

**Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)
Regular Meeting Minutes
January 17, 2024, 2:00 p.m.**

Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission*
112 MacTanly Place, Stanton, VA 24401

Present (14):

Voting Members				Others	
City of Staunton		VDOT		Staff (CSPDC)	
✓	Rodney Rhodes	✓	Don Komara		Ann Cundy
	Tim Hartless (Alt)	✓	Brad Reed (Alt)	✓	Zach Beard
✓	Lyle Hartt (Alt)	✓	Cody Huffman (Alt)	✓	Devon Thompson
		✓*	Shane McCabe (Alt)	✓	Paula Melester
		VA DRPT			Ansley Heller
	Augusta County	✓*	Grace Stankus	✓	Allyson Finchum
✓	Doug Wolfe				
	Alidia Vane	Non-Voting Members			
	Elizabeth Goodloe (Alt)			Other attendees	
✓	Julia Hensley (Alt)	VRT			Sam Styers
	City of Waynesboro		Steve Wilson	✓*	Avery Daugherty
✓	Leslie Tate, Chairperson		Phil Thompson (Alt)		
✓	Alisande Tombarge	Federal Highway Admin.			
	Scott Kesecker (Alt)		Kevin Jones		
	Chad Rambo (Alt)	Federal Transit Admin.			
			Michele DeAngelis		
		VA Dept. of Aviation			
			Rusty Harrington		

Call to Order

The meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) of the Staunton-Augusta-Waynesboro Metropolitan Planning Organization (SAWMPO) was called to order at 2:00 p.m. by Ms. Leslie Tate, Chair. Pursuant to §2.2-3708.2 of the Code of Virginia, SAWMPO TAC members may participate in meetings of the SAWMPO or its committees through electronic communication means. Those who attended virtually are indicated by an asterisk; all others attended in-person.

Public Comment

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

Approval of Minutes

Chairperson Tate presented minutes from the November 15, 2023, TAC Meeting. Mr. Rodney Rhodes moved, seconded by Ms. Alisande Tombarge, to approve the minutes of November 15, 2023, as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

SAWMPO 2024 Safety Targets (Board Memo #24-01)

Mr. Zach Beard presented information on the 2024 Safety Targets. Mr. Beard noted that in 2016, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) established National Performance Measures for Safety Performance for the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) to assess fatalities and serious injuries on public roads. The FHWA requires that state DOTs and MPOs set statewide annual safety percentage targets for reducing the number and rate of fatalities and serious injuries. He stated that the SAWMPO must concur with VDOT's safety targets or set MPO-specific targets by February 29, 2024, and there is no penalty for not meeting the targets.

Mr. Beard reviewed the statewide targets and goals, noting that in June 2023, the CTB approved OIPI's proposed methodology and statewide targets for calendar year 2024. He stated that OIPI's methodology establishes targets from statistical models that project future safety performance based on expected crash reductions from completed projects and five-year trends of the annual number of fatalities, serious injuries, and nonmotorized facilities and serious injuries. Mr. Beard reported on the Aspirational Goals and SAWMPO Targets and Crash Trends. Mr. Beard reviewed the next steps, noting that the SAWMPO staff will submit a letter to VDOT concurring with the statewide safety targets for 2024, and will continue to evaluate opportunities for the MPO, state, and local partners to address the upward trend in fatal and serious injury crashes in the region.

SMART SCALE Policy Changes Update (Board Memo #23-06)

Mr. Brad Reed presented an update on SMART SCALE Policy Changes. Mr. Reed noted that in 2023, the Office of Intermodal Planning and Investment (OIPI) conducted a full review of the SMART SCALE process in collaboration with the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) and the Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT). Mr. Reed reviewed the proposed changes recommended by the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) to the SMART SCALE program.

Mr. Reed presented a PowerPoint presentation on the problem areas, staff recommendations, and improvements, and reviewed the High-Priority Projects Program (HPP) Eligibility, modification of Land Use Factor and Factor Weightings. Mr. Reed stated the schedule for Round 6 SMART SCALE, noting that preapplications are open March 1, 2024.

