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Federal Highway
Administration
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Federal Transit
Administration
Region III

Transportation Management Area Planning Certification Review

Hampton Roads, Virginia Transportation Management Area Planning Certification Review



August 20, 2025

Summary Report

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1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

From February 2024 through November 2024 the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) conducted the certification review of the transportation planning process for the Virginia Beach – Norfolk, VA, and Williamsburg Urban Areas. FHWA and FTA are required to jointly review and evaluate the transportation planning process for each urbanized area over 200,000 in population at least every four years to determine if the process meets the Federal planning requirements.

1.1 Previous Findings and Disposition

The first certification review for the Virginia Beach – Norfolk, VA urbanized area was conducted in 2001. Planning certification reviews have been conducted roughly every 4 years since, with the most recent conducted in 2020. The previous Certification Review findings and the recommendation disposition are provided in **Appendix A**.

1.2 Summary of Current Findings

The current review found that the metropolitan transportation planning process conducted in the Virginia Beach – Norfolk, VA urbanized area MEETS Federal planning requirements.

As a result of this review, FHWA and FTA are certifying the transportation planning process conducted by the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization (HRTPO) in cooperation with the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (VDRPT), as well as the Hampton Roads Transit (HRT), Williamsburg Area Transit Authority (WATA), and Suffolk Transit subject to addressing corrective actions. There are also recommendations in this report that warrant close attention and follow-up, as well as areas that MPO is performing very well in that are to be commended.

Review Area	Observation	Action	Corrective Actions/ Recommendations/ Commendations	Resolution Due Date
MPO Structure Boundaries, and Agreements 23 U.S.C. 134(d) 23 CFR 450.314(a)	HRTPO's Community Advisory Committee (CAC) is comprised of up to 30 members who are residents of Hampton Roads member jurisdictions, and currently not all of those 30 spots are filled.	Recommendation	HRTPO should evaluate the process for filling available seats on the CAC.	



Review Area	Observation	Action	Corrective Actions/ Recommendations/ Commendations	Resolution Due Date
	Not all agreement documents between the stakeholders outline explicitly the roles of each agency in the development of planning documents.	Recommendation	The Federal Review Team recommends that HRTPO and the parties to their jointly signed agreement documents should review the joint-planning documents on a regular basis to ensure a sufficient level of detail is included.	
	The Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA) boundary contained in the 3-C Agreement and agreed to by the HRTPO and Governor is defined differently from the MPA boundary contained in the HRTPO Bylaws. One is inclusive of the population residing within the City of Franklin and Southampton County and the other excludes portions of the population. The excluded portion is nonmetropolitan (23 USC 134 (B)(3).	Recommendation	In consideration of 23 CFR 450.312(j), the Federal team requests that the State and MPO provide a clear description (in sufficient detail to assist with delineating areas of metropolitan and statewide and nonmetropolitan planning and programming) of what population areas within PDC-23 fall within the HRTPO's metropolitan planning area boundary and what population areas fall outside of the HRTPO's metropolitan planning area boundary or in the statewide and nonmetropolitan area. The statewide and nonmetropolitan planning and programming process is governed by 23 USC 135.	
Consultation and Coordination 23 U.S.C. 134(g) & (i) 23 CFR 450.316, 23 CFR 450.324(g)		Commendation	HRTPO is a national leader in coordination and engagement with the U.S. military branches located within their MPA and recognizing and valuing their distinct transportation networks within the region.	



Review Area	Observation	Action	Corrective Actions/ Recommendations/ Commendations	Resolution Due Date
		Commendation	HRTPO's exploration and incorporation of resiliency planning into their transportation planning process has brought them National recognition in federal, state, and national planning best practice citations.	
TPM/ Performance-Based Planning and Programming 49 U.S.C. 5326(c) 49 U.S.C. 5329(d), and 23 CFR 450.314(h)	HRTPO does not currently play an active role in ensuring proposed transit projects on the TIP work towards meeting the regional transit asset (TAM) and safety (PTASP) targets it has set.	Recommendation	HRTPO should document their process to ensure Federally-funded transit investments identified by HRT, WATA, and Suffolk Transit, meet HRTPO's weighted regional transit TAM and PTASP safety targets, separate from the transit agencies' respective targets.	
Public Participation 23 U.S.C. 134(i)(6) 23 CFR 450.316 & 450.326(b)		Commendation	HRTPO staff are continuously dedicated in their efforts to evolve external communication and public outreach efforts and more effectively increase public reach. Their online and community-event-based engagement efforts over the past four years have proven particularly exemplary in their ability to expand the organizations reach.	



Review Area	Observation	Action	Corrective Actions/ Recommendations/ Commendations	Resolution Due Date
	Following a Title VI Compliance Review Report of the HRPDC in 2023, on September 20, 2023, the HRTPO's Title VI Administrator met with VDOT and for the first time agreed that the HRPDC and HRTPO would update and combine their separately approved PPPs and submit it to VDOT for review before the next quadrennial review (2024). The joint HRTPO and HRPDC Participation Plan would be renamed a "Public Engagement Plan."	Recommendation	The Federal Team recommends that the HRTPO and HRPDC joint Public Engagement Plan, developed in response to a VDOT Title VI finding covering the HRPDC; be consistent with the HRTPO 3-C Agreement, HRTPO bylaws, and federal regulations that require the MPO to use, develop, and approve/adopt a Participation Plan and send the adopted Participation Plan to FHWA and FTA. The document should draw a clear distinction between each agency's roles in the identification of the approval of activities, programs, budgets, revenue sources, products, public participation initiatives, and oversight responsibilities involving HRTPO's public involvement activities that support the metropolitan transportation planning process.	
	HRTPO's current PPP does not document performance metrics or methodology for measuring the effectiveness of their public outreach efforts.	Corrective	By the end of Fiscal Year 2026, the HRTPO is required to update the Public Participation Plan and make it current to demonstrate and support the process for "periodically reviewing the effectiveness of the procedures and strategies contained in the participation plan to ensure a full and open participation process (23 CFR 450.316(a)(1)(x)). The update should be reflected in the next UPWP and approved within the UPWP's FY.	3/30/2026



