

**FREIGHT TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
OF THE HAMPTON ROADS TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION**

JANUARY 12, 2010 MEETING

AGENDA

This agenda is issued for the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization's (HRTPO) Freight Technical Advisory Committee (FTAC) January 12, 2010 meeting.

Following is the meeting agenda.

1. Call to Order
2. Taking of Attendance
3. Public Comment Period
4. Old business
 - a. Adoption of Last Meeting's Minutes
 - b. Update on Business Outreach Program
5. New Business
 - a. Discussion of Results from *Hampton Roads Regional Transportation Prioritization Report: Project Evaluation and Scoring*
 - b. Discussion of potential funding sources and fiscal constraints
 - c. Revise statement for FTAC feedback to HRTPO Board
 - d. Discussion of Tolling, Scenarios and Freight Impacts
6. Announcement of Next Meeting Date, Place, Time
7. Adjournment

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DECEMBER 8, 2010 MEETING

DRAFT MINUTES

Co-Chair Bill Bell called the HRTPO Freight Technical Advisory Committee to order at 10:00 a.m. in the Virginia Port Authority (VPA) Board Room with the following in attendance:

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Bill Bell, Co-Chair (Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding)
Chris Luebbers (Norfolk Southern Corp.)
Homer Crane (K Line America, Inc.)
Keith Helton (Givens Logistics)

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Art Moye (Virginia Maritime Association)
Curtis Hall (Target Import Warehouse)
Ron Drogan (The CrossGlobe Group)
Stan Clark, Co-Chair (Isle of Wight Board of Supervisors)

STAFF:

Jeff Florin (Virginia Port Authority)
Andy Pickard (HRTPO)
Greg Grootendorst (HRTPO)
Keith Nichols (HRTPO)
Rob Case (HRTPO)
Sam Belfield (HRTPO)
Stephanie Shealey (HRTPO)
Andy Hecker (Moffatt & Nichol)
Allison Mall (Moffatt & Nichol)

OTHERS PRESENT:

LCDR Wade Russell (U.S. Coast Guard)
L. Frank Mach (Director, Maritime Administration Mid-Atlantic Gateway Office)

1. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

All the meeting attendees introduced themselves and Co-Chair Bill Bell opened the public comment period. Hearing no requests for public comment, Mr. Bell declared the public comment period closed.

2. OLD BUSINESS

a. Committee Membership Review

Committee members were reminded that election to FTAC was for a five year term. As FTAC completes its first year, staff will be confirming continued participation of the members for the next year.

3. NEW BUSINESS

a. HRTPO Presentation: Latest Project Prioritization Results

Mr. Andy Pickard, Principal Transportation Engineer at the HRTPO, presented the latest draft scoring results from the Project Prioritization tool. The final report, *Prioritization of Transportation Projects: Project Evaluation and Scoring*, contains the scores for all 150 projects. It includes one page snapshots with greater detail for high profile projects and top regional priorities, with bridge and tunnel projects scoring the highest, with 19 projects. The report also includes “dot maps” showing forecasted trip counts for each project, and a glossary of criteria.

Mr. Pickard highlighted some of the important items from the report:

- The Midtown Tunnel and Martin L. King Freeway Extension project scored the highest, with 242 points (out of 300).
- Based on feedback from the technical committee, components of the 3rd Crossing were broken down into separate projects and the different combinations scored accordingly.
- Projects in each category (bridge/tunnel, highway, intermodal, and transit) were further categorized by *interstate* or *primary* roads.
- In previous iterations of the scoring report, the two-lane Craney Island Access Road was separated by the intermodal corrector and the air terminal interchange. The intermodal connector is now fully funded, so it was taken out of the scoring.
- Transit scores include light rail and fast ferry service, and passenger rail was not scored. The HRTPO Board supports high speed rail, but didn't score it because there are competing proposals on the table.

The schedule is as follows for approval of the final scores:

December 2010: TTAC and HRTPO Board approval of the *Hampton Roads Regional Transportation Prioritization Report: Project Evaluation and Scoring*

February 2011 (special HRTPO Board meeting): HRTPO Board Discussion of Project Prioritization

December 2010 / January 2011: Present results to the HRTPO Board advisory committees (TTAC, FTAC and CTAC).

