

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

Meeting Held Virtually via Zoom

Voting Members				Others	
City of Staunton		VDOT		Staff (CSPDC)	
✓*	Rodney Rhodes		Don Komara	✓*	Zach Beard
	Tim Hartless (Alt)		Brad Reed (Alt)	✓*	Devon Thompson
✓*	Lyle Hartt (Alt)	✓*	Shane McCabe (Alt)	✓*	Paula Melester
		VA DRPT			Ann Cundy
Augusta County			Grace Stankus		
✓*	Doug Wolfe				
	Julia Hensley (Alt)	Non-Voting Members			
		VRT		Other attendees	
City of Waynesboro		✓*	Steve Wilson		
✓*	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		

*A virtual attendance option by Zoom. While in-person meeting attendance is typically required for voting members for a meeting quorum, State Code allows MPOs to hold up to two all-virtual meetings annually to approve MPO action items.

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, Chairperson. The meeting was held virtually via Zoom.

Public Comment

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

Approval of Minutes

Chairperson Tate presented minutes from the May 15, 2024 TAC Meeting. There were no comments.

Mr. Doug Wolfe moved to approve the minutes; seconded by Ms. Alisande Tombarge. The TAC approved the motion by unanimous vote.

Election of Officers (TAC Action Form #24-03)

Mr. Zach Beard presented the action item regarding SAWMPO TAC elections. Mr. Beard noted that Leslie Tate is currently serving as TAC Chair, with Mr. Rodney Rhodes as Vice Chair. The TAC Bylaws stipulate that officers serve for two years or until their successors are elected, and that the Chair and Vice Chair must be from local government and cannot be from the same locality.

Typically, officers are elected in June and assume their duties in July. However, this year's June elections were delayed due to a scheduling conflict with the Juneteenth holiday. The next scheduled elections will take place in June 2026.

Mr. Beard explained that traditionally the Vice Chair assumes the position of Chair in the following term. Mr. Rhodes has expressed his agreement to serve as the new Chair. Furthermore, it is customary for a senior-serving TAC member to assume the role of Vice Chair. Mr. Doug Wolf has indicated his willingness to serve in this capacity. Chairperson Tate requested TAC motions on two separate votes for Chair and Vice Chair positions.

Mr. Doug Wolfe moved to approve the nomination of Rodney Rhodes as TAC Chair; seconded by Chairperson Tate. The TAC approved the motion by unanimous vote.

Mr. Rhodes moved to approve the nomination of Doug Wolfe as TAC Vice Chair; seconded by Chairperson Tate. The TAC approved the motion by unanimous vote.

2050 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Update

Mr. Garreth Bartholomew presented an update on the 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) process. Mr. Bartholomew said that MPO staff are working with the consultant Avid Core to ensure inclusive and public engagement. He noted that a visioning survey will be distributed starting August 12, allowing participants to map problem areas, indicate transportation needs and uses, and prioritize top needs.

Two community consultation sessions are scheduled for August 12 and 15 at the BRITE Transit office, involving various community representatives to understand how to best engage their networks and cultivate relationships with organizations and population subsets that are typically overlooked in the transportation planning process.

Mr. Bartholomew also explained that MPO staff will be presenting an update on the LRTP at localities in August, and also will be attending events throughout the region to promote the LRTP survey, plan process, and increase general awareness of the MPO as an organization, to include farmers markets and downtown businesses. Staff is also assisting Avid Core with developing a toolkit and community outreach materials for Policy Board and TAC members to share with their networks.

At the next TAC meeting, staff will present the existing conditions chapter of the LRTP, detailing changes since the 2045 LRTP in socioeconomic and demographic conditions, as well as transportation-related changes over the past five years.

Agency Updates

VDOT

Mr. Shane McCabe gave the following update:

- SMART SCALE Round 6 full applications are due on August 1. The SMART SCALE portal will begin allowing editing to the full applications in June, and major readiness documents supporting projects, such as signal justification reports, must be uploaded into the portal by July 15.

