

## **AGENDA ITEM #19: FOR YOUR INFORMATION**

### **A. HAMPTON ROADS TRANSPORTATION OPERATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MINUTES**

The approved minutes of the October 11, 2011 meeting of the Hampton Roads Transportation Operations Subcommittee (HRTTO) are attached.

Attachment 19-A

### **B. I-64 HAMPTON ROADS BRIDGE-TUNNEL EIS: HRTPO STAFF COMMENTS**

VDOT is preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the I-64 Hampton Roads Bridge-Tunnel study. In response to a November 28, 2011 email from VDOT, the HRTPO staff prepared comments (attached) on the draft Purpose and Need chapter of the EIS.

Attachment 19-B

### **C. USDOT TIGER III REWARD ANNOUNCEMENTS**

On December 15, 2011, the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) announced the 46 transportation projects that will receive a total of \$511 million from the third round of the U.S. Department of Transportation's popular TIGER program. The USDOT received 848 project applications from all 50 states, Puerto Rico, and Washington, DC, requesting a total of \$14.29 billion, far exceeding the \$511 million made available for grants under the TIGER III program. The grants will fund a wide range of innovative transportation projects in urban and rural areas across the country:

- Of the \$511 million in TIGER III funds available for grants, more than \$150 million will go to critical projects in rural areas
- Roughly 48% of the funding will go to road and bridge projects
- 29% of the funding will support transit projects
- 12% will help build port projects
- 10% will go to freight rail projects
- Three grants were also directed to tribal governments to create jobs and address critical transportation needs in Indian country
- Three grants will provide better multimodal access to airports

A complete list of grant recipients can be viewed at:

<http://www.dot.gov/affairs/2011/FY2011TIGER.pdf>

## **Minutes of the October 11, 2011 HRTPO Subcommittee Meeting**

Regional Board Room, Regional Building, Chesapeake, 9:30am

### **Attendees**

Robert Case, HRTPO

Leon Sisco, WATA

Devin Connelly, Open Roads Consulting

Frank Hickman, Va. Beach

Sam Belfield, HRTPO

Ric Lowman, Va. Beach

Stephanie Shealey, HRTPO

Keith Nichols, HRTPO

Daniel Rydzewski, Norfolk

Jackie Kassel, Newport News

Christopher Swartz, Hampton

Gary Walton, Chesapeake

Eddie Spencer, CBBT

Steve Hetrick, Naztec ITS

Rob Brown, Norfolk

### **Public Comment Period**

No Public Speakers

### **Minutes of August 9, 2011 Meeting**

No modifications of the minutes – approved.

### **Proposed Changes to ADA Public Rights-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines**

On July 26, 2011 the Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board published proposed changes to ADA Public Right-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines.

Comments on the proposed guidelines are due by November 23, 2011. Rob Brown (City of Norfolk, Assistant City Engineer) led a discussion concerning submitting HRTPO comments on the proposal. Rob stated that the City of Norfolk, in evaluating the proposed changes, focused on pedestrian crossings:

- Guidelines added a new section on new pedestrian push button w/ acoustics
- When a municipality changed bulb/lens, they are required to install acoustic signals
- Cost is an issue if compliance is required

- New guidelines also made changes to ADA ramp slope issues and language on pedestrian pathways
- Leon Sisco (HRT) stated that the ADA ramp requirements at bus shelters is driving up the cost to construct them

A proposal was made to submit HRTO comments as a joint document by all members of the HRTO.

HRTO also discussed a related issue: the latest MUTCD compliance table:

- It was stated that this is an unfunded mandate and that MUTCD is relaxing the targeted compliance.
- Five compliance dates remain – the others are under a guidelines platform.
- It was stated that the costs to meet VDOT Design Guidelines are an issue – i.e. 90mph requirement is now set at 110mph.

Concerning the ADA guidelines, it was proposed that Rob Brown prepare a response, that HRTPO staff distribute this response to HRTO members via email for comment, and that HRTPO staff submit a final response based on all input. Gary Walton (Chesapeake) made a motion to proceed as discussed; Jackie Kassel (Newport News) seconded the motion; the motion passed unanimously.

### **Lessons Learned from Recent Hurricane Irene**

Representatives from member cities shared with the group their lessons learned from hurricane Irene.