Review Area	Observation	Action	Corrective Actions/ Recommendations/ Commendations	Resolution Due Date
Civil Rights Title VI Civil Rights Act, 23 U.S.C. 324, Age Discrimination Act, Sec. 504 Rehabilitation Act, Americans with Disabilities Act	HRTPO's vital planning documents are published entirely in English.	Recommendation	Within HRTPO documents, include a language insert that advises people with limited English proficiency how to obtain translated materials or language assistance service.	
Unified Planning Work Program 23 CFR 450.308	HRTPO's current UPWP does not include all significant end products that are scheduled and expected to be completed within the UPWP timeframe.	Recommendation	HRTPO should endeavor to clearly identify planning activities and associated funds carried over from prior UPWPs as such, to reduce the impression that the project and its related cost is duplicative from prior years' efforts.	
	The Federal Review team reviewed the most recent Nonmetropolitan/Rural Long-Range Transportation Plan (Hampton Roads 2045 Rural Long Range Transportation Plan - City of Franklin and Southampton County) and we could not find any information to confirm or support that this is a product from the HRPDC/HRPDC Board – the authorized recipient of federal SPR Rural Transportation Program funds.	Recommendation	The FHWA Virginia Division coordinate with VDOT to conduct a program review of VDOT's SPR Rural/Nonmetropolitan Program (that supports Virginia PDCs and rural transportation planning) to determine if Federal SPR funds that have been authorized by FHWA are being made available to the Virginia PDCs – including the HRPDC/HRPDC Board for their use and discretion to support nonmetropolitan transportation planning activities - including the adoption of a Nonmetropolitan/Rural Long-Range Transportation Plan. The review should consider the executed Master Agreements between the VDOT and PDCs.	



Review Area	Observation	Action	Corrective Actions/ Recommendations/ Commendations	Resolution Due Date
	HRTPO's current efforts to merge and update the HRTPO and HRPDC PPPs (including Title VI Plan) were not included as an end product in either the MPO's FY 2024 and/or FY 2025 UPWP documents. Rather it was listed as "Update public participation documents, such as the Public Participation Plan, as needed," which does not directly communicate a timeline for work toward this deliverable or demonstrate a product.	Recommendation	The FHWA Virginia Division coordinate with VDOT on this to determine if the activities to support the development of the end products by HRTPO and HRPDC were authorized through the approval of the UPWP or any amendment to the UPWP or Scope of Work. The review should also assess the sources of funds used towards the development of the end products (joint Public Engagement Plan and the Title VI and LEP Plan).	
Metropolitan Transportation Plan 23 U.S.C. 134(c),(h)&(i) 23 CFR 450.324		Commendation	HRTPO's exploration and incorporation of scenario planning into their transportation planning process and project prioritization tool aims to ensure selected transportation investments provide the highest regional benefit across a multitude of different future regional growth patterns.	
		Commendation	HRTPO's Candidate Project Portal allows members of the public to manually add their requested project for investment consideration on a web-based mapping platform. This portal is opened throughout the development of the LRTP, not just during the public comment period, allowing the public to provide input beyond the LRTP update cycle.	



Review Area	Observation	Action	Corrective Actions/ Recommendations/ Commendations	Resolution Due Date
Transportation Improvement Program 23 U.S.C. 134(c)(h)&(j) 23 CFR 450.326	Only transit projects expecting to utilize CMAQ and RSTP funds have the full amount of detail listed as all highway and bridge projects.	Recommendation	Ensure TIP project descriptions contain consistent level of detail, across all project types, in fulfillment of 23 CFR 450.326(g).	
List of Obligated Projects 23 U.S.C. 134(j)(7) 23 CFR 450.334	The transit section of HRTPO's 2023 AOR does not contain all required elements outlined in 23 CFR 450.334.	Recommendation	The Federal Team Recommends that HRTPO should coordinate with VDOT, VDRPT, HRT, WATA, and Suffolk Transit to identify the role and responsibility of each agency in the development of the AOR to ensure all required elements outlined in 23 CFR 450.334.	
Freight 23 U.S.C. 134(h) 23 CFR 450.306		Commendation	The Federal Review Team acknowledges the tremendous value and significant contributions of HRTPO staff to respond to and assist with freight related activities of regional, state, and national significance.	

Details of the certification findings for each of the above items are contained in this report.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Background

Pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 134(k) and 49 U.S.C. 5303(k), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) must jointly certify the metropolitan transportation planning process in Transportation Management Areas (TMAs) at least every four years. A TMA is an urbanized area, as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau, with a population of over 200,000. After the 2020 Census, the Secretary of Transportation designated 192 TMAs. In general, the reviews consist of three primary activities: a site visit, a review of planning products (in advance of and during the site visit), and preparation of a Certification Review Report that summarizes the review and offers findings. The reviews focus on compliance with Federal regulations, challenges, successes, and experiences of the cooperative relationship between the MPO(s), the State DOT(s), and public transportation operator(s) in the conduct of the metropolitan transportation planning process. Joint FTA/FHWA Certification Review guidelines provide agency field reviewers with latitude and flexibility to tailor the review to reflect regional issues and needs. Consequently, the scope and depth of the Certification Review reports can vary significantly.

The Certification Review process is only one of several methods used to assess the quality of a regional metropolitan transportation planning process, compliance with applicable statutes and regulations, and the level and type of technical assistance needed to enhance the effectiveness of the planning process. Other activities provide opportunities for this type of review and comment by FHWA and FTA, including Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) approval, the MTP, metropolitan and statewide Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) findings, air-quality (AQ) conformity determinations (in nonattainment and maintenance areas), as well as a range of other formal and less formal contact. The results of these other processes are considered in the Certification Review process.

While the Certification Review report itself may not fully document those many intermediate and ongoing checkpoints, the “findings” of Certification Review are, in fact, based upon the cumulative findings of the entire review effort.

The review process is individually tailored to focus on topics of significance in each metropolitan planning area (MPA). Federal reviewers prepare Certification Reports to document the results of the review process. The reports and final actions are the joint responsibility of the appropriate FHWA and FTA field offices, and their content will vary to reflect the planning process reviewed, whether or not they relate explicitly to formal “findings” of the review.

To encourage public understanding and input, FHWA/FTA will continue to improve the clarity of the Certification Review reports.

2.2 Purpose and Objective

Since the enactment of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) of 1991, the FHWA and FTA, are required to jointly review and evaluate the transportation planning process in all urbanized areas over 200,000 population to determine if the process meets the Federal planning requirements in 23 U.S.C. 134, 40 U.S.C. 5303, and 23 CFR 450. The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), extended the minimum allowable frequency of certification reviews to at least every four years.

The Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization (HRTPO) is the designated MPO for the Hampton Roads area, including the Virginia Beach—Norfolk, VA TMA. The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) and the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transit (VDRPT) are the responsible State agencies and Hampton Roads Transit (HRT), Williamsburg Area Transit Authority (WATA), and Suffolk Transit are the responsible public transportation operators. Current membership of HRTPO Board consists of elected officials and empowered representatives from the political jurisdictions within its planning boundary.

Certification of the planning process is a prerequisite to the approval of Federal funding for transportation projects in such areas. The certification review is also an opportunity to provide assistance on new programs and to enhance the ability of the metropolitan transportation planning process to provide decision makers with the knowledge they need to make well-informed capital and operating investment decisions.

3.0 SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Review Process

The previous certification review was conducted in 2020. A summary of the status of findings from the last review is provided in Appendix A. This report details the most recent review, which consisted of written questions, a formal site visit, and a hybrid public involvement opportunity conducted on August 14-15, 2024. The virtual participation platform was hosted through Microsoft Teams.

Participants in the review included staff from HRTPO, HRPDC, VDOT, VDRPT, FHWA, FTA, and HRT. A full list of participants is included in Appendix B.

A desk audit of current documents and correspondence was completed prior to the site visit. In addition to the formal review, routine oversight mechanisms provide a major source of information upon which to base the certification findings.

The certification review covers the transportation planning process conducted cooperatively by the MPO, State, and public transportation operators. Background information, current status, key findings, and recommendations are summarized in the body of the report for the following subject areas selected by FHWA and FTA staff for review:

- Metropolitan Planning Area Boundaries
- MPO Structure and Agreements
- Consultation and Coordination
- Performance-Based Planning and Programming (PBPP)
- Public Participation
- Civil Rights (Title VI, , ADA, etc.)
- Unified Planning Work Program
- Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)
- Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
- List of Obligated Projects
- Transit Planning
- Freight Planning

3.2 Documents Reviewed

The following MPO documents were evaluated as part of this planning process review:

- 2045 LRTP
- FY 2024-2027 TIP
- FY 2023-2025 UPWP
- PPP Involvement Process/Procedures
- Regional Active Transportation Plan

- Extending the Elizabeth River Trail- Cost Model and Cost Estimates
- Resource for trail planning in Hampton Roads to help advance active transportation projects.
- Level of Traffic Stress Analysis for the City of Hampton.
- Economic Impact of Bicycle Facilities- Ph II
- Hampton Roads Regional Freight Study - 2017 Update
- Hampton Roads Freight Facilities Interactive Map
- Annual List of Obligated Projects (ALOP)
- DRPT Coordination Plan
- Congestion Management Process (CMP)
- Resiliency planning documents and considerations
- Organizational Structure, Board Membership, and Planning Boundaries
- Approved Bylaws for TPO and Committees (including Committee membership/structure)
- Consultation and Coordination with Federal, State, and local agencies (i.e., formal memoranda or agreements)
- Agreements and Contracts (including 3C and PL, and SPR agreements and contracts with HRPDC, VDOT, DRPT, HRT, WATA, and Suffolk Transit)
- Title VI Program, Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan, ADA documents/procedures
- 2021 Report - HRPDC and HRTPO Title VI/Nondiscrimination Review Report and Findings

4.0 PROGRAM REVIEW

4.1 MPO Structure, Boundaries, and Agreements

4.1.1 Regulatory Basis

23 U.S.C. 134(d) and 23 CFR 450.314(a) state the MPO, the State, and the public transportation operator shall cooperatively determine their mutual responsibilities in carrying out the metropolitan transportation planning process. These responsibilities shall be clearly identified in written agreements among the MPO, the State, and the public transportation operators serving the MPA.

23 USC 134 (e) provides that the boundaries of a [metropolitan planning area](#) shall be determined by agreement between the [metropolitan planning organization](#) and the Governor.

Pursuant to 23 USC 134 (b)(3), a “[Nonmetropolitan area](#)” means a geographic area outside designated [metropolitan planning areas](#).”

Pursuant to 23 CFR 450.104, a “*Nonmetropolitan area*” means a geographic area outside a designated metropolitan planning area.”

Pursuant to 23 CFR 450.104, a “*Nonmetropolitan local officials*” means elected and appointed officials of general purpose local government in a [nonmetropolitan area](#) with responsibility for transportation.”

Pursuant to 23 USC 134 (b)(1), “a [metropolitan planning area](#)” means the geographic area determined by agreement between the [metropolitan planning organization](#) for the area and the Governor...”

Pursuant to 23 CFR 450.104, a “*Metropolitan planning area* (MPA) means the geographic area determined by agreement between the [MPO](#) for the area and the [Governor](#), in which the metropolitan transportation planning process is carried out.”

Pursuant to 23 CFR 450.104, a “*Metropolitan Planning Organization* (MPO) means the policy board of an organization created and designated to carry out the metropolitan transportation planning process.”

4.1.2 Current Status

HRTPO is the designated MPO for the Virginia Beach – Norfolk, VA TMA, often referred to as the Hampton Roads, VA Area. The HRTPO is staffed by the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission (HRPDC) and the HRPDC serves as the fiscal agent on behalf of the HRTPO, pursuant to a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the two organizations and the Metropolitan Planning Agreement.

HRPDC is the Planning District Commission (PDC) for Planning District 23. There are 21 planning districts and associated PDCs in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Virginia’s PDCs are political subdivisions of the Commonwealth created in 1969 pursuant to the Virginia Area Development Act and a regionally executed Charter Agreement, that act as regional organizations representing the Planning Districts’ local

governments. The HRPDC was formed in 1990 by the merger of the Southeastern Virginia Planning District Commission and the Peninsula Planning District Commission.

HRTPO was designated as an MPO in 1991. Voting membership of the HRTPO is outlined in the HRTPO Board Bylaws and includes elected officials from each of the cities and counties within the MPA, two members of the Virginia Senate and two members of the Virginia House of Delegates, plus one representative from each of the following: the Transportation District Commission of Hampton Roads (TDCHR), the Williamsburg Area Transit Authority (WATA), the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (VDRPT), and the Virginia Port Authority (VPA).

