lots in Goochland County and shuttle service to West Creek should also be considered.
5. Mr. Britton said that the Route 60 corridor has been targeted for growth by Charles City and New Kent Counties, and service along this corridor should be considered.
6. It was noted that the GRTC Comprehensive Operational Analysis is developing a proposal for grid service within the existing service area. This service pattern has not been incorporated into these Service Concepts.

**Socioeconomic Data Update**

1. Mr. Yolton stated that the Population and Demographic data that was used in the development of the demand modeling was not accepted by the MPO. Several member jurisdictions have expressed concern that the forecasts for the year 2031 are too low. The TAC, at its meeting on July 19, 2007 supports the use of new year 2030 VEC forecasts as extended to year 2031 and including up to a 10 % increase as allowed by VDOT policy, for use in the MPO's Socioeconomic Data Report. These revised forecasts will then be distributed to the TAZ level by each locality. Mr. Yolton stated that this process will take approximately 90 days, as RRPDC staff will have to review and distribute the revised forecasts to the TAC for its review and recommendation to the MPO.
2. Mr. Spielberg stated that these revisions to the travel demand analysis are likely to have an impact on the services being proposed in the service concepts.
3. Mr. Yolton stated that Mr. Corey Hill of DRPT was in attendance at the TAC meeting, and he understands the need to extend the contract date for the Regional Transit Plan in order allow enough time to incorporate these revised population and demographic projections.
4. Mr. Lysy stated that there were unobligated planning funds that could be utilized to extend the consultant's contract in order to incorporate these revised projections.
5. Mr. Lerner stated that he would prepare a contract amendment to extend the completion date of the study and identify additional costs necessary to incorporate the revised projections.

**EDAC and CTAC Meeting**

1. The consulting team will make a presentation on the status of the Regional Mass Transit Plan to the combined meeting of EDAC and CTAC on July 31, 2007.

**Public Meeting**

1. The SAC agreed that the Public Meeting on the Regional Mass Transit Plan, which had been scheduled for August 6, 2007, will be rescheduled. Since the primary purpose of this meeting is to present the proposed service alternatives, it was agreed that the meeting should be postponed until the travel demand modeling using the revised population and demographic projections is completed.