

HRMPO TAC Minutes March 4, 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 Orebaugh, Mt. Crawford	✓ Rita Whitfield
✓ Thanh Dang	Jakob zumFelde, Harrisonburg	
✓ Erin Yancey	Avery Daugherty, Harrisonburg	Others
✓ Gerald Gatobu	Cheryl Spain, Harrisonburg	✓ Kyle Lawrence, SVC
Rockingham County	Dan Rublee, Harrisonburg	✓ Burgess Lindsey, VDOT
✓ Rhonda Cooper, Vice Chair	Grant Sparks, DRPT	
✓ Bradford Dyjak	✓ Jeff Lineberry, VDOT	
Casey Armstrong	✓ Brad Reed, VDOT	
Town of Bridgewater	Josh Dunlap, VDOT	
✓ Alex Wilmer		
Town of Dayton		
Susan Smith		
Town of Mt. Crawford	Non-Voting Members	
✓ J. C. Smythers	Kevin Jones, FHWA	
VDOT	Michelle DeAngelis, FTA	
Terry Short	✓ 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 March 4, 2021, HRMPO TAC meeting was conducted via video conferencing using Zoom. The March 4, 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.

Ms. Cundy announced that Manas Ranjan has been hired as the new CSPDC Transportation Planner, replacing Jonathan Howard.

Minutes

Chairperson Blessing presented the minutes from the January 7, 2021, TAC Zoom Video/Audio Conferencing call. Ms. Cooper moved, seconded by Mr. Gatobu, 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.

Draft Title VI Plan Review and Amendment Release to Public Comment (TAC Action Form #21-1)

Chairperson Blessing presented for consideration the Draft Title VI Plan Review and Amendment Release to Public Comment. Ms. Cundy reviewed Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, noting that as a recipient of federal funds, the HRMPPO adheres to this law, and documents this in the Title VI Plan. She stated that in the fall of 2020, VDOT conducted a triennial review of the MPO's Title VI Plan and program and reported on its Letter of Findings. Ms. Cundy noted that staff is amending the MPO's Title VI Plan to address Findings 1 and 6, adding the Title VI Certifications and Assurances, and revising the Discrimination Complaint Procedures to ensure compliance with FHWA's new requirement that all complaints made against a subrecipient of federal funds be routed directly to FHWA for review. She reviewed the next steps, noting that following the 21-day public comment period, staff will incorporate any additional edits and public comments into the amended document. Ms. Cundy stated that staff will present the final 2021 Title IV Amendment to the Policy Board for approval at the April 15, 2021 meeting. Ms. Cooper moved, seconded by Ms. Dang, to recommend to the HRMPO Policy Board to release the Draft Amendment to Title VI to a 21-day public comment period. Motion was carried by unanimous vote.

FY 2021 Small Area Study Program Update (TAC Memo #21-3)

Chairperson Blessing presented the FY 2021 Small Area Study Program Update. Ms. Cundy gave an update on the Study, noting that the small area study has evaluated the feasibility of a bicycle-pedestrian bridge over Port Republic Road at the intersection with Bluestone Drive and Hillside Avenue. She stated that the Study Team and AMT have finalized Phase 2 of the Study, refined the Alternative 4 concept and cost estimate. Ms. Cundy reported that the HRMPO and the City of Harrisonburg have created an online public engagement website to solicit comments on proposed operational and safety improvements to the project. Ms. Cundy presented the website, noting that a presentation on the study



and draft recommendations can be viewed on the website, as well as a brief survey on the project. She noted that the public comment period closes on March 28, 2021.

FY 2022 UPWP Discussion (TAC Memo #21-4)

Chairperson Blessing presented for discussion the FY 2022 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). Ms. Cundy gave a review on the UPWP, noting that the UPWP is the annual work program and budget for the HRMPO. She stated that the UPWP details the administrative and planning activities to be undertaken during the fiscal year, and the federal, state, and local funds used for these activities. Ms. Cundy presented the table comparing FY 2021 UPWP with the Draft FY 2022 UPWP funding. She noted that as the funding from VDOT (FHWA PL funds) and DRPT (FTA Section 5303) does not change significantly from year to year, staff begins the update process with funding levels from the prior fiscal year and makes necessary adjustments prior to final approval. Ms. Cundy reviewed the next steps, noting that staff will present a draft document to the Policy Board at their March meeting, final drafts to the TAC and Policy Board at their April meetings, with final approval by the Policy Board at their May meeting.

Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) Update

Mr. Reed gave an update on SMART SCALE, noting that the HRMPO did very well in this round. He stated that the HRMPO area received seven projects out of the nine submitted, totaling \$23.3 million; statewide, there were 397 applications submitted, totaling \$6.3 billion in requested funds; and in the Staunton District, there were 45 applications, totaling \$235 million in requested funds. Mr. Reed gave an update on the U.S. 33 Arterial Management Plan in Rockingham County and reported on the survey for the Plan, noting that currently, approximately 2,000 responses have been received so far. He reported on VDOT's Strategically Targeted Affordable Roadway Solutions (STARS) study in the City of Harrisonburg, which will be evaluating safety issues at 10 intersections in the downtown area.

Mr. Komara gave updates on several bridge construction projects in the HRMPO area: announced that the Mauzy bridge construction project for \$12.5 million was completed ahead of schedule; the Smithland Road bridge project is scheduled for this fall; the Route 682 Friedens Church Road is scheduled to begin construction this spring; the Route 33 bridge project for \$60 million over I-81 is scheduled for 2022; gave an update on the Route 11 right-of-way four-lane project; and reported on snow removal and costs.



Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT)

Mr. Hudson gave an update on DRPT activities, announcing that the Section 5303 grants portal is open and will close on May 14, 2021. He gave an update on rail activities, noting that the Virginia Passenger Rail Authority's next meeting will be held on March 22, 2021, and reported on the FTA COVID-19 research grant. Mr. Hudson reported on recommendations from the Metropolitan and Micropolitan Statistical Area Standards Review Committee to the Office of Management and Budget regarding changes to the standards for delineating metropolitan and micropolitan statistical areas. Ms. Cundy stated that she had reviewed this recommendation in its entirety and reported on her findings regarding the minimum urban area population to qualify a metropolitan statistical area. She stated that MPOs are required to represent localities in all urbanized areas with populations over 50,000, as determined by the U.S. Census.

Harrisonburg Department of Public Transportation (HDPT)

Mr. Gatobu reported on HDPT's activities, noting that HDPT is currently working on a feasibility study. He reported on area public schools and James Madison University (JMU) schedules, and providing effective transit routes. Mr. Gatobu reported on a shortage of bus drivers, mainly due to the demand of additional routes needed to maintain the safety requirements for COVID-19.

Upcoming Meetings

Chairperson Blessing announced that the HRMPO Policy Board will hold a meeting on March 18, 2021, at 3:00 p.m.; and the next HRMPO TAC meeting will be held on April 1, 2021, at 2:00 p.m.

Adjournment

A motion for adjournment was unanimously passed at 2:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ann W. Cundy".

Ann Cundy
Director of Transportation