

Staunton-Augusta-Waynesboro Metropolitan Planning Organization Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Regular Meeting Minutes April 2, 2025, 2:00 p.m.

Meeting Held at Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission Office

Voting Members				Others	
City of Staunton		VDOT		Staff (CSPDC)	
✓	Rodney Rhodes (Chair)		Don Komara	✓	Zach Beard
✓	Meggie Roche (Alt)		Brad Reed (Alt)	✓	Garreth Bartholomew
✓	Lyle Hartt (Alt)	✓	Shane McCabe (Alt)	✓	Devon Thompson
		✓	Cody Huffman	✓	Paula Melester
		VA DRPT			Danielle Gannon
	Augusta County	✓*	Grace Stankus		
✓	Doug Wolfe (Vice Chair)				
✓	Julia Hensley (Alt)	Non-Voting Members		Other attendees	
		VRT		✓*	Sam Styers
	City of Waynesboro	✓*	Steve Wilson	✓*	Jeff Oswald
✓	Leslie Tate	✓*	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		

*Virtual attendance

Call to Order

The meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) of the April 2, 2025 Staunton-Augusta-Waynesboro Metropolitan Planning Organization (SAWMPO) was called to order at 2:00 p.m. by Chair Rodney Rhodes.

Approval of Minutes

Chair Rhodes presented the minutes from the February 5, 2025 TAC Meeting.

Mr. Garreth Bartholomew noted that transit updates from Devon Thompson were not documented in the February minutes, and that staff would include the updates in the final approved minutes document.

Ms. Leslie Tate moved to approve the minutes; seconded by Ms. Julia Hensley. The TAC approved the motion by unanimous vote.

Public Comment

Chair Rhodes opened the floor for public comment. There were no public comments.

SAWMPO Draft FY 2026 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Release for Public Comment and Conditional Approval (TAC Action Form #25-02)

Mr. Zach Beard presented the draft FY 2026 UPWP. Mr. Beard noted that staff requests that the TAC recommend to the Policy Board the release the draft 2026 UPWP for a 21-day public comment period and also conditionally approve the document pending no public comment after that 21-day period.

Mr. Beard explained that the UPWP is the MPO's annual work plan and budget, detailing upcoming fiscal year administrative and planning activities and funding allocation to the MPO's main work activities: administration and public engagement, long-range planning, short-range planning, local and state assistance, and transit planning assistance.

Mr. Beard stated that the SAWMPO's FY26 focus will be on approving the LRTP by December 2025 and starting a new small area study beginning in January 2026. The budget also includes technical assistance for BRITE's procurement of a contracted service provider and funding for assistance to localities as requested for grant opportunities.

Ms. Tate moved to recommend approval for the Policy Board to release the document for 21 days of public comment and conditional approval; seconded by Mr. Doug Wolfe. The TAC approved the motion by unanimous vote.

SAWMPO FY26 Small Area Study Discussion

Mr. Beard explained that a new small area study will begin in the upcoming fiscal year after the LRTP is approved in December from January 2026 to May 2026. The five-month study time is shorter than the typical nine-month timeframe to accommodate the next SMART SCALE application in-take period in summer 2026. Mr. Beard reported that staff coordinated with each locality to gather input on potential studies that could fit the timeframe.

Mr. Garreth Bartholomew suggested revisiting the 2019 VDOT STARS study in the City of Staunton conducted along Greenville Avenue corridor in the southern part of the city. The study has become dated, and the concepts and improvements originally proposed were somewhat underdeveloped and need refinement. Mr. Bartholomew noted that the existing study could provide a good baseline for a new study, which would assist with developing a new study within the shorted study timeframe.

Mr. Bartholomew presented maps showing the draft proposed study area, displaying Potential for Safety Improvement (PSI) intersections and segments from VDOT's GIS data for 2016-2020 and 2018-2022 timeframes.

Mr. Bartholomew explained that given proposed improvements going north on Greenville Avenue toward the new Greenville Avenue road diet improvements, and improvements south of Barterbrook Road and Greenville Avenue toward Rolling Thunder Drive, there are funded improvements underway. The improvements noted in the 2019 VDOT STARS study between Ritchie Boulevard and Statler down to Betsy Bell and Barterbrook Road have significant PSI segments throughout the Staunton District.

The segment between Circle K near Betsy Bell to Statler was ranked 7th in the district for PSI segments. The study area would pick up where the STARS study left off, examining key intersections at Ritchie, Statler, Amherst, and continuing down the corridor from Amherst to Betsy Bell and the intersection with Barterbrook Road.