#### Norfolk

- 3% signals with battery backup system (BBS)
- 5 signals damaged
- Problems with knowing what is FEMA-reimbursable verses FHWA-reimbursable
- Identified that the region's local governments would benefit from improved communication with VDOT
- Information to be shared would include bridge/tunnel closures as well as municipal roadways/ramps

#### Va. Beach

- 7% signals with BBS
- BBS batteries ran out of power
- Minimal damage, with no signals down

- Va. Beach is looking into a method for getting weather information around the city
- Stated that sharing phone numbers before the storm helped establish good communication during the storm

#### Chesapeake

- 12% signals with BBS
- 7 signals down, minimal damage
- Focused recovery on high volume corridors
- As a lesson learned, in future they will stage a staff member at Dominion Virginia Power (DVP) center for coordination purposes
- In advance Chesapeake stockpiled inventory and was prepared for the event and were able to bring everything up and running quickly
- One major problem was recovering from power outages
- With loss of power they had to track problems manually

#### Newport News

- They mobilized 20 gas-powered generators to address power outages
- They addressed theft by chaining them to the mast arm poles
- To keep the generators running they mobilized a refueling truck
- Stated that Hurricane Irene was mainly a power event

#### Hampton

- Hampton spent \$25k of a \$45k reserve account for generators
- 27 signals damaged
- Stated that they could benefit from better communications with VDOT
- Requested that this topic be added as an agenda item to the RCTO's next meeting

#### **New Improvements to Real-Time Incident Management Information System (RTIMIS)**

Devin Connelly (Open Roads Consulting) presented information to the group concerning RTIMIS, its recent improvements, and plans for the future:

- Objective of RTIMIS: Improve safety and mobility by sharing information
- RTIMIS interfaces with existing systems:
  - Real time
  - Secure
  - Automated data extraction

- Data is filtered
- Auto data input/injection
  
- Recent Changes in RTIMIS:
  - Web-viewer upgraded
  - Full screen map view
  - Enhanced notification functions
  - List views updated
  - RTIMIS is now a statewide system, each region is now self sufficient and all share data regionally
  
- Plans for the future:
  - to add additional devices and capabilities, i.e. flood detectors, bridge lifts, video
  - to provide a feed to the 511 system, potential for sharing the incident information with HRT

Mr. Connelly was asked to consider adding system data (corridor speeds), creating an archive of the active incident data, and adding city video in the future.

#### **Next Meeting Schedule**

The next HRTO meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, December 13, 2011 from 9:30 – 11:30 a.m. Jackie Kassel will check the availability of the conference room at Newport News Police Dept.

## **HRTPO Staff Comments on “Chapter 1, Draft Purpose and Need”**

I-64 HRBT EIS  
December 2011

### **General Comments**

#### Adequacy

The draft purpose and need (P&N) document appears to include most of the main topics which should be covered in such a document. However, given that the comprehensive P&N document for the HRCS (1994) numbered 115 pages and that of I-64 (1997) numbered 79 pages, and given the billions of dollars being considered, we are concerned about the size of the draft effort (11 pages), and recommend that each topic be supported with the extensive data which has been gathered over recent years by various organizations (VDOT, HRTPO, etc.) on this crossing.

#### Aging

In the current P&N document, the important issue of the aging of the current HRBT is not discussed until the Summary on the last page, and then only cursorily. Therefore, we recommend that you dedicate subsections of the document (under both the “Existing” and “Future” sections) to a thorough analysis of the aging issue, i.e. maintenance, rehab, and replacement.

### **Key Specific Comments**

#### Proposed “Aging” Subsection (existing needs)

For this Aging subsection, see “Hampton Roads Regional Bridge Study” (HRTPO, Sept. 2008), p. 63  
<http://www.hrtpo.org/Documents/Reports/2008/RegionalBridgeStudyFinalReport.pdf> concerning the condition of HRBT.

In this Aging subsection, we recommend that you summarize the July 2, 2009 “Carmageddon” (see page 81 of draft 2034 LRTP document [http://www.hrtpo.org/Documents/2034LRTP/Draft\\_2034LRTP\\_TechnicalAppendicesX.pdf](http://www.hrtpo.org/Documents/2034LRTP/Draft_2034LRTP_TechnicalAppendicesX.pdf)) which resulted from closing HRBT in one direction due to an aging pipe.

#### Proposed “Aging” Section (future needs)

For this Aging subsection, see “Hampton Roads Regional Bridge Study” (HRTPO, Sept. 2008), p. 63  
<http://www.hrtpo.org/Documents/Reports/2008/RegionalBridgeStudyFinalReport.pdf>

concerning the impact of closing all four HRBT lanes (temporarily or permanently) on the volumes and LOS of regional roadways.

