



Technical Advisory Committee Meeting Agenda August 5, 2021, 2:00 p.m.

Rockingham County Administration Center
20 East Gay Street
Harrisonburg, VA 22802

Zoom Meeting for Remote Attendees:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87662080215?pwd=MnFDZzVjdGRLNERRWm5KL0h6Z3A5QT09>

Meeting ID: 876 6208 0215 ** Passcode: 026020 ** **Dial In:** 301-715-8592

1. Call To Order
2. Approval of Minutes of June 3, 2021 Meeting*
3. Public Comment
4. Consideration of Resolution Authorizing Electronic Participation in Meetings of the HRMPO (TAC AF #21-5)*
5. 2045 Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Scoping Session (TAC Memo #21-7)
6. Agency Updates
 - a. VDOT
 - b. DRPT
 - c. HDPT
7. Other Business
8. Upcoming Meetings
 - a. HRMPO Policy Board Meeting Thursday, August 19, 2021, 3:00 pm
 - b. HRMPO TAC Meeting Thursday, September 2, 2021, 2:00 p.m.
9. Adjournment

* Action needed

HRMPO TAC Minutes June 3, 2021, 2:00 p.m.

Via Zoom Video/Audio Conferencing Call

Voting Member	Alternates	Staff
City of Harrisonburg	✓ Patrick Wilcox, Rockingham	✓ Ann Cundy
✓ Tom Hartman	Jay Litten, Bridgewater	✓ Manas Ranjan
✓ Bill Blessing, Chair	✓ Libby Clark, Mt. Crawford	✓ Rita Whitfield
✓ Thanh Dang	Jakob zumFelde, Harrisonburg	
✓ Erin Yancey	Avery Daugherty, Harrisonburg	Others
✓ Gerald Gatobu	Cheryl Spain, Harrisonburg	✓ Kim Sandum, Shenandoah Alliance
Rockingham County	Dan Rublee, Harrisonburg	✓ Burgess Lindsey, VDOT
✓ Rhonda Cooper, Vice Chair	Grant Sparks, DRPT	✓ Sam Styers, McCormick Taylor
✓ Bradford Dyjak	Jeff Lineberry, VDOT	
✓ Casey Armstrong	Josh Dunlap, VDOT	
Town of Bridgewater		
✓ Alex Wilmer		
Town of Dayton		
✓ Christa Hall		
Town of Mt. Crawford	Non-Voting Members	
✓ J. C. Smythers	Kevin Jones, FHWA	
VDOT	Michelle DeAngelis, FTA	
✓ Brad Reed	Bill Yates, JMU	
✓ Don Komara	Rusty Harrington, Aviation	
VDRPT		
Wood Hudson		

Call to Order

Governor Ralph Northam declared a state of emergency in Virginia on March 12, 2020, in response to COVID-19. In light of this emergency, the June 3, 2021, HRMPO TAC meeting was conducted via video conferencing using Zoom. The June 3, 2021, Zoom Video/Audio Conferencing call of the Harrisonburg-Rockingham Metropolitan Planning Organization Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) was called to order at 2:00 p.m. by Chairperson Blessing.

Minutes

Chairperson Blessing presented the minutes from the April 1, 2021, TAC Zoom Video/Audio Conferencing call. Mr. Dyjak moved, seconded by Mr. Reed, to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Public Comment

Chairperson Blessing opened the floor for public comment. There were no comments from the public.

Election of Officers (TAC AF #21-3)

Ms. Cooper nominated Mr. Bill Blessing for the office of Chairperson, seconded by Mr. Komara. Nominations for Chairperson were unanimously closed. Mr. Blessing was unanimously elected to the office of Chairperson. Chairperson Blessing opened the floor for nominations for Vice Chairperson. Mr. Armstrong nominated Ms. Cooper for the office of Vice Chairperson, seconded by Mr. Komara. Nominations for Vice Chairperson were unanimously closed. Ms. Cooper was unanimously elected to the office of Vice Chairperson.