Non-voting membership of the HRTPO includes the chairs of the Community Transportation Advisory Committee (CTAC) and the Freight Transportation Advisory Committee (FTAC), the Chief Administrative Officers (CAOs) from each of the cities and counties within the MPA, and one representative from each of the following: the Virginia Department of Aviation (VDOA), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), the Peninsula Airport Commission, and the Norfolk Airport Authority.

The HRTPO structure is comprised of its Policy Board (Board), seven committees, and three working groups. The committees include Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) Committee, the Community Advisory Committee (CAC), the Freight Transportation Advisory Committee (FTAC), the Regional Transit Advisory Panel (RTAP), the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC), and the Transportation Technical Advisory Committee (TTAC). TTAC has five subcommittees: the Active Transportation Subcommittee, the Hampton Roads Transportation Operations Subcommittee (HRTTO), the Long-Range Transportation Plan Subcommittee (LRTP), the TRAFFIX Subcommittee, and the Transportation Programming Subcommittee (TPS). Current working groups include the Bowers Hill Interchange Study Working Group, the Regional Connectors Study (RCS) Steering (Policy) Committee and Working Group, and the Regional Transit Cooperation Working Group (RTCWG).

The CAC is comprised of up to thirty (30) members, each of whom shall be a resident of a HRTPO/HRPDC-member locality and serves as an advisory committee to the HRTPO and the HRPDC. The purpose of the CAC is to provide the HRTPO and HRPDC with the community's viewpoint on regional issues, strategies, funding, priorities, and the decision-making process of the HRTPO and HRPDC. Currently not all 30 seats on the CAC are filled, and it appears not all member jurisdictions have a representative serving on the CAC, which may mean some jurisdictions' views go unrepresented from the community perspective shared with and by the CAC.

In 2014 the Virginia General Assembly established the Hampton Roads Transportation Accountability Commission (HRTAC). In accordance with this legislation, the moneys deposited into the Hampton Roads Transportation Fund (HRTF) (comprised of local sales tax and state fuels tax) are used solely for new construction projects on new or existing highways, bridges, and tunnels in the localities comprising HRPDC-23 as approved by the HRTAC. The legislation directs HRTAC to prioritize those projects that are expected to provide the greatest impact on reducing congestion for the greatest number of people residing within HRPDC-23 and that the HRTF shall be used for such construction projects.

During the 2020 legislative session the Virginia General Assembly created the Hampton Roads Regional Transit Fund (HRRTF) to develop, maintain, and improve a regional network of transit routes and related infrastructure, rolling stock, and support facilities. The program is administered by the HRTAC and funded by additional taxes imposed in localities in the Hampton Roads Transportation District. Use of the funds requires a two-thirds vote of the localities in which the new taxes were imposed.

As part of the legislation, the General Assembly required the HRTPO to establish a Regional Transit Advisory Panel (RTAP) composed of representatives of major business and industry groups, employers, shopping destinations, institutions of higher education, military installations, hospitals and health care centers, public transit entities, and any other groups identified as necessary to provide ongoing advice to the regional planning process.

Boundaries and Agreements

HRTPO has multiple planning agreements that outline the MPO's, VDOT's, VDRPT's and transit agencies' (HRT, WATA, Suffolk Transit) roles and responsibilities for carrying out the transportation planning process. The July 15, 2009, MOU between HRTPO and HRPDC was the formal directive that assigns HRPDC staff to perform the HRTPO duties for the metropolitan area (as outlined in the respective HRTPO UPWP document) and to coordinate those efforts with the HRTPO Board and Advisory Committees, while abiding to five core functions. The HRTPO and HRPDC MOU has been updated two times. The September 16, 2009, update added provisions for fiscal and financial policies and responsibilities of both agencies. The January 16, 2014, update expanded the membership of HRPDC's Personnel and Budget Committee to include the Chair and Vice Chair of the HRPDC and HRTPO Boards, as well as additional executive and non-executive staff of each agency.

The 2018 Metropolitan Planning Agreement between HRTPO, VDOT, VDRPT, HRT, WATA, and Suffolk Transit outlines the agencies responsible for in carrying out the metropolitan transportation planning process for the Hampton Roads MPA. The Agreement identifies the planning boundaries of the HRTPO, the MPO structure and committees. It includes provisions for the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), Public Participation Plan (PPP), Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Annual Obligations Report, as well as financial planning and programming, obligation reports, Performance-Based Planning Process responsibilities (including setting transit asset management (TAM) and transit safety targets), and data creation and sharing.

The 2018 MPA Agreement outlines joint coordination on each of the required planning documents, but at times is not clear on how the duties should be fulfilled by the parties, or the timelines for coordination. For example, within the TIP development section it is unclear when the state provides the list of projects, or the transit operators provide a list with assistance from the state and when the public input is solicited. A more developed outline of the steps, roles, and timeline would offer better clarity and improve coordination.

Pursuant to 23 CFR 450.310(f), nothing in the metropolitan regulations "shall be deemed to prohibit an MPO from using the staff resources of other agencies, non-profit organizations, or contractors to carry out selected elements of the metropolitan transportation planning process," the 3-C Agreement provides

that the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission (HRPDC) will serve as “planning and administrative staff” to the HRTPO Board. As planning and administrative staff to the HRTPO, the HRPDC is not a member of the HRTPO. The HRPDC Board is a separate body/organization and serves as a political subdivision of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

HRTPO and the HRPDC have annual planning project agreements with VDOT and VDRPT for the use of FHWA PL and SPR Program funds, FTA Section 5303 Program planning funds, as well as separate agreements with each of the three fixed route transit agencies, HRT, WATA, and Suffolk Transit, as well as agreements with VDOT and VDRPT for allocation of State Planning funds from Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB).

The Hampton Roads Transportation Accountability Commission (HRTAC) was created by the Virginia General Assembly in 2014 to maintain and administer the Hampton Roads Transportation Fund (HRTF), a trust fund for transportation projects established by the Virginia General Assembly through a 0.7% increase in the state sales and use tax and a 2.1% increase in the fuel tax region-wide. The Hampton Roads Transportation Fund (HRTF) is the primary funding source for regionally significant transportation projects within the PDC-23 boundary. The PDC-23 boundary includes a metropolitan areas boundary and a nonmetropolitan area.