Under “1.3 Needs- Existing Conditions”

Re: trip purposes discussion (the bulk of pages 4 and 5)

Comment:

This section—which describes the various users of the HRBT (commuters, freight, military, etc.)—is an important set-up for the discussion of needs because it humanizes the subject, but it does not address “needs”. Therefore, we recommend that it be a separate section titled “Users” (and placed after the “History” section).

We recommend that you treat each user group separately—commuters, freight, military, tourism, business, personal, recreation, etc.—not combining several groups in one paragraph as in the draft.

Re: “It [I-64 and the HRBT] is also a link in transporting international freight to and from the region’s shipping ports.”

Comment:

According to a 2008 VDOT survey of local container port terminals (NIT, PMT, and APM), half of all truck trips between the state’s Southside ports and points outside of Hampton Roads use the HRBT and MMMBT (*Hampton Roads Travel Demand Model 2008 Port Origin-Destination Survey*, VDOT Transportation & Mobility Planning, June 5, 2009).

Re: “Tourism attractors include: Virginia Beach’s 29 miles of beaches....”

Comment:

We understand that Virginia Beach has conducted 1) surveys which show the portion of its visitors which use the HRBT to reach Virginia Beach, and 2) surveys which show how strongly visitors dislike traveling the HRBT.

Re: “I-64 is a designated hurricane evacuation route....”

Comment:

According to the 2011 *Virginia Hurricane Evacuation Guide* (<http://www.vdot.virginia.gov/travel/resources/hurricaneEvacuation1.pdf>), VDOT will close the MMMBT during an I-64 lane reversal.

Under “1.3 Needs- Existing Conditions”

Subsection “1.3.1 Capacity”

We recommend that this section be titled “Insufficient Capacity” (as opposed to “Capacity”), in order to be clear about the cause of the need.

Under the Insufficient Capacity section, in order to quantify the degree to which capacity is insufficient, we recommend that you create an “Existing Demand” section in which you quantify the current demand at HRBT, i.e. the number of vehicles which would use the facility if its capacity were unlimited. For an example of a demand analysis, see the

HRTPO's analysis of demand at HRBT (approx.. 2004) in our 2026 LRTP (pp. 39-41)  
<http://www.hrtpo.org/Documents/Reports/2026RTPtechdoc.pdf>

Re: "...observed queues often exceed 3-5 miles in length."

Comment:

See pages 14-16 of *Hampton Roads Congestion Management Process, 2010 Update* (HRTPO, Sept. 2010, [http://www.hrtpo.org/Documents/Reports/2010/CMP\\_Final\\_Report\\_TPO.pdf](http://www.hrtpo.org/Documents/Reports/2010/CMP_Final_Report_TPO.pdf)) for HRBT queue data.

Re: "As shown in Table 1, existing levels of service are "D" and "E" on several mainline sections of I-64..."

Comment:

The level of service at HRBT is—by definition, in light of the daily queues mentioned—F, not D and E as listed in Table 1. Since your method calculates D and E, we recommend that you examine and adjust your method to match the documented reality of queues.

Re: Footnote 4: *I-64 HRBT Existing Traffic Conditions Final Report* (VDOT, Oct. 28, 2011)

Comment:

We do not remember seeing a copy of this report. 1) Please forward us a copy. 2) Consider incorporating this document into this P&N document.

Re: "... non-recurring congestion..." and "...crash data shows..."

Comment:

We recommend that the Purpose and Need document include: 1) a thorough summary and analysis of lane closures (from all causes), and 2) a thorough summary and analysis of available crash data, not simply a mention of these two in a paragraph discussing reliability.

Under "Needs- Existing Conditions"

Subsection "1.3.2 Geometric Deficiencies of Existing Facilities"

Comment:

In addition to the four paragraphs discussing locations where the existing highway is sub-standard, we recommend a thorough treatment of this standards subject, starting with tables and maps showing each deficiency (prior to the four summary paragraphs), and ending with a section (following the four summary paragraphs) establishing the needs which result from the substandard geometry. This needs discussion would include the relationships (which you mentioned) 1) between sub-standard vertical clearance and trucks being stopped, and 2) between low vertical profile and salt deterioration.

See the "Hampton Roads Regional Bridge Study" (HRTPO, Sept. 2008), p. 63 and Appendix A <http://www.hrtpo.org/Documents/Reports/2008/RegionalBridgeStudyFinalReport.pdf> for geometric deficiencies at the HRBT.