June 2011: Completion and approval of fiscally-constrained list of projects by HRTPO Board.

i. Q&A and Discussion of Prioritization Results

Mr. Bell thanked Mr. Pickard for his presentation and asked what the plan is for whittling down the 150 projects, which total approximately \$25 billion, to \$2.4 billion by June. Mr. Pickard said that the HRTPO Board will hold a special meeting in February and will be concentrating fully on this task until June. He also explained that the amount of funding available does not include PPTA money, and that the actual price tag will need to go above \$2 billion in some manner.

Mr. Jeff Florin asked Mr. Pickard to briefly discuss the sensitivity analysis, if any, that was part of the scoring process. For instance, the HRBT and the 3rd Crossing projects are extremely close in score, and Mr. Florin asked if one reason the HRBT got a higher score is because it has a proposal submitted. Mr. Pickard answered that this is true, because the HRBT scored higher on viability (funding and procedural permits, etc.) than the 3rd Crossing project. Mr. Florin asked, if a PPTA was submitted for the 3rd Crossing, if its score would go up. Mr. Pickard answered in the affirmative. The Committee agreed that the recent pro-3rd Crossing VMASC study makes this a timely issue.

Mr. Florin said that it is “a really a great tool for everyone to understand what the project is and the scores are a good data to go on,” but that the ones that have such close scores have to be given a sensitivity analysis – do the scores make sense? Mr. Pickard said that the HRTPO tried to make scoring as objective as possible with the data available.

Mr. Andy Hecker asked if the project ranking and prioritization will continue until June or if the scoring is complete and the focus will now be on fiscally constraining the plan. Mr. Pickard said that they absolutely need

to move forward with the fiscal planning, which include public meetings. He said that “what isn’t in the plan will be as much of a story as what is,” and that the LRTP a document that the HRTPO has to produce in order for projects to be in the state Six Year Plan, but that long range *planning* is an ongoing process. Mr. Hecker asked what the status of the Southeastern Parkway project was following FHwy discontinuing review of the project, and Mr. Pickard answered that he was not sure how Virginia Beach leadership will proceed.

Mr. Butch Crane asked if there is any intention to take the top projects and recompress them using the same criteria for slightly different guidelines, by changing the parameters slightly. He asked, “will there be a different result now that there is no weighing for all the other projects?” Mr. Pickard said no, because the scores are stand-alone scores, and they do not affect each other. He said that about 30 questions are asked of each project and no more criteria will be considered.

Mr. Rob Case pointed out that the HRTPO does not anticipate that the Board will try to “tweak the numbers,” but that they will take them and make a decision. He said that “there is no indication that they will be a slave to these numbers. They can throw it in the trashcan if they want. We hope that they will not battle over specific scores.” He said that Mr. Dwight Farmer has repeatedly stated that the Board has the prerogative to do what they see fit, and the tool scores are information only. For this reason, the tool does not provide rankings, only scores.

Mr. Sam Belfield commented that the “beauty of having three different components each broken down is that you can see how each one is weighted.” He said that the Board will hopefully make a decision not by total score, but by each component.

Mr. Bell said that he didn’t think the Committee should make any decisions today, but rather that they should “absorb the information and then give feedback to HRTPO after the January FTAC meeting.”

Mr. Andy Hecker stated FTAC staff’s thoughts on the final prioritization scores. He said that the information is becoming more transparent and easy to understand. However, it is apparent that there are 10 or 12 top projects and that they cost 15 times the amount of available funding (without PPTA money). He reiterated that the viability component is extremely sensitive, and that the focus should continue to be on systems that move freight in and out of the region. He agreed that now is the time to focus on fiscal constraints and where to get funding.

ii. Review/Revise FTAC Resolution on Prioritization Results

FTAC has developed a resolution on the prioritization results to present to the Board. FTAC staff asked the Committee for comments on it before the next meeting, so that it can be included in the February HRTPO meeting packet.

Mr. Case asked if we planned on bringing anything to the Board for the December meeting, when Camelia would be giving an update. Mr. Bell said that nothing formal will be submitted until February. He said that FTAC's position is the same as in the statement that was submitted for the November meeting, that the Committee generally supports the tool but is still cautious about some of the inputs. The Committee strongly supports a systematic approach to the entire transportation system, which VDOT supported at the last Board meeting.

The Committee asked FTAC staff to send out the resolution for review and comment.

b. Review Draft Presentation for FTAC Business Outreach

Mr. Andy Hecker presented an outline and storyboard of a proposed voiceover movie that FTAC would like to develop in order to conduct outreach about the importance of freight to the region's business community. Mr. Hecker requested that the committee provide comments on the presentation over the next month. Mr. Bell said that the presentation is "well on the way towards what the committee is envisioning."

