



Transit Capital Project Revenue Advisory Board
VDOT Auditorium
1401 East Broad Street, Richmond, VA 23219
10:00 AM to 3:00 PM

Minutes

Members Present:

Hon. Marty Williams, Chair
Hon. Tom Rust
Jim Spore
Josh Baker

Hon. Jeff McKay (Arrived at 10:15)
Hon. Mary Katherine Greenlaw
Dr. James Toscano (Arrived at 10:15)

DRPT Staff Present:

Jennifer Mitchell
Jennifer DeBruhl
Chris Smith
Cheryl Openshaw
Terry Brown
Steve Pittard
Andy Wright
Bethany Thomas

Presenters:

Nate Macek, Parsons Brinkerhoff
Tom Harrington, Cambridge Systematics
John Martin, SIR

1. Call to Order / Introductions (10:05 AM) – Chair Williams called the meeting to order.
2. Guiding Principles and Calendar:

Jennifer DeBruhl, Chief of Transit for the Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT), asked that the group review the Guiding Principles document and proposed calendar. She informed the Board that the TSDAC (Transit Service Delivery Advisory Committee), who is working on the technical side of the study, previewed all of this information at their last meeting in August. She informed the Board that the guiding principles were adopted by the TSDAC with the acknowledgement that they are fluid and may need to change.

Jennifer DeBruhl also asked that board members review the calendar of meetings going forward. She acknowledged that a lot of work must be done between now and the interim report to the General Assembly and that the meeting timeframes have been established to meet key milestones.

3. Transit Resource Allocation Plan Update - Nate Macek, Parsons Brinkerhoff
 - a. Nate Macek shared with the members that the purpose of his work is to help quantify overall statewide transit capital needs , an in the context of the expected funding gap beginning in FY 2018, and to identify revenue options that can close the funding gap.
 - b. The plan needs to reflect transit projects that are not yet in the SYIP, but are established and/or programmed in transit development plans or other capital program documents.
 - c. Chairman Marty Williams asked if the information being presented is based on current funding available or if the goal is to document needs beyond current funding sources. Nate replied that the current SYIP is fully funded, and that the goal is to include other projects that would reasonably seek funding to identify the total gap in funding.
 - d. Nate shared that they are calibrating data based on new Transit Development Plans, which are looking at costs to deliver service. In addition, they are conducting interviews with the state's ten largest transit agencies.
 - e. Jim Spore commented that we want to look at the later years of the SYIP analysis to see what is not included. What we are after is the overall capital needs statewide.
 - f. Nate said detailed agency interviews have been conducted and follow ups have been scheduled. WMATA is the largest transit agency in the state, receiving 45% of state capital funds.
 - g. Delegate Tom Rust asked that if 45% of state transit capital funding goes to WMATA, does the remaining 55% go to the remaining transit agencies in the state? Director Jennifer Mitchell responded that he is correct in that assumption.
 - h. Director Jennifer Mitchell stated that CFOs from local jurisdictions in the WMATA compact are getting to the bottom of what WMATA's funding needs really are. DRPT is part of the discussion and will be monitoring all discussions and ensuring that both safety and capital needs are incorporated.
4. Prioritization Processes and Measures-Presentation by Tom Harrington, Cambridge Systematics
 - a. Chairman Williams reminded Board Members that the presentation given by Tom is in draft form and is meant to stimulate discussion and therefore members are encouraged to speak up if they have comments or questions.
 - b. Tom Harrington discussed HB1359 which directs TCPRAB to study a project-based prioritization method for the allocation of transit capital funds, for both state of good repair and expansion transit projects.
 - c. Factors for evaluation are similar to SMART Scale, but the measures may be different.
 - d. Supervisor Jeff McKay asked if State of Good Repair Projects will go through a prioritization, and drew a comparison to highway maintenance. Chairman Marty Williams replied that CTB is going through a similar process to prioritize State of Good Repair Projects.