### Under “Needs- Future Conditions”

As in the “Needs- Existing Conditions” section discussed above, in the “Needs- Future Conditions” section we recommend that you create a “Future Demand” section at the beginning of the Insufficient Capacity section.

Re: “Population...is projected to grow...”

Comment:

We recommend that you discuss (in the proposed Future Demand section) expected growth in the number of users of the HRBT (commuters, military, freight, tourism, etc.) currently listed in Section 1.3. For example, given the economic opportunity presented by the widening of the Panama Canal, we recommend that you address growth expected at the state-owned ports on the Southside.

### Under “Needs- Future Conditions”

#### Subsection “1.4.1 Capacity” and

#### Subsection “1.4.2 Geometric Deficiencies of Existing Facilities”

Comment:

Instead of the two paragraphs which currently comprise these sections, we recommend that you thoroughly examine future needs. For example, the HRCS P&N forecasted the spread of peak conditions (in hours) and the number of incidents causing delays of 15 minutes or longer (in incidents per day).

### Under “Summary”

Re: “...the purpose of the I-64 HRBT study is to find a solution to...”

Comment:

Because this section is concisely written, consider placing it first (and last) in the P&N document. We recommend that the crash issues discussed in the body of the report be included in the summary.

## **Minor Specific Comments**

### Under “1.1.1 Study Area”

Re: “The Long Range Transportation Plan for Hampton Roads...”

Comment:

Please identify the target date (2030? 2034?) of the LRTP to which you are referring.

### Under “1.1.2 Existing Roadway”

Re: “...spanning Hampton Roads, the mouth of the James River.”

Comment:

The body of water known as Hampton Roads can be more accurately described as “the confluence of the James River, Nansemond River, and Elizabeth River.”

### Under “1.2 History”

Re: The 2001 HRCS FEIS “addressed alternatives that involved increasing capacity along the existing I-64 HRBT corridor; however, those alternatives were not selected....”

Comment:

It would be more informative to write: “addressed three alternatives, two of which involved increasing capacity along the existing I-64 HRBT corridor; however, neither of these alternatives were selected....”

Re: “...FY 2009-2012 Transportation Improvement Program.”

Comment:

Our current TIP is titled “FY 2012-2015”.

### Under “1.3 Needs- Existing Conditions”

Comment: Two different fonts were apparently inadvertently used in this section.

Re: “Peak hour volumes approach or exceed capacity on some sections.”

Comment:

Perhaps “Peak hour volumes exceed capacity on some sections.” is more to the point.

### Under “1.3 Needs- Existing Conditions”

#### Subsection “1.3.1 Capacity”

Re: “The higher traffic densities result in vehicles being more closely spaced...”

Comment:

Because “vehicles being more closely spaced” is the same as “higher traffic densities”, consider omitting this phrase.

Under “Needs– Existing Conditions”  
Subsection “1.3.2 Geometric Deficiencies of Existing Facilities”

Re: “...bottleneck, reducing the capacity by one third.”

Comment:

We recommend that this capacity issue be addressed in the Capacity sections.

Re: “The existing bridges have a low superstructure vertical profile.”

Comment:

We recommend that you defend and bolster this statement, e.g. by comparing HRBT to the MMMBT.

Re: “An average of 80 to 90 overheight trucks per month must be stopped and inspected...”

Comment:

In order that the reader understand this issue, we recommend that you make it clear that these trucks 1) set off the alarm, 2) do not stop at the inspection station, 3) must be extracted from the travel lane, 4) must be inspected near the tunnel, 5) must either re-enter the WB travel lanes or be turned around and enter the EB travel lanes.

Under “Needs– Future Conditions”

Re: “The factors contributing to the existing congestion...are expected to continue into the future.”

Comment:

We recommend that you consider replacing “continue” with “continue and increase”.

Re: “...in Section 1.3.2...” and “...in Section 1.3.3.” (both on page 8)

Comment:

It appears that these references should be changed to “Section 1.3.1” and “Section 1.3.2”, respectively.

Re: “The HRTPO’s Long Range Transportation Plan also looks at transportation needs...” and “The 2040 forecasted volumes...”

Comment:

Given that the 2040 forecasted volumes did not come from the LRTP, we recommend that you 1) remove reference to the LRTP here, and 2) describe the calculation of the 2040 numbers.

Under “Summary”

Re: “Geometric deficiencies...impede operating efficiency...”

Comment:

We recommend clarifying (or removing) “impede operating efficiency”.