

## Transportation Committee Meeting Minutes of April 14, 2016

### Call to Order:

The Transportation Committee meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

### Members Present

Chris Yakabouski (Battlefield District Supervisor), Tim McLaughlin (Chancellor District Supervisor), Darrell Caldwell (At Large Representative), Eric Martin (Salem Representative), Robert Fogg (Battlefield Representative), Arthur Snyder (Livingston District), James Perkins (Chancellor District), Sean Nelson (VDOT), Dan Cole (staff), Doug Morgan (staff)

### Others Present

Paul Agnello (FAMPO), Daniel Reese (FAMPO)

### Approval of the March 10th, 2016 Minutes

Minutes were approved.

### Public Comment

No members of the public spoke.

### Discussion Items

- **Corridor Studies:** Dan Cole updated the Transportation Committee on the status of the on-call consultants, the “J” Ramp IMR and the corridor studies. Staff asked Committee members for direction on whether to proceed with the studies on US 1 & Route 208 and Route 2 / Route 17 B or substitute one for a study of Harrison Road? It was pointed out that there were a couple of things working against making a change. They were; the closing window of opportunity to collect traffic data while school is in session and any change would have to be approved by the BOS and VDOT. This is because “Revenue Sharing” money is linked to these two corridor studies. A vote was taken at the conclusion of the discussion. The vote was 9 to 0 in favor on continuing with the two studies on US 1 & Route 208 and Route 2 / Route 17 B.

### Announcements

- **Fredericksburg Chamber of Commerce Survey:** Dan Cole informed Committee members of a survey being conducted by the Fredericksburg Chamber of Commerce to gauge the public’s interest and thoughts on transportation and specific projects in our region. Members were encouraged to complete the short survey by Wednesday, April 27<sup>th</sup>.
- **Constrained Long Range Plan (CLRP):** Dan Cole informed Committee members about changes to the existing 2040 Long Range Plan. The existing 2040 CLRP was included in the agenda packet

for members to review. Staff is moving forward with a change to place the Spotsylvania Parkway Extension in the plan as either a study (which does not require an allocation of dollars) or taking out the Smith Station Road widening project and reallocating the dollars to the Spotsylvania Parkway Extension. The rationale for doing this is that the new project would be less costly and would make the Smith Station Road project redundant. The deadline for making changes to the 2040 CLRP is May 18<sup>th</sup>. Dan Cole then informed the Committee about the upcoming 2045 CLRP. Changes to the new (2045) CLRP will be considered on May 31<sup>st</sup>. *“If Committee member have any suggestions about the 2045 CLRP, look over the information in the agenda packet and contact either myself or Doug Morgan with additions or deletions.”*

### Informational Items

- **VRE Ridership (FAMPO):** Danny Reese presented a power point presentation on the Spotsylvania Station Opening. A study was conducted on March 8<sup>th</sup> and consisted of collecting ridership data on the Fredericksburg Line from Spotsylvania Station to Brooke Station. Total ridership was 3,344 passengers on that day. The Spotsylvania Station consisted of 689 boarding's. Total ridership on the VRE increased 200 passengers or a 7.3% over last year. The result indicates that the new Spotsylvania Station had an impact on all of the other existing stations on the line. Some committee members wanted to know if there was any seasonal variation in boarding's. Mr. Reese said, *“Ridership tended to be a little higher during the summer months. Usually by the time the trains reach Springfield the trains are full and its standing room only.”*
- **FAMPO I-95 Corridor Study Update** Paul Agnello presented a power point presentation on the latest information on FAMPO's I-95 Study. Phase 1 will look at the Garrisonville Exit (143) to just south of the Spotsylvania Exit (126). Traffic volumes on I-95 range from 134,000 vehicles-per-day (vpd) on the north end of the study area to 95,000 vpd on the south end. The percentage of trucks in the traffic stream increases the further south one travels on I-95. Various existing congestion scenarios were discussed concerning data collected from September to November in 2015. Information included the new state proposal known as the *“Atlantic Gateway Program”*. The proposed program will use existing and planned funding for several SYIP projects as leverage to obtain additional Federal Funding from FASTLANE and TIGER Grant programs. Potential new projects in the FAMPO region includes; 1) Extension of the I-95 Express Lanes to Route 17 in Stafford and 2) AMTRAK/VRE Rail Corridor Improvements to increase capacity and reliability. The draft HB2 Funding Plan includes the SB River Crossing Project. Mr. Agnello said, *“The NB Rappahannock River Crossing needs to be fully funded before the Harrison Road slip ramp could be built”*. Mr. Agnello discussed the impact of the CD lanes south of Route 3 and the necessity of using the inside median right-of-way reserved for the Express Lanes in order to reduce cost. He also briefly identified the traffic impacts of a full interchange at Harrison Road. *“A first phase of any study would be to replace the Harrison Road Bridge. A new bridge would have to be six lanes wide. He estimated the cost of the bridge to be about \$17 million dollars. Harrison Road would also need to be widened to six lanes west of I-95 and four lanes east of I-*

95". Mr. McLaughlin brought up the issue of a partial interchange. He said, *"There are no issues with motorists traveling east on Harrison Road"*. Mr. Agnello said, *"Partial interchanges are not favored by FHWA. Historically partial interchanges are not approved"*. The Courthouse Road interchange was also discussed. The general consensus on it is that, it is too close to the existing Exit 126 interchange. However, Courthouse Road would not present the capacity issues that Harrison Road does and therefore would be less expensive.

- **HB2 Preparation Efforts:** Mr. Agnello presented a schedule for the next round of HB2 projects. He indicated that he would like to have preparations to get new projects ready for June. The application window for the 2<sup>nd</sup> round of projects would be August or September. He said, *"To maximize project eligibility/scores candidate projects need to be in the FAMPO CLRP, in the newly proposed Economic Development Plan and in the Comprehensive Plan. He though we (County) need to think small because three \$5 million dollar projects were better than one \$15 million dollar project and would have a better change of scoring well"*. Dan Cole pointed out, *"Intersection projects are not in our Comprehensive Plan. We will have to discuss this with the Planning Director"*. Several members expressed support for Alternative 3 from the IMR that was done on the "J" Ramp study. Mr. Fogg liked the plan but pointed out that, *"the removal of the signal at KFC was looked at in the past and negotiations failed because that restricted their (KFC) access"*. Mr. Yakabouski wanted to know what FHWA's plan was for our region and *"indicated he would rather see projects like the "Outer Connector" built rather than spend hundreds of thousands of dollars on another interchange study"*. Mr. McLaughlin seconded that sentiment and added, *"What we need is jobs here (Spotsylvania) but business don't want to come here when they see the traffic problems – it only works if there is a reverse commute on I-95. I agree we should fix our local roads"*. Some Committee members suggested that perhaps maps could be brought in and marked up at our next meeting to address some of the local traffic issues.

- **Next Meeting**

The next scheduled Transportation Committee Meeting is Thursday, May 12th.

**Adjourn:**

The Transportation Committee adjourned at 8:45 pm.

**\* As a follow-up to the his comment concerning the "NB Rappahannock River Crossing funding" the following explanation was provided by Mr. Agnello in a subsequent conversation – "FHWA is unlikely to allow only one SB slip off-ramp to be constructed on I-95 at Harrison Road. They will likely require a partial interchange to/from the North and in order to get the NB on-ramp connection, C/D lanes will be needed between Harrison and Route 3 which then requires the NB River Crossing project to be built and hence fully funded."**