Ms. Tate asked if applications had been made for SMART SCALE from the previous study. Chair Rhodes confirmed that the city had applied from Ritchie Boulevard north to Greenville Avenue, which is currently being designed, and the county also had a project in the opposite direction. Mr. Bartholomew clarified that six improvements were suggested as part of the Greenville Avenue study, and half of those improvements are funded, and half were not advanced. As a result, the new SAMWPO study would examine some of the unfunded improvements and update the concepts to 2025 data and cost estimates.

Presentation: 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan Phase 2 Public Engagement Summary

Mr. Bartholomew presented the Phase 2 public engagement summary for the 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan. Mr. Bartholomew noted that Monday marked the final day of public engagement for Phase 2 of the LRTP.

Mr. Bartholomew noted that staff designed a survey based on Phase 1 feedback and that MPO staff presented to elected officials at City Council and Board of Supervisors meetings and conducted pop-up events at Staunton YMCA, Waynesboro YMCA, and Stuarts Draft High School. The survey collected 201 responses using the Social Pinpoint platform.

Augusta County Projects

Ten projects were proposed for Augusta County, ranging from Route 250, Wilson Workforce Rehabilitation Center, Route 256, and US 11 safety improvements. The highest rated project was US 250 Jefferson Highway safety improvements, with feedback noting safety challenges for multimodal users and concerns about speed limit compliance. The lowest rated projects, with less than 85% support, were two roundabout projects - the Laurel Hill Road and Exit 227 northbound ramp roundabout (about 65% support) and the Route 256 and Route 11 single-lane roundabout (about 70% support). Comments showed mixed reception to roundabout concepts, with concerns about truck traffic, queuing, and congestion.

Staunton Projects

Seven projects were proposed, ranging from unfunded Greenville Avenue projects to pedestrian improvements at George Cochran Parkway, improvements along Churchville Avenue and Thorn Rose Avenue near Gypsy Hill Park, and safety improvements at North Augusta Street and Statler Boulevard. The highest rated projects were the Amherst, Statler, and Ritchie intersection improvements (which is the proposed FY26 study area), receiving strong support for sidewalk and pedestrian improvements and median improvements for the two-way left turn lane safety. The North Augusta Street, Statler Boulevard, and Edgewood Drive safety improvements also rated highly, particularly for pedestrian improvements given proximity to schools, YMCA, Food Lion, and BRITE bus stops.

The lowest rated project in Staunton was the Greenville Avenue, Coalter, and Commerce Road intersection (only 16% support) - primarily due to concerns about the unfunded roundabout at Richmond Road and Greenville Avenue. Additional projects with less than 85% support was the West Beverly Street and North Jefferson Street single-lane roundabout. Similarly, at the Churchville Avenue and Thornrose Avenue right turn lane modification (about 65% support) there were concerns about cost-benefit and increased congestion.

Waynesboro Projects

The City of Waynesboro had six projects, including Delphine Avenue improvements, the Lew DeWitt and Rosser roadway connector, and the Rockfish Gateway shared-use path. The highest rated project was the Rockfish Gateway shared-use path received unanimous support and was the most viewed project overall, with feedback highlighting both safety benefits and economic development opportunities.

The lowest rated projects in Waynesboro with less than 85% support were the Delphine Avenue and Hopeman Parkway intersections with concerns about cost-benefit when other Route 340 improvements might be more worthwhile, the Lew DeWitt and Rosser Avenue roadway connector with questions about current demand and practicality, and the South Delphine Avenue and I-64 Exit 96 westbound ramp improvements - feedback suggested interstate merging issues rather than exit ramp problems.

Next Steps

Project scoring will be completed by the end of May. Phase 3 public engagement with the draft LRTP will launch in early fall (August-September), with the final draft available for review in October and approval by the TAC and Policy Board at the December SAWMPO meetings.

Agency Updates

VDOT

Mr. Cody Huffman reported:

- Barterbrook Road Bridge: deck pouring has started, the project remains ahead of schedule, and project completion is expected completion spring/early summer.
- I-81 widening project from mile markers 221-225 is well ahead of schedule, continuing median work and three-lane construction in each direction.



- Weyers Cave widening began with right shoulder strengthening in both directions, milling completed, pavement and traffic shifting to follow, concrete barriers in median expected within a month.
- Resurfacing schedules have started, with continued pothole work from the harsh winter and route preparation for upcoming resurfacing.