Mr. Pickard then told the committee about an outreach event that the HRTPO did at Thurgood Elementary School to approximately 250 attendees, including parents and fifth graders. They gave a "how did your cookies get here" presentation with Google Earth to teach the group about how important transportation is to providing things they use in their daily life. The committee thought that this was a great idea and thought it would be a good tool for FTAC to also utilize in their business outreach.

c. Hypothetical Inland Intermodal Transfer Facility Discussion

Mr. Keith Nichols, Senior Transportation Engineer at the HRTPO, led a discussion about a hypothetical inland intermodal transfer facility, located beyond the most congested areas in the region, that the HRTPO was tasked to study by the Unified Planning Work Program. Mr. Nichols thanked the Committee for their input as freight experts and asked them to consider what effects such a facility would have on Hampton Roads.

Mr. Nichols presented the idea: currently freight is brought in by ship, transferred to trains, trucks and barges, and then delivered inland. What if freight that is bound for outside markets is brought to an inland facility in Suffolk or Isle of Wight?

Mr. Nichols' presentation was an outline of the planned report, which is due in June 2011. The HRTPO would like to be able to continually get FTAC's advice and opinions on this study as it progresses. He said that the HRTPO constantly analyzes data so they have lots of information, and will research other intermodal facilities as well. His first round of questions for the Committee were:

- Should the proposed Inland Intermodal Transfer Facility be one location or two?
- Where outside of the congested areas should it be located?
- What rail line should it be located on?
- Which port facilities would be able to use intermodal facility? Should we just look at NIT and AMPT?
- What percentage of freight would be able to utilize such a study?
- What about freight that goes port to port?
- What percent of trucks leave the region or stay in the region?
- What is reasonable and feasible?
- What data sources are available?
- What would the freight community see as the biggest benefits or drawbacks of this hypothetical facility?
- What other freight concepts or issues should be considered?

Mr. Chris Luebbers started the discussion by saying that the facility is a great idea for lots of reasons. For a port to be successful you have to have both local traffic and intermodal connections. New York has a huge local population that consumes lots of goods; Savannah did not have a local population but created one with an "empire of distribution centers and warehouses before they are further distributed inland." Hampton Roads does not have a huge local market, or a large population of consumers. He asked if there is an opportunity to develop a facility that can be a local industrial warehouse distribution center complex similar to what the port has done in Front Royal, except closer inland? He pointed out that the study must include analysis of local dray savings vs. rail costs. He also mentioned that short haul container moves are not the railroad's our most economically efficient way to go, so the railroads will have issues.

Mr. Keith Helton commented that commodity freight will likely use this facility more, because retailers are now focusing on every day inventory turns and commodity-type goods can't stand an increase in costs. Auto parts and electronics may be able to withstand an increase in transit cost.

Mr. Butch Crane said that the most important issue to consider is whether putting goods on trains will mean increases in time and cost, and thus loss of business, for importers and exporters. If short-haul trucking provides regular twice-a-day service, then exporters would benefit because they wait until the last minute.

The facility would be an opportunity for empties for exporters to be in one location, instead of having to travel to the Port. Mr. Luebbers seconded this comment by saying that the Port would benefit if their amount of empties is reduced. He also pointed out that more train service per day would be needed to run freight to the proposed inland facility.

LCDR Wade Russell from the U.S. Coast Guard said that it is important to maintain security and customs laws in the development of this facility.

Mr. Jeff Florin said that it is relatively easy for the Port to set up free trade zones that will allow materials to come in untaxed from other countries, which has a lot of benefits to security and to the shipper. He also said that there are already a number of studies on this topic “on the shelf” that may not speak directly what the HRTPO is looking for but do focus on land to the west that is available for distribution centers. He said that the Port has lots of information on land costs and freight flows from the Port. He pointed out that June is a “very aggressive time frame” to complete this report.

4. ADOPTION OF LAST MEETING'S MINUTES

Mr. Bell noted the minutes of the October 12, 2010 FTAC meeting and asked for any revisions. There being none, Mr. Bell moved the minutes be approved as submitted. Mr. Crane seconded the motion and the minutes were approved unanimously. Mr. Case reminded FTAC staff to put approving the minutes on the agenda in the future.

5. ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT MEETING DATE, PLACE, TIME

The next meeting will take place on **Wednesday, January 12th**, from 10:00 – 11:30 a.m., in the VPA Board Room. The meeting was adjourned at 11:30 a.m.