Presentation: I-64 Virginia Breeze Feasibility Study

Mr. Avery Daugherty, Statewide Programs Manager, Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) gave a presentation on the I-64 Virginia Breeze Feasibility Study. Mr. Daugherty provided an overview on the Study and Needs Assessment, and the intercity needs and issues. He stated that Virginia Breeze was launched in 2017 to connect underserved rural communities to national bus network and other transportation modes and reviewed the existing Virginia Breeze service area. Mr. Daugherty noted that DRPT is currently studying the creation of an east-west Virginia Breeze route that would connect the Staunton/Harrisonburg area and Virginia Beach area along the Interstate 64 corridor.

Mr. Daugherty noted that the study is focused on determining if there are unmet intercity bus needs in the areas of Virginia between Virginia Beach and Harrisonburg/Staunton. He stated that DRPT has implemented rural intercity bus service under the Virginia Breeze brand (see <https://virginiabreeze.org/> for more information) and is interested in knowing if there are additional needs for additional connections to offer east-west bus service across the Commonwealth. Mr. Daugherty reviewed the project timeline, noting that the draft and final reports would be available in February 2024.

Agency Updates

VDOT

Mr. Don Komara provided the following update:

- Staunton Crossing Project is in progress; no issues.
- The Barterbrook Road project construction has begun; no issues.

- I-81 from milepost 221 to 225 started right shoulder strengthening southbound as a design build. Construction occurring in Winter 23/24 and progressing rapidly in Spring 2024 beginning with widening on the inside and an addition of barriers.
- Weyers Cave climbing lanes, milepost 232-238 to be design-build, construction scheduled for Fall 2024.
- Website for information on projects along I-81 is improve81.org.

DRPT

Ms. Grace Stankus provided the following update:

- Ms. Stankus stated that applications for FY25 are open on new grant software - WebGrants.

Transit

Ms. Devon Thompson gave the following BRITE Transit updates:

- Grant applications for DRPT have opened and staff will be working on these prior to the February 1, 2024, deadline. Applications will be made for Urban and Rural Operating and Capital Cost of Contracting, CAP Operating, and Technical Assistance grant for a micro transit feasibility study.
- The design and engineering phase of the Lewis Street Hub rehabilitation project continues to move forward. CSPDC submitted final plans to the City of Staunton for site plan approval, and the plans were approved at the end of December. CSPDC is in the process of finalizing the Invitation for Bid for the construction.
- Implementation for BRITE's mobile data collection system (MSDCS) is progressing. CSPDC, VRT, and consultant Kimley-Horn are working with Passio Technologies to install and implement MDCS on Brite buses. System information has been shared with Passio and the account has been built out; and all equipment has been installed on the buses. On-site training has been scheduled with Passio later this month.

Afton Express

Ms. Paula Melester gave the following Afton Express update:

- Ridership continues to remain strong. The year end survey to collect qualitative information from riders has been conducted and data is being analyzed. Comments have been positive with requests to increase service, expand service, and adjust times. Barriers of inability to get to the park-and-ride lots was also shared. All information will be summarized in the annual report in January.

Locality Updates

Augusta

- Mr. Doug Wolfe stated the Verona Pedestrian Project is progressing along Route 612, US 11 portion will soon start, and that the Comprehensive Plan process continues.

Staunton

- Mr. Rodney Rhodes stated that notice was received from VDOT of a public meeting on the crossing way on Richmond Avenue Shared Use Path on February 21st.
- VDOT also conducted a kick-off meeting on Greenville Avenue Road and Roundabout.
- West Beverley Street Improvements design in review by VDOT; start in Spring 2024.

Waynesboro

- Chairperson Tate noted that Greenways Phase III sidewalk connection project final plans for right-of-way in progress with plans to VDOT this week. Anticipated for Spring/Summer 2024 construction.
- West Main Street, Broad Street, and 13ths and Rosser Roundabout projects are all in design.

Other Business

Afton Mountain Small Area Study Update

Mr. Zach Beard presented information on the Afton Mountain Small Area Study. The project is near the I-64 Exit 99 interchange. Timmons met with the County of Augusta, City of Waynesboro, VDOT, and SAWMPO to discuss potential scenarios of future development. Timmons is currently finalizing recommendations, receiving feedback from stakeholders. The next study group meeting is being scheduled for February 2024 to review the draft scenarios and concepts.

Upcoming Meetings

Chairperson Tate stated that the Policy Board is scheduled to meet on February 7th and the TAC on February 21st.

Meeting Adjourned

The meeting was adjourned at 3:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Zach Beard, Senior Planner