- e. Supervisor Jeff McKay commented on the administrative process that could be involved in these applications and remarked that he was concerned that the application process could become more bureaucratic and time consuming than the repair itself.
- f. Supervisor Jeff McKay asked Tom Harrington a question on what projects would be considered as enhancements/capacity expansion. Tom Harrington replied that there is a gray area between state of good repair and enhancement/expansion that will need to be defined.
- g. Chairman Williams pointed out that the CTB funds the greatest needs first for state of good repair, and makes a determination on what projects can wait. He hopes that the principle will work the same with transit.
- h. Delegate Tom Rust asked if the intent is to show state of good repair projects and expansion projects as being equal. Director Jennifer Mitchell replied that this is really a programming question that the board will need to determine. There could be two separate pots of funding. The CTB has not directed the Board to fund State of Good Repair Projects first. The group needs to make a recommendation on which policy is best.
- i. Chairman Williams said we need a good process evaluation that we can use to run scenarios. He asked Director Jennifer Mitchell to make sure that time is set aside to work through developing the process on the next agenda.
- j. Chairman Williams mentioned that similar criteria have been adopted for SMART Scale and that different point values were assigned for different regions. This should be done again to prevent smaller transit agencies from being overwhelmed by the bigger agencies.
- k. Supervisor McKay mentioned that it would be prudent to look at several different prioritization processes so that what we send to the General Assembly will reflect that we have had a discussion about weighting.
- l. Josh Baker said the Board needs to consider that many smaller systems have to use their operating budgets to keep things in a state of good repair, so the overall budgets of agencies may need to be considered.
- m. Tom Harrington discussed the different measures and how the Board should pick them. He stressed that we want to pick measures that have data that we can reasonably obtain. Some measures will need to be qualitative, not everything can be quantified.
- n. Dr. James Toscano mentioned that between SMART Scale, New Starts/Small Starts and the Mass Transit fund, that the same project could be scored three different times. He asked what will be the impact of these three scores and how will a project actually get funding.
 - i. Director Jennifer Mitchell replied and said there will be very few projects that would be eligible for all three of these funding programs. DRPT encourages projects to apply for SMART Scale funding to lessen the burden on our transit capital funds. The Board should strive to minimize the differences between the scoring methods as much as possible.
 - ii. Dr. James Toscano recommended that a process map be created to show how often projects will be rated and when so that grantees can have a more predictable process.
- o. Chairman Williams stated that Smart Scale scoring is based on region and scored within the region. The Smart Scale system is hard to apply back to transit. There will be fear in

the community but we will have to convey to the public that this is being done so that there is sensibility and fairness in the process.

- p. Dr. James Toscano posed the question as to whether or not an agency that experiences a high asset failure rate because of management decisions and maintenance practices will end up getting more State of Good Repair money and stated this will need to be considered in the measures.
 - q. Tom Harrington discussed the Congestion and Accessibility measures with the group.
 - i. Looking at ridership in terms of congestion mitigation would be the easiest.
 - ii. Accessibility is looking at access to jobs, particularly by those who are disadvantaged. Mary Katherine Greenlaw stated that she felt that accessibility is the most important aspect of transit and we don't want this to get lost in the process.
 - iii. Supervisor Jeff McKay asked how we measure people that use transit as a choice and not out of necessity. The Board has to think about significant projects that could move people into the transit system.
 - iv. Chairman Williams concurred that we need more people to enter the transit system so that the cost per rider can be lowered.
 - v. Jim Spore stated that we also must consider accessibility for other types of mobility needs such as medical treatment, and not focus just on jobs.
 - r. Director Jennifer Mitchell stated that there needs to be a discussion about the weighting at the next meeting.
 - s. Next Steps are discussed
 - i. Chairman Williams stated that they will get a lot of good feedback from the General Assembly based on the interim report to them in January.
 - ii. Chairman Williams urged Board members to talk to local transit and legislative officials and get them involved with what this Board is doing.
 - iii. Director Jennifer Mitchell encouraged members to review TSDAC documents, as their discussions have informed much of what was discussed at this meeting.
 - iv. Supervisor McKay asked that the Board receive all of TSDAC's input and comments but a formal recommendation from them is not necessary.
 - v. Jennifer Mitchell stated that a summary of the TSDAC's discussion will be brought to the next meeting and presented earlier on in the meeting.
5. The Business Case for Transit Investment-John Martin, SIR
- a. John Martin presented to the group the 15 strongest arguments for transit investment based on research that is already available.
 - b. He asked the group to direct him to what they feel are the strongest cases so they can do more research and come up with a narrative.
 - c. Much of the data he is referencing came from the 2015 DRPT Mobility Study and other studies that have been completed.
6. Meeting was suspended for lunch at 12:18 pm

