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# 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan

## Chapter 1: Planning Context and Requirements

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The SAWMPO 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan satisfies the federal metropolitan planning requirements, and establishes a program for making priority transportation investments in the region.

This chapter addresses the following areas:

- 1 – 1 Planning Background & Context
- 1 – 2 Overview of Federal Laws & the Transportation Planning Process
- 1 – 3 Compliance with Federal Regulations

### 1 – 1 Planning Background & Context

#### Pre-MPO Planning Efforts

Historically, VDOT prepared small urban plans for towns and cities throughout the Commonwealth to address transportation investments. In the late 1990s, VDOT updated Thoroughfare Plans for the Cities of Staunton and Waynesboro, which were adopted by those jurisdictions in the early 2000s. These plans analyzed highway capacity, safety, geometry, and local citizen/stakeholder input.

In the late 2000s, VDOT partnered with the State's 20 Planning District Commissions (PDCs) to evaluate roadway networks in non-urban areas of the Commonwealth. The partnership intended to develop a regional plan identifying transportation improvement needs based on objective goals unique to each geographic region. In 2011, the Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission (CSPDC) adopted the Rural Long Range Transportation Plan, identifying transportation priorities for the five county region. The plan included a comprehensive list of operational, geometric, and safety deficient roadways. This needs-based assessment did not include a fiscally-constrained project list.

#### MPO Designation

As a result of the 2010 U.S. Census, the Cities of Staunton, Waynesboro, and the urbanized portions of Augusta County, met the criteria to be defined as an UZA, which requires the formation of a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) under federal law. UZA's are defined as densely developed residential, commercial, and other nonresidential areas of 50,000 people or greater. The SAWMPO was formed in November, 2012, and received official recognition from the Governor of Virginia on March 26, 2013. Similar to other MPOs in Virginia, the SAWMPO is housed with the Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission (CSPDC) to act as the fiscal and administrative agent.

The MPO is governed by a Policy Board comprised of elected and appointed officials representing the respective jurisdictions. The Policy Board appoints members to a Technical Advisory Committee that is charged with



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The MPO is governed by a Policy Board comprised of elected and appointed officials representing the respective jurisdictions. The Policy Board appoints members to a Technical Advisory Committee that is charged with making recommendations to the Policy Board and providing assistance in reviewing issues related to regional transportation priorities and key technical or procedural matters in updating planning documents. Both bodies operate under a set of by-laws that define leadership responsibilities and terms.

The SAWMPO's partner agencies include the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) along with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (VDRPT) and the Virginia Department of Aviation.

## 1 – 2 Federal Laws and the Transportation Planning Process

The LRTP for the newly designated SAWMPO has been developed in accordance with the current federal transportation law, MAP-21. MAP-21 replaced the previous Federal transportation, SAFETEA-LU, in 2012. These two federal laws have shaped the way transportation investments are conceived, planned, funded, and implemented at the state and regional levels of government.

### The Federal Transportation Planning Framework

As a part of requirements through MAP-21, the MPO must meet the requirements of the federally-mandated transportation planning processes. These processes include the development of several documents:

- The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) that serves as an annual work program that defines specific MPO planning activities and updated each year;
- The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) that identifies transportation projects to be funded within the next six years; and
- The Long Range Transportation Plan that defines the long-range (at least 20 years) transportation needs and includes a fiscally-constrained list of projects that will be eligible for inclusion in the TIP. Through the LRTP, the MPO establishes the investment priorities of federal transportation. The LRTP is reviewed and updated every 5 years, and must cover at least a 20-year planning horizon. This plan uses a 25-year planning horizon.

### Federal Transportation Planning Factors and the 3-C Agreement

#### *Planning Factors*

SAFETEA-LU and MAP-21 identify eight planning factors (23 CFR 450.316) which must be considered as part of the transportation planning process for all metropolitan areas. These planning factors were integrated into the development of the LRTP, and include the following:

1. Support the economic vitality of the metropolitan area, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency;
2. Increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users;



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3. Increase the security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users;
4. Increase the accessibility and mobility of people and for freight;
5. Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve the quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and state and local planned growth and economic development patterns;
6. Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight;
7. Promote efficient system management and operation; and
8. Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system.

In compliance with SAFETEA-LU, the LRTP addresses these factors in the Plan goals, existing conditions inventory, alternatives/ scenario analysis, project screening, and the CLRP. Strategic planning concepts were integrated throughout development of the LRTP to support development of a sustainable, multimodal, and cost-effective transportation plan. These concepts include bicycle and pedestrian mobility, travel demand management, safety and security, and intermodal considerations, as well as the financial limitations for investing in these strategies. These comprehensive planning strategies align with the SAWMPO planning goals and objectives and have shaped development of the CLRP.

## *3-C Agreement*

Regional long-range transportation planning, by legislative definition must be:

- Comprehensive (including all modes)
- Cooperative (involving a broad array of stakeholders and other interested parties)
- Continuous (ever improving and evolving)

Planning efforts must reflect an overall purpose to efficiently move people and goods, while supporting regional land use and economic development plans and policies. This process directs cooperation with all levels of government to develop a plan which addresses long- and short-range multimodal goals and strategies for transportation improvements and priorities for the implementation of projects to fulfill those goals.

## 1 – 3 Compliance with Federal Regulation

A primary purpose of the LRTP is to establish the MPO's compliance with all current federal laws and regulations.

### Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

The SAWMPO is a sub-recipient of federal financial assistance and is required to comply with Title VI and other federal non-discrimination laws as well as provide an overview of how the SAWMPO addresses Executive Order 12898 on Environmental Justice as well as Executive Order 13166 on Limited English Proficiency (LEP) and complies with the Title VI plan. Detailed Environmental Justice guidelines and outreach strategies for protected classes are included in the SAWMPO's Public Participation Program. As part of addressing Environmental Justice, a Benefits and Burdens Analysis is included in Chapter 7, where the Plan's fiscally constrained projects

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are identified with respect to the location of underserved or potentially vulnerable population segments. This analysis provides a tool for decision makers to gauge how projects and programs may impact social equity and environmental justice.

### Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

Enacted in 1990, The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) prohibits discrimination by public entities on the basis of disability. A primary function of transportation is to deliver opportunities for basic mobility to society. The greatest challenge of the LRTP is to prioritize and implement a transportation network that is multimodal and inclusive of all users. Transportation facilities should be accessible to all users allowing full participation in society – including employment, school, commerce and recreation activities. It is vital that government strive to ensure that transportation systems are not only safe and efficient, but usable by all. Projects identified in the LRTP go through a subsequent, detailed ADA-compliance review process during the design and engineering stage of implementation.