The decision in 2016 to expand the metropolitan planning area boundary to include a portion of the City of Franklin and Southampton County was the result of the following:

- The Virginia General Assembly action to enact certain taxes (to be maintained in a HR Trust Fund) on the entire population within the PDC-23 boundary;
- The formation of HRTAC; and,
- The ultimate decision by the Governor and MPO to ensure that no person in any jurisdiction was without MPO Policy Board representation regarding the metropolitan transportation planning process and the planning and programming of regionally significant projects wholly or partly financed and/or funded by HRTAC trust funds.

Following the federal certification review in 2016, HRTPO staff worked with the CAO’s of the City of Franklin, Southampton County, and representatives of VDOT and the FHWA Virginia Division to develop a concept that:

- Expanded the Metropolitan Planning Area Boundary to include a portion of the City of Franklin and Southampton County population providing tax revenue and contributing to the HRTF. The included portions of Southampton County and the City of Franklin are east of Route 258 and provided Southampton County and the City of Franklin officials with HRTPO voting representation for populations within that portion of the MPA boundary that is within PDC-23.
- Excluded from the Metropolitan Planning Area Boundary a larger portion of the City of Franklin and Southampton County population providing tax revenue and contributing to the HRTF. The excluded portion of the population, while within PDC-23, would not have voting representation for the metropolitan planning and programming of projects funded with tax revenue as that

geographic area would remain nonmetropolitan or a geographic area outside of the designated metropolitan planning area agreed to by the Governor and MPO.

The concept was approved by the HRTPO Board and forwarded and approved by the Secretary of Transportation on November 16, 2016, and reflects the current MPA boundary. HRTPO amended their bylaws to add the City of Franklin and Southampton County to the Metropolitan Planning Area and HRTPO Board Voting Membership on October 20, 2016. The current 3-C Agreement (dated 9/13/18) between the State, MPO, and Transit Operators, details the included portions of the City of Franklin and Southampton County population.

The September 13, 2018, HRTPO 3-C Agreement defines the current Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA) boundary (approved by the MPO and Governor) as including the “Cities of Chesapeake, Hampton, Newport News, Norfolk, Poquoson, Portsmouth, Suffolk, Virginia Beach, and Williamsburg; the Counties of Isle of Wight, James City, and York; and portions of the City of Franklin and the Counties of Gloucester and Southampton.”

The Bylaws of the HRTPO, amended and approved on July 21, 2022, defines the Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA) boundary as consisting of “the Cities of Chesapeake, Franklin, Hampton, Newport News, Norfolk, Poquoson, Portsmouth, Suffolk, Virginia Beach, and Williamsburg, as well as the Counties of Gloucester, Isle of Wight, James City, Southampton, and York.”

The HRTPO’s MPA boundary, approved by the MPO and Governor pursuant to 23 USC 134 (e)(1)), defines an MPA boundary that excludes portions of the City of Franklin and Southampton County population from the metropolitan planning and programming process (23 USC 134). However, the MPO Bylaws define an MPA boundary that is inclusive of the City of Franklin and Southampton County population or broader than the MPA boundary agreed to by the MPO and Governor. There is a difference. If, for example, the metropolitan planning area boundary as defined in the MPO Bylaws is accurate, then all of the population of the City of Franklin and Southampton County paying into the HRTF are within the MPA, represented in the metropolitan planning process, and certain suballocated federal metropolitan transportation funds can be available and spent for the benefit of all of the City of Franklin and Southampton County (through the MPO’s project selection process).

For planning and programming purposes, the portions of the City of Franklin and Southampton County that fall outside the MPA boundary are nonmetropolitan or rural and fall within the Statewide and nonmetropolitan planning and programming process (23 USC 135).

As stated above, regarding the metropolitan planning and programming of regionally significant projects that are wholly or partly financed and/or funded by HRTAC trust fund tax revenues, the City of Franklin and Southampton County population provide tax revenue and contribute to the Hampton Roads Trust Fund (HRTF).



4.1.3 Findings

Commendations: None

Corrective Action: None

Recommendations:

- The Federal Review Team recommends that the HRTPO evaluate their process for filling available seats on the CAC. As part of this effort, it is recommended that the HRTPO evaluate if they could increase efforts to recruit members by working with community-based organizations. The process for filling available seats on the CAC should address how new members are nominated to be added to the CAC and evaluate/establish a mechanism for communicating CAC's role within HRTPO structure.
- The Federal Review Team recommends that the HRTPO staff and the parties to their signed agreement documents review the documents on a regular basis to ensure that a sufficient level of detail is included that outlines the roles and responsibilities of each agency in the development of the related transportation planning document or process as outlined in 23 CFR 450.314(a).
- In consideration of 23 CFR 450.312(j), the Federal team requests that the State and MPO provide a clear description (in sufficient detail to assist with delineating areas of metropolitan and statewide and nonmetropolitan planning and programming) of what population areas within PDC-23 fall within the HRTPO's metropolitan planning area boundary and what population areas fall outside of the HRTPO's metropolitan planning area boundary or in the statewide and nonmetropolitan area. The statewide and nonmetropolitan planning and programming process is governed by 23 USC 135.

4.2 Consultation and Coordination

4.2.1 Regulatory Basis

23 U.S.C. 134(g) & (i)(5)-(6) and 23 CFR 450.316(b-e) set forth requirements for consultation in developing the MTP and TIP. Consultation is also addressed specifically in connection with the MTP in 23 CFR 450.324(g)(1-2) and in 23 CFR 450.324(f)(10) related to environmental mitigation.

In developing the MTP and TIP, the MPO shall, to the extent practicable, develop a documented process that outlines roles, responsibilities, and key decision points for consulting with other governments and agencies as described below:

- Agencies and officials responsible for other planning activities (State, local, economic development, environmental protection, airport operations, or freight)
- Other providers of transportation services
- Indian Tribal Government(s)
- Federal land management agencies

4.2.2 Current Status

HRTPO serves approximately 140,000 active duty, reserve, and civilian personnel, over 135,000 military dependents, and over 230,000 veterans, who account for almost one third of the MPA. HRTPO has had a long-standing relationship with the Hampton Roads regions' U.S. military community since the 1970s. Eighteen U.S. military installations, representing five of the six military branches, including two joint bases, and Naval Station Norfolk, the world's largest naval station, are located within HRTPO's MPA. Military representatives are invited and participate at HRTPO Policy Board meetings and are non-voting members of TTAC.