2020 Census Bureau Proposed Criteria for Urban Areas (TAC AF #21-4)

Chairperson Blessing presented the 2020 Census Bureau Proposed Criteria for Urban Areas. Ms. Cundy stated that the U.S. Census Bureau is proposing a new methodology for defining urban areas. She noted that the proposed changes would change the size of the HRMPO urban area, and could affect Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funding allocations to MPOs and small urban transit systems. Ms. Cundy stated that the Census Bureau currently define urban areas based on population density per Census block and are currently defined as urbanized areas with at least 50,000 people. She noted that staff submitted a letter to the Census Bureau on behalf of the HRMPO to meet the deadline addressing the concerns with the urban criteria methodology, and encouraged the U. S. Census Bureau to simplify the criteria for planning purposes (letter attached to file minutes). Ms. Cundy presented a draft letter to the state Senators and Congressman to outline the FHWA and FTA code implications and reviewed the map for the preliminary HRMPO urban area changes on the Census Bureau's Proposed Criteria using 2010 Census data. Ms. Cooper moved, seconded by Mr. Komara, to recommend that the Policy Board approve the letter to the U.S. Senators and Congressman outlining concerns about the impact of the U.S. Census Bureau's proposed urban area definition changes on the HRMPO and BRITE Transit. Motion was carried by unanimous vote.

Presentation: COVID Impacts on Transportation in the HRMPO – Manas Ranjan

Mr. Ranjan gave a PowerPoint presentation on COVID Impacts on Transportation in the HRMPO. He noted that staff wanted to explore how the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the transportation networks and requirements in the region, and study the findings in comparison to national trends and trends. He stated that the comparative study found interesting variances and region-specific insights that contrast with national trends, and raised valuable questions regarding transportation characteristics and needs particular to the region. Mr. Ranjan noted that based on the studies conducted nationally and in Northern Virginia, HRMPO staff conducted a study focused on the CSPDC region to explore if the region also followed the national trend or, if it differed, then by how much. He stated that the study used crash data from VDOT to develop models to explore the nature of crashes, increase in fatal crashes, and the reason behind the increase specific to the rural nature of our region. Mr. Ranjan noted that the study found that, unlike the trends noticed in urban areas and Northern Virginia, the region did not face the same effects of COVID-19 pandemic on transportation. He reported on overall crashes in the region, the number of fatal and major injury crashes as compared to previous years, and the different ways the pandemic may have impacted urban and rural regions. Discussion ensued regarding the need and purpose for additional future studies to explore other factors contributing to fatal and severe crashes during and after COVID-19.

Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)

Mr. Reed gave an update on the Revenue Sharing and Transportation Alternative (TA) programs, noting that the portal is currently open for both preapplications. He stated that the mandatory preapplications are due by July 1st, and the full application period will be from August 16 through October 1, 2021.

Mr. Reed gave an update on the U.S. 33 Arterial Management Plan in Rockingham County and reported on the public survey responses, noting that over 2,000 responses had been received. He reported on VDOT's Strategically Targeted Affordable Roadway Solutions (STARS) study in the City of Harrisonburg, which will be focusing on safety issues at 10 intersections in the downtown area. Mr. Reed gave an update on the feasibility study being conducted by the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, with the help of VDOT, to study the feasibility of a 50-mile long Shenandoah Valley Rail Trail project between Broadway and Front Royal. He stated that a survey for the Rail Trail was designed to gather input from communities along the study corridor, as well as visitors to the Shenandoah Valley. Mr. Reed noted that over 7,000 responses have been received so

far. He announced that Terry Short is no longer on the HRMPO, having taken a position with VDOT in the local assistance program.