Mr. Cody Huffman gave the following update:

- I-81 widening (Staunton, between exits 221 and 225) is progressing with concrete barrier wall installation complete and currently working on grading in the median.
- Barterbrook Road bridge project is significantly ahead of schedule, abutments and pier are complete, and girders to be set starting the week of July 29.
- Southern Corridor project moving along well.
- Afton Mountain lighting project held a public hearing through the Culpepper Construction District. The project includes 35 pole-mounted lights at the Exit 99 I-64 and Route 250 interchange and aims to improve visibility. Public reception was generally positive, although some concerns were expressed about site distance and the Parkway entrances.

DRPT

Mr. Beard gave the following DRPT updates on behalf of Ms. Grace Stankus, who was absent from the meeting:

- The approved FY25 Six-Year Improvement Plan (SYIP) is available to view on the DRPT Open Data Portal, where you can view rail and public transit funding for the upcoming year throughout the state on a map.
- SMART SCALE final applications are due no later than August 1st. Contact Paige Lazar (paige.lazar@drpt.virginia.gov) or Dan Sonenklar (daniel.sonenklar@drpt.virginia.gov) with application questions.

Transit

Ms. Devon Thompson gave the following updates:

- Awarded technical assistance grant from DRPT for micro-transit feasibility study
- BTAC approved route changes for Staunton North and West loops that will extend service along Middlebrook Avenue and change to one 1-hour loop instead of two 30-minute loops, which will lead to an earlier start time for better connections with other routes
- Lewis Street Hub construction progressing, with concrete curbs and center island poured, conduit installation upcoming, and completion expected by end of August

- Mobile data collection system final acceptance testing completed, the project is being closed-out

Afton Express

Ms. Thompson also gave the following Afton Express update:

- Staff is receiving positive feedback on the new Fontaine Research Park stop in Charlottesville
- There are plans to relocate the Staunton Mall stop to Staunton Crossing Park and Ride Lot, with a tentative move date in September, pending the Staunton Crossing Way opening.

Locality Updates

Augusta County

Mr. Wolfe gave the following updates:

- Augusta County recently celebrated the completion of the Verona Pedestrian Project with a ribbon-cutting ceremony held on June 24.
- The County has also received approval for revenue sharing to improve Dick Huff Lane. This project, originally conceived as a four-lane divided entrance, has been modified to a two-lane design with a divided median. While currently scheduled for 2026, efforts are underway to expedite the timeline. These improvements aim to enhance access to the new courthouse development, which is progressing well behind the government center.
- Augusta County submitted a Smart Scale application for the Exit 235 bridge project in Weyers Cave. Additionally, the County is working on a project south of Staunton. The County held a public meeting at a local museum to discuss the plans with the community.

Staunton

Mr. Rhodes mentioned that the City finalized a Scope of Work for the City's Comprehensive Plan update, and work is beginning on the update process. Mr. Lyle Hartt also gave the following updates:

- The City of Staunton is moving forward with several infrastructure projects. A significant repaving initiative is underway, focusing on various street sections, particularly in the downtown area and extending westward along West Beverly Street and New Hope Road. This project is being funded through the Virginia Department of Transportation's State of Good Repair (SGR) program.
- Additionally, the city has secured funding for a new sidewalk project on West Beverly Street. A preconstruction meeting for this initiative was held this month, with construction expected to commence by the end of summer. The project is anticipated to be completed by next summer.
- Lyle Hartt also mentioned that the city has been awarded a revenue sharing grant for streetscape improvements on Churchill Avenue. While the details of this project were not fully elaborated, it represents another step in the city's ongoing efforts to enhance its infrastructure and urban environment.

Waynesboro

Chairperson Tate gave the following update:

- The City received a single bid for the Greenway Phase 3/14th Street Sidewalk Improvement Project. The bid was submitted yesterday and came in significantly higher than the project's estimated cost. City staff will be evaluating the bid and exploring options in the coming weeks to address this discrepancy.

Other Business

Mr. Beard gave two additional general updates:

- CSPDC staff are evaluating the feasibility of adjusting the SAWMPO TAC and Policy Board schedules to better align with the HRMPO schedule starting in January 2025, and staff will be reaching out to reach locality to assess availability of staff to attend a new TAC meeting date
- DRPT informed the SAWMPO of a missing FY25 Valley Program for Aging Services project in SAWMPO TIP, and as a result staff is amending the TIP document and will present the change at the August 7 Policy Board meeting and release the document for a 21-day public comment period.

Meeting Adjourned

Chairperson Tate adjourned the meeting at 2:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Zach Beard, Program Manager