A core component of HRTPO's engagement with military stakeholders concerns the Strategic Highway Network (STRAHNET). The STRAHNET is a subset of the National Highway System (NHS) roads designated necessary for emergency mobilization and peacetime movement of heavy armor, fuel, ammunition, repair parts, food, and other commodities to support U.S. military operations. STRAHNET is a network of more than 62,000 miles of routes and connectors identified by the Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command Transportation Engineering Agency (MSDDCTEA). HRTPO routinely provides GIS data for the Hampton Roads STRAHNET and additional military and supporting sites online for public use. HRTPO's transportation planning coordination with military stakeholders has contributed to identification of STRAHNET routes and investment needs to sustain it through flood events and sea level rise.

HRTPO has incorporated findings from their 2018 Military Transportation Needs Study into their overall transportation planning practices, including the most recent updates to its Congestion Management Process (CMP) and Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Project Prioritization Tool. For example, projects that are anticipated to have a positive impact on STRAHNET and its climate resiliency are scored higher through HRTPO's project prioritization tool, in ranking projects to be included in the LRTP.

HRTPO was one of six regions selected to highlight best practices for transportation planning for military needs in a soon-to-be published 2024 report, the USDOT Volpe and US Department of Defense/Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command Transportation Engineering Agency (SDDCTEA) report, “Military at the Table: A Guide for Agency Coordination in Transportation Planning and Decision-making (FY 23-25).” The report references the needs, partnerships, and coordination documented in HRTPO’s Military Transportation Needs Study, as well as information gathered through an October 2023 interview with the TPO and regional military stakeholders.

Prompted by past bouts of critical road and bridge infrastructure that have been left unusable from weather-related events, HRTPO incorporates resiliency planning into their overall transportation planning process and investment prioritization system. The MPO published several transportation planning documents that identify road and bridge segments vulnerable to flooding and adaptation strategies that would reduce how compromised they become during weather-related events. Results from the analysis additionally highlight the expected impact in road congestion from the closures of the critical roads and bridges, and further aid in situational awareness for proposed development within the Hampton Roads region. Projects that improve resiliency of the transportation network are scored higher through the HRTPO’s project prioritization tool, in ranking projects to be included in the LRTP. HRTPO’s scenario planning methodology also accounts for expected sea level rise and storm surge assumptions.

In 2016, HRTPO conducted a study, “Sea Level Rise and Storm Surge Impacts to Roadways in Hampton Roads.” Numerous proceeding comprehensive planning studies within the region have incorporated this study’s findings, eventually leading to HRTPO’s evacuation analysis and public-facing, open-source data portal. Through a partnership with Waze, flooding detected during weather-related events can be reported out through real-time traffic updates on impacted roads, whether the impact results in a reduction in lane capacity, or full road closure. This work has led to recommendations for regional sea-level and inland storm surge policy.

HRPDC and HRTPO staff are involved in several resiliency planning initiatives, especially with a focus on coastal and sea level resiliency. HRPDC has their own Coastal Resiliency Committee, HRTPO is a part of the Norfolk and Virginia Beach Joint Land Use Study (JLUS), and additionally provide technical assistance to USDOT/Volpe Tools to Augment Transportation Infrastructure Resilience and Disaster Recovery, VDOT/Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS), and local and statewide universities. In FY 2024, HRTPO staff joined the US EPA Region 3 bi-monthly conference calls and e-mails on emerging federal policy.

HRTPO’s resiliency planning efforts have been recognized as state and national best practices in transportation planning. This includes HRTPO’s participation in the FHWA/FDOT Integrating Resilience Peer Exchange (September 2020); referenced in the in the TRB Transportation Resiliency Metrics Study (September 2020) and TRB Transportation Planning Applications (June 2021); participation in the C40-USDN Advancing Climate Action Webinar Series (March 2022); recognition from the APA Federal Planning Division (June 2022); participation in the FHWA/Houston-Galveston Area Council Freight and Technology Peer Exchange (December 2022); reference in the TRB Innovations in Travel Analysis and Planning (June 2023) and FHWA/Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation (May 2023), and participation in the FHWA Resiliency Peer Exchange (July 2024).

HRTPO's national partnership in resiliency planning efforts with the USDOT Volpe Center began a decade ago. The most completed efforts stem from HRTPO's involvement in the development of the Volpe Center's Resiliency and Disaster Recovery (RDR) Tool Suite's beta platform through a pilot study in collaboration additionally with VDOT and HRPDC. HRTPO was included in a separate succeeding pilot study alongside other MPOs situated along coastal lands to test the tool prior its public release. HRTPO staff continues to work with the Volpe Center in the development of their Resiliency and Disaster Recovery Tool Suite.

In 2022, Hampton Roads, VA was selected as an urban coastal community that would benefit from the Virginia-based non-profit, RISE Resiliency Innovations' Rural and Urban Coastal Community Resilience Challenges award. Fernleaf was the small business awarded to team up with HRTPO to develop tools and approaches in analyzing the impact of flooding events on vulnerable communities' roadway access to core services. Recent improvements that HRTPO staff are helping to test include analyzing potential impacts to transit and vulnerable communities.

4.2.3 Findings

Commendations:

- HRTPO is a national example in coordination and engagement with the U.S. military branches located within their MPA and recognizing and valuing the U.S. military's distinct transportation networks within the region. Prompted by road congestion and delay concerns expressed by several military representatives, HRTPO studied military transportation needs within the region. Following the study, transportation investments serving military installations on, connecting, or adjacent to the STRAHNET are now ranked higher in HRTPO's project prioritization tool for long range transportation planning. HRTPO is sought out externally to share their best practices for coordination and partnership efforts among the military community and for incorporating military planning in regional transportation investment project prioritization.
- HRTPO's exploration and incorporation of resiliency planning into their transportation planning process and as a factor within the MPO's project prioritization tool aims to create a roadway and bridge network that will remain operational for all road users through major weather events. HRTPO receives recognition in federal, state, and national planning best practice citations. Advancements in HRTPO's public real-time navigation data in climate-event related evacuations is particularly noteworthy. HRTPO also regularly collaborates with Federal, local, and private agencies to further the field and access of equitable resiliency planning.