Mr. Komara gave an update on several Revenue Sharing and Transportation Alternative (TA) projects in the area. Ms. Cundy reminded everyone that if a jurisdiction in the HRMPO area is applying for a TAP project, a resolution of support is needed from the HRMPO. Mr. Komara reported on I-81 Corridor Improvement Program initiatives happening across the district, noting that can updated information can be viewed on <https://improve81.org>. He reported on the Smithland Road bridge construction project, which is scheduled for this fall; the Route 682 Friedens Church bridge project improvements in Rockingham County, noting that advertisement is scheduled for this fall; and the Route 33 bridge project at Exit 247 for \$60 million over I-81.

Harrisonburg Department of Public Transportation (HDPT)

Mr. Gatobu reported on HDPT's transit routes for area schools and how HDPT is preparing for summer school and the upcoming fall season. He gave an update on HDPT's Feasibility Study, noting that a survey is being developed and expected to be presented in the next few weeks.

Other Business

Under Other Business, Ms. Dang announced that the City of Harrisonburg is releasing Part 1 of three parts of the update to the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances. She stated that the existing Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances were last evaluated and re-written in 1997 and 1996, respectively. In the ensuing time, many changes, both major and minor, have been made to the ordinances, with results including ordinances containing outdated requirements and internal inconsistencies. Ms. Dang stated that the public comment period will begin on June 8 and conclude on July 5.

Ms. Cundy stated that the General Assembly authorized public bodies to meet via electronic means without a physical quorum during the COVID-19 global pandemic. She noted that absent a declared state of emergency, the Virginia Freedom of Information Act authorizes certain limited electronic participation, provided that the public body has first adopted a written policy providing for electronic participation in meetings, and subject to certain other restrictions and requirements. Ms. Cundy stated that the Commission's attorney is developing a policy to be approved in order to allow the HRMPO to enable its members to participate remotely in meetings to the extent possible allowed under law. She noted that the next HRMPO meeting will be held in-person.



Upcoming Meetings

Chairperson Blessing announced that the HRMPO Policy Board will hold a meeting on June 17, 2021, at 3:00 p.m.; and the next HRMPO TAC meeting will be held on July 1, 2021, at 2:00 p.m.

Adjournment

A motion for adjournment was unanimously passed at 3:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ann W. Cundy".

Ann Cundy
Director of Transportation



TO: Harrisonburg-Rockingham MPO Technical Advisory Committee

FROM: Ann Cundy, Director of Transportation

MEETING DATE: August 5, 2021

RE: **TAC Action Form #21-5: Consideration of Resolution Authorizing Electronic Participation in Meetings of the HRMPO**

RECOMMENDATION

Recommend approval of the HRMPO Remote Attendance Policy.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Governor of Virginia's Executive Order allowing public bodies to meet by electronic means in response to the COVID-19 pandemic expired on June 30, 2021. The HRMPO is resuming in-person Policy Board and TAC meetings at Rockingham County Administration Center in August 2021. The revised Virginia State Code allows for members to participate electronically based on several restrictions and conditions.

BACKGROUND

Governor Ralph Northam declared a state of emergency in Virginia on March 12, 2020, in response to COVID-19. The General Assembly authorized public bodies to meet via electronic means without a physical quorum during the COVID-19 global pandemic, which expired on June 30, 2021.

Absent a declared state of emergency, the Virginia Freedom of Information Act authorizes certain limited electronic participation. The HRMPO must approve a policy based on Code of Virginia § 2.2-3708.2 to enable its members and committees to participate remotely in meetings.

The Code allows members to participate electronically if a member notifies the Chair or other presiding officer on or before the date of the meeting that the member is unable to attend due to 1) a specified personal matter; 2) a temporary or permanent disability or other medical condition that prevents physical attendance; or 3) the member's principal residence is more than 60 miles from the meeting location.