7. Meeting was reconvened at 1:00 pm by Chairman Marty Williams and a discussion of John Martin's presentation was opened up.
 - a. Chairman Williams asked John Martin about his statistical survey pool to ensure that it was done randomly and that individuals who had expressed interest in transit were not the ones surveyed. John Martin assured that the study was conducted using random digit dialing.
 - b. Director Jennifer Mitchell told the Board that the purpose of the SIR work is to provide information that the Board requested that shows why transit is important.
 - c. Supervisor Jeff McKay stressed that a statewide economic study may need to be conducted to show how a transit project in a particular region may have an economic impact in another region of the state.
 - d. Chairman Williams suggests that John Martin dig deeper into the DRPT mobility study. He also stated that many companies now look to locate in an area where there is an existing workforce and a transit system, so the business case can be made that if you have a successful transit system, businesses will come.
 - e. Dr. James Toscano stated that the General Assembly asked for the good, bad, and the ugly and that there is no "ugly" in John Martin's research. They need to be able to give the General Assembly something that is grounded in reality and that they can believe in.

8. Legislative Intent/Project Tiers - Chris Smith, DRPT
 - a. Chris Smith introduced Anne Oman, Staff for the Virginia House Transportation Appropriations Subcommittee, to answer questions the Board might have on the legislative intent of HB1359.
 - b. Anne Oman stated that the intent of the study is to look at what was done by TSDAC and to develop a broad based funding and prioritization strategy that may or may not incorporate tiers.
 - c. Chairman Williams asked that a 2-3 sentence synopsis of the Board's legislative charge be provided as a handout at the next meeting as a reminder of what they are tasked with.
 - d. Supervisor Jeff McKay commented that the TSDAC process is still new, so he wonders what isn't working with it that has caused the legislature to ask that it be drilled down into more.
 - e. Anne Oman replied to Supervisor McKay that the TSDAC only looked at needs and not priorities. The General Assembly wants transit projects to be looked at relative to one another and utilize prioritization, much like is being done on the highway side.
 - f. Director Jennifer Mitchell said that they need to look at scenarios within and outside of the tiers. Chairman Williams said he would like these options to be presented in the interim report.

9. Public Comment
 - a. Brian Smith, HRT, Member of TSDAC
 - i. Brian Smith stressed the importance of state of good repair projects. He commented that historically through the application driven process, priorities within the transit agencies are already reflected in the funding applications submitted. He urged the Board to look at how major projects will be funded.

- b. Rupert Farley, Fredericksburg resident.
 - i. Mr. Farley stated that mass transit should be considered a public utility. Any new development should be required to pay for transit to the development at their cost. He expressed that he believed that there should be congestive pricing on roads where transit is needed.

10. Next Steps

- a. The members want feedback from TSDAC and asked that TSDAC members be present at the next Revenue Advisory Board meeting.
- b. By the January 1, 2017 interim report to the General Assembly, there needs to be a good basis of ideas so that options can be communicated.
- c. Director Jennifer Mitchell let members know that DRPT will be working to isolate all decisions that need to be made prior to the next meeting. Scenarios will likely not be run until January.
- d. Chairman Williams asked that conceptual data be ready for the interim report.

11. The meeting is adjourned by Chairman Marty Williams at 1:50 pm.