Corrective Action: None

Recommendations: None

4.3 TPM/ Performance-Based Planning and Programming

4.3.1 Regulatory Basis

23 U.S.C. 150(b) identifies the following national goals for the focus of the Federal-aid highway program: Safety, Infrastructure Condition, Congestion Reduction, System Reliability, Freight Movement and Economic Vitality, Environmental Sustainability, and Reduced Project Delivery Delays. Under 23 U.S.C. 134(h)(2), the metropolitan planning process shall provide for the establishment and use of a performance-based approach to transportation decision-making to support the national goals, including the establishment of performance targets.

23 CFR 450.306(d) states that each MPO shall establish performance targets to support the national goals and track progress towards the attainment of critical outcomes. Each MPO shall coordinate with the relevant State to ensure consistency, to the maximum extent practicable, and establish performance targets not later than 180 days after the State or provider of public transportation establishes its performance targets. The selection of performance targets that address performance measures described in 49 U.S.C. 5326(c) and 49 U.S.C. 5329(d) shall be coordinated to the maximum extent practicable, with public transportation providers to ensure consistency with the performance targets that public transportation providers establish under 49 U.S.C. 5326(c) and 49 U.S.C. 5329(d). Additionally, each MPO shall integrate the goals, objectives, performance measures, and targets from other performance-based plans and programs integrated into the metropolitan transportation planning process.

23 CFR 450.314(h) states that the MPO, the State, and the public transportation operator shall jointly develop specific written provisions for performance-based planning and programming (PBPP), which can either be documented as part of the metropolitan planning agreements or in some other means.

23 CFR 450.324(f) states that MTPs shall include descriptions of the performance measures and performance targets used in assessing the performance of the transportation system, a system performance report evaluating the condition and performance of the transportation system with respect to the performance targets, and progress achieved in meeting the performance targets in comparison with system performance recorded in previous reports.

23 CFR 450.326(d) states that the TIP shall include, to the maximum extent practicable, a description of the anticipated effect of the programmed investments with respect to the performance targets established in the MTP, the anticipated future performance target achievement of the programmed investments, and a written narrative linking investment priorities to those performance targets and how the other PBPP documents are being implemented to develop the program of projects.

4.3.2 Current Status

HRTPO's performance management is a strategic approach that uses system information to make investment and policy decisions to achieve performance goals. During the site visit, HRTPO discussed that it had based its planning and programming process on performance management for many years, predating federal efforts.

Furthermore, HRTPO emphasized that PBPP is applying TPM within the planning and programming processes of transportation agencies to achieve desired performance outcomes for their multimodal transportation system. Virtual presentations and discussion questions revealed that HRTPO's performance-based planning and programming (PBPP) methodology is a strategic, data-driven approach to decision-making that enables transportation agencies to allocate resources efficiently, maximize the return on investments, and achieve desired performance goals increasing accountability and transparency to the public.

Compliant PBPP targets are set in HRTPO's FY 2024-2027 TIP for roadway safety, pavement condition, bridge condition, roadway performance, freight movement, transit asset management (TAM), transit safety, on-road mobile source emissions, and traffic congestion. According to the TIP, HRTPO aligns their safety targets with the Vision Zero ideology of achieving zero serious injuries and fatalities by 2045.

HRTPO facilitates a Performance Measures Task Force consisting of staff from member communities, transit agencies, VDOT, and subject matter experts that work to recommend transportation performance targets to the HRTPO's TTAC, who then recommends the performance targets to the Board. Since 2020, HRTPO has been releasing annual system performance reports on progress being made towards its regional performance targets. The latest system performance report was published in October 2023, and the HRTPO Board adopted 2024 regional targets in January 2024.

As a Tier I Transit Agency, Hampton Roads Transit (HRT) develops their own TAM Plan and Public Transportation Safety Action Plan (PTASP) and sets their own TAM performance measures and safety targets. Williamsburg Area Transit Authority (WATA) and Suffolk Transit are participants of the VDRPT State-sponsored Virginia Group Tier II Transit Asset Management (TAM) Plan and PTASP and adopt the statewide TAM performance measures and safety targets.

HRTPO chooses to set regional transit TAM performance measures and transit safety targets for the region. These targets are weighted averages of HRT, WATA, and Suffolk Transit's TAM and safety targets. HRTPO staff prepared a recommended list of regional transit safety targets, based on this weighted average. It was not explained in the TIP document nor during the site visit, how transit projects are evaluated against the regional transit TAM and safety targets. HRTPO does not actively link transit agencies' proposed projects to be added to the TIP to the regional TAM and safety targets. When asked at the site visit how HRTPO ensures proposed transit projects go towards achieving the regional targets set by the HRTPO, HRTPO responded they delegate that task to the respective transit agencies.

4.3.3 Findings

Commendations: None

Corrective Action: None

Recommendations:

- HRTPO should document their process to ensure federally funded transit investments identified by HRT, WATA, and Suffolk Transit, meet HRTPO's weighted regional transit TAM and PTASP safety targets, separate from the transit agencies' respective targets.

4.4 Public Participation

4.4.1 Regulatory Basis

Section 23 USC 134(i)(6)(B) requires MPOs to develop a Participation Plan in consultation with all interested parties and that the plan shall provide that all interested parties have reasonable opportunities to comment on the contents of the transportation plan serving the metropolitan planning area.

Sections 134(i)(5), 134(j)(1)(B) of Title 23 and Section 5303(i)(5) and 5303(j)(1)(B) of Title 49, require a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to provide adequate opportunity for the public to participate in and comment on the products and planning processes of the MPO. The requirements for public involvement are detailed in 23 CFR 450.316(a) and (b), which require the MPO to develop and use a documented participation plan that includes explicit procedures and strategies to include the public and other interested parties in the transportation planning process.

23 CFR 450.316(a)(3) requires the MPO, following a 45-day public comment period, to adopt the Participation Plan and send a copy of the approved Participation Plan to FHWA and FTA.

23 CFR 450.316 also provides specific requirements that include giving adequate and timely notice of opportunities to participate in or comment on transportation issues and processes, employing visualization techniques to describe metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs, making public information readily available in electronically accessible formats via the internet, holding public meetings at convenient and accessible locations and times, demonstrating explicit consideration and response to public input, and a periodically reviewing of the effectiveness of the participation plan.

4.4.2 Current Status

Since the last Certification Review, HRTPO updated their website. The updated website has improved accessibility features including screen reader compatible content and AudioEye visual toolkit functions (through CivicPlus partnership). The website also includes an embedded Google Translate plug-in for toggling webpage text translation.