ATTACHMENT

- [HRMPO Remote Attendance Policy](#)
- [Code of Virginia: § 2.2-3708.2. Meetings held through electronic communication means](#)

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING ELECTRONIC PARTICIPATION IN MEETINGS OF THE HARRISONBURG-ROCKINGHAM METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

WHEREAS, the General Assembly has authorized public bodies to meet via electronic means without a physical quorum during the COVID-19 global pandemic; and

WHEREAS, absent a declared state of emergency, the Virginia Freedom of Information Act authorizes certain limited electronic participation, provided that the public body has first adopted a written policy providing for electronic participation in meetings, and subject to certain other restrictions and requirements; and

WHEREAS, the Harrisonburg-Rockingham Metropolitan Planning Organization (“HRMPO”) desires to adopt a policy to enable its members to participate remotely in meetings of HRMPO, and its committees, under certain circumstances.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, HRMPO resolves and adopts the following policy:

1. Members are hereby approved to participate in a meeting of HRMPO or its committees through electronic communications, such as telephone or video participation, from a remote location as provided in Code of Virginia § 2.2-3708.2, subject to the following requirements:
 - A. A member wishing to participate from a remote location in a meeting shall notify the Chairperson, or other presiding officer, on or before the date of a meeting that the member is unable to attend the meeting due to (i) a personal matter, provided that the member identifies with specificity the nature of the personal matter, (ii) a temporary or permanent disability or other medical condition that prevents the member’s physical attendance, or (iii) because the member’s principal residence is more than 60 miles from the meeting location.
 - B. The minutes for the meeting shall record the remote location from which the absent member participated, as well as the specific nature of the personal matter, that the member participated in the meeting electronically due to a medical condition or disability, or that the member participated in the meeting electronically due to their principal residence being more than 60 miles away from the meeting location.
 - C. If the absent member’s remote participation would violate this policy, such remote participation is disapproved and the absent member shall not be allowed to participate. The reason for such disapproval shall be recorded in the minutes.
 - D. Participation in a meeting through electronic communication due to a personal matter shall be limited, for each member and in each calendar year, to two meetings of the public body.



- E. A quorum must be physically assembled at the primary or central meeting location, unless otherwise provided by law.
- F. Arrangements shall be made, to the maximum extent practicable, for the voice of the absent member to be heard by all persons in attendance at the primary or central meeting location.
- G. Nothing herein shall be construed to restrict the ability of HRMPO or its committees to meet without a quorum physically assembled at one location during a state of emergency as may be authorized by law, including without limitation Virginia Code § 2.2.3708.2.

Signed this 5th day of August 2021.

SIGNED:

ATTEST:

Bill Blessing, Chair
Harrisonburg-Rockingham
Metropolitan Planning Organization
Technical Advisory Committee

Bonnie S. Riedesel, Secretary/Treasurer
Harrisonburg-Rockingham
Metropolitan Planning Organization
Policy Board



TO: Harrisonburg-Rockingham MPO Technical Advisory Committee

FROM: Ann Cundy, Director of Transportation

MEETING DATE: August 5, 2021

RE: **TAC Memo #21-7: 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Scoping Session**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The HRMPO's Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) must be updated every five years. HRMPO adopted the 2040 LRTP on March 16, 2017 and amended the document on May 17, 2018 and August 15, 2019. This plan update will extend the horizon to 2045, and staff anticipates this update process being a largely staff-rather than consultant-led process.

UPDATE PROCESS

Staff is conducting a 2045 LRTP visioning session with the TAC to inform the Scope of Work. The visioning session will focus on identifying regional transportation challenges and opportunities; reviewing changes in demographic and transportation data trends since the last update in 2017; and reviewing potential data sources for information that may be required to update the existing conditions, transportation demand management (TDM) modeling, and transportation needs in the region.

Staff summarized growth in the MPO area over the past five years to inform the visioning session discussion. The summary highlights demographic trends over past 20 years in all the member jurisdictions, shows the current housing affordability statistics in the region, major employment sectors, and changes in road safety and vehicular crash frequencies.

NEXT STEPS

Staff will use the visioning exercise to develop the scope of work and project timeline, and will present the document to the Policy Board for approval. The 2045 LRTP update process will take approximately 18-months, and the final document will be complete in early 2023.

ATTACHMENT

[2040 HRMPO LRTP](#)