Mr. Shane McCabe reported:

- I-81 corridor improvement plan is out for public review with an online survey and interactive map.
- The CTB approved the next round of Project Pipeline study locations at March CTB meeting, including the US 340 Rosser Avenue study in the SAWMPO region. This safety-focused study will examine the district's number one Potential for Safety Improvement (PSI)-ranked in the Rosser Avenue corridor. A 2018 MPO corridor study focused on operations and produced a funded SMART Scale application, but did not include safety recommendations.
- Revenue sharing and Technical Assistance Program (TAP) applications have a pre-application window from April 1-May 30, and full applications are due from August 15 - September 15. VDOT Contacts for the grant opportunities are Jonathan Liss for revenue sharing and Cynthia Waymack for TAP.
- District Planning is awaiting the final CTB funding decisions for the Waynesboro Transportation Access Project and Route 256 I-81 Interchange Bridge project, plus allocation of excess \$8 million in district grant program funding.

DRPT

Ms. Grace Stankus reported:

- DRPT is finalizing FY26 funding recommendations for rail and transit projects.
- Draft SYIP (Six-Year Improvement Program) release planned for April 15.
- SYIP meeting attendees will have the opportunity to comment on transit projects during the STIP Staunton District meeting on May 15 at Blue Ridge Community College.
- The Virginia Transit Association annual conference is May 28-29 in Richmond.
- The new TIP update process and travel expense pre-check are effective April 1, and there is a webinar recording available on DRPT YouTube.

BRITE and Afton Express

Ms. Thompson reported:

- March is Transit Operator Appreciation Month! CSPDC staff expressed appreciation to BRITE and Afton Express drivers on Transit Operator Appreciation Day on March 18 with donuts and coffee, and Virginia Regional Transit provided lunch to drivers on March 27.
- The BRITE microtransit feasibility analyzing potential service models and related costs and considerations to potentially implement on-demand microtransit service within the service area is developing. The consultant identified prioritized zones underwent broad analysis with high-level recommendations, and service delivery models and final recommendations will be presented to the BRITE Transit Advisory Committee (TAC) at May BRITE TAC meeting.

- Shop and Dine Out in Downtown Staunton detours will begin for the Staunton Downtown Trolley and Saturday Night Trolley beginning April 4.

Afton Express

- Staff finalized and distributed the 2024 Afton Express Annual Report.

Augusta County

Ms. Julia Hensley reported:

- The congressionally directed spending funding was rescinded and is no longer available for the Exit 213 study.
- There was a fatality at the Exit 225 northbound off-ramp, and the County is revisiting previous funding applications for improvements in the area.
- The County conducted walk-throughs with VDOT on two potential Revenue Sharing and TAP projects.

City of Staunton

Mr. Lyle Hartt reported:

- Greenville Avenue/US-11 Road Diet and Roundabout Project had significant budget overruns that led to project redesign and the project went from a two-lane roundabout with road diet extending half a mile up Greenville Avenue to potentially a single-lane roundabout. Additional VDOT funding that was expected to cover the shortfall became unavailable.
 - The City is moving forward with a conventional signalized intersection instead of a roundabout, while still accommodating pedestrian safety and traffic flow, and interfacing with the Greenville Avenue Road Diet to the south and Commerce Road connections to the north. A concept plan is expected later in the month.
- There are infrastructure issues beneath the wharf area and structural engineers identified areas needing immediate attention under Johnson Street near the parking garage and at the creek confluence in the middle of the wharf. Traffic has been rerouted to allow access from Byers Street, with engineers developing both immediate repair plans and long-term improvements including flow improvements, utility relocations, and debris removal.
- Chair Rhodes added that the Edgewood sidewalk project is being designed, with staff working with property owners for initial acceptance of the proposed sidewalk. Mr. Rhodes also noted that Meggie Roche is coordinating the continuing comprehensive plan update.

City of Waynesboro

Ms. Leslie Tate reported:

- The Greenway Phase 3 (sidewalk project along 14th Street) with S&K Excavating contract is running through end of May.
- The City is considering TAP application for Race Avenue to connect Main Street and Short Street with sidewalk and potential on-street parking for the future museum site.



- The East Main Street streetscape project is over budget (\$2 million SMART Scale funding vs. \$7 million estimated cost), and the City is considering revenue sharing application to cover the shortfall.
- The Comprehensive Plan process continues and the consultant will hold a steering committee meeting later in April.
- Mr. Scott Kesecker added that the City had a SMART Scale project for Delphine and East Main connected to the East Main streetscape, but preliminary design indicated a need for a two-lane roundabout, so the City revised the improvement to a signal replacement instead.

Other Business

SAWMPO and VDOT staff noted again the announcement of the FY 2026-2031 Staunton District SYIP meeting on May 15 at Blue Ridge Community College at 4:00 p.m.

Upcoming Meetings

Chair Rhodes announced that the next SAWMPO Board meeting will be held April 16, 2025, and the next TAC meeting will be held on May 7, 2025, at 2:00 p.m.

Meeting Adjourned

Chair Rhodes adjourned the meeting at 3:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Zach Beard".

Zach Beard, Program Manager