HRTPO reaches the public through social media using their accounts on Facebook, YouTube, Nextdoor, and LinkedIn. During the site visit, HRTPO reported its significant increase in engagement particularly through their Facebook page and website since the last certification review (). HRTPO utilizes Facebook to post weekly event schedules, post short videos from CAC members, provide construction and funding updates for projects in the region, solicit public comments, promote HRTPO outreach efforts, and share updates from partner agencies such as HRPDC, VDOT, transit service providers, and member communities.

Figure 1 HRTPO Facebook Engagement, 2020 vs. 2023/2024

Time Period	Impressions	Reaches	Reactions	Comments	Shares	Clicks
1/1/2020 – 12/31/2020	16	15	4	0	8	0
8/12/2023 – 8/12/2024	23,264	22,342	649	98	72	1,322

HRTPO provides virtual access to their Policy Board and TTAC meetings by livestreaming the meetings on their YouTube page (the public can attend the meetings in person, as well). After each HRTPO Policy Board meeting, HRTPO's executive director provides a one or two minute "after action" video summarizing the discussion and actions of the meeting. These "after action" videos are uploaded to the joint HRTPO and HRPDC YouTube account along with recordings of HRTPO's Policy Board, TTAC, and CAC meetings. Through Nextdoor, HRTPO can communicate with all residents who live within the MPA and have a Nextdoor account, as well as tailor their outreach (draw geographical boundaries) to a more granular, corridor-level. Each post from Nextdoor sent to the entire MPA averages 50 – 80 thousand impressions.

In-person, HRTPO engages the public through its recurring board and committee meetings, plan outreach meetings, as well as setting up a booth at local community events. Recent booth engagement has included events such as The Farmers' Market at City Park, Blackwater Regional Library, and Pride in the 'Peake. The combined HRTPO/HRPDC outreach for 2023 included staff participating in 26 community outreach events with an attendance of over 205,154 people.

HRTPO continues to look for ways to incorporate improved public engagement methods into their planning practice. This includes expanding the MPO's contact list of organizations within the community, as well as exploring new tools of engagement, such as those that incorporate virtual reality components (notably HRTPO deploying a newly created "metaverse" for their 2050 LRTP development process).

Public Participation Plan

In 2020, the FHWA and FTA reviewed the HRTPO's Public Participation Plan (PPP). It was adopted by the HRTPO Board in February 2018. The effective timeframe of the PPP, as contained in the document's "ABSTRACT" section is "2018-2020." At the time of the last review, the PPP was still valid and the Federal review team was informed that an update was planned.

Based on the current review, it appears that the HRTPO's PPP had not been updated in several years and includes activities that are no longer in use by the HRTPO. For example, page 33 of the HRTPO's PPP documents the use of an EJ Roundtable as a tool and strategy for engaging communities and stakeholders. The Federal review team has no information to support the HRTPO's continued practice of utilizing the EJ Roundtable. Because of this, the HRTPO's current PPP (adopted in 2018) does not appear to fully capture and compliment the range of activities and strategies that have evolved since the PPP was adopted. It is important that the HRTPO periodically review and evaluate the effectiveness of the procedures and strategies contained in the PPP and update the PPP to reflect what changes have occurred and what new strategies have been adopted – especially considering the establishment of and changes to the Community Advisory Committee (CAC).

Following a Title VI Compliance Review Report of the HRPDC in 2023, on September 20, 2023, the HRTPO's Title VI Administrator met with VDOT and for the first time agreed that the HRPDC and HRTPO would update and combine their separately approved PPPs and submit it to VDOT for review before the next quadrennial review (2024). The joint HRTPO and HRPDC Participation Plan would be renamed a "Public Engagement Plan."

Historically, the HRTPO and HRPDC have had two separate Public Participation Plans, that were adopted and updated on separate schedules. The current HRTPO Public Participation Plan was adopted in February 2018 and the current HRPDC Public Participation Plan was adopted in July 2020.

As of this TMA certification review, the HRTPO and HRPDC are actively developing the combined plan and are aiming to jointly approve/adopt it by the end of CY 2024.

The HRTPO's Public Participation Plan is a core metropolitan transportation planning product, required to be consistent with the HRTPO's 3-C Agreement and federal metropolitan transportation planning regulations. Historically it had been developed, adopted, maintained, and used by HRTPO as an independent document. Federal regulations require the HRTPO's Public Participation Plan include, to the extent practicable, a documented process(es) outlining roles, responsibilities, and key decision points for consulting with the other agencies and organizations (like the HRPDC) during the development of the Metropolitan Plan and Transportation Improvement Program.

Regarding public participation, the public participation requirements for metropolitan areas (23 CFR 450.116) are different from public participation requirements of the State and as it pertains to nonmetropolitan areas like portions of the City of Franklin and Southampton County (23 CFR 450.210). There may be some confusion when merging the HRTPO and HRPDC Public Participation documents as the nonmetropolitan areas of Hampton Roads PDC-23 fall under the Statewide and Nonmetropolitan regulations.

HRTPO's current PPP does not document the measures they use for evaluating the effectiveness of their public outreach efforts. As described in Section 4.4, measuring performance helps ensure that investments are performance-driven, outcome-based, and contributing progress toward strategic goals.

4.4.3 Findings

Commendations:

- HRTPO staff are continuously dedicated in their efforts to evolve external communication and public outreach efforts and more effectively increase public reach. Their online and community-event-based engagement efforts over the past four years have proven particularly exemplary in their ability to expand the organizations reach.

Corrective Action:

- By the end of Fiscal Year 2026, the HRTPO is required to update the Public Participation Plan and make it current to demonstrate and support the process for "periodically reviewing the effectiveness of the procedures and strategies contained in the participation plan to ensure a full and open participation process (23 CFR 450.316(a)(1)(x)). The update should be reflected in the next UPWP and approved within the UPWP's FY.



Recommendations:

- The Federal Team recommends that the HRTPO and HRPDC joint Public Engagement Plan, developed in response to a VDOT Title VI finding covering the HRPDC; be consistent with the HRTPO 3-C Agreement, HRTPO bylaws, and federal regulations that require the MPO to use, develop, and approve/adopt a Participation Plan and send the adopted Participation Plan to FHWA and FTA. The document should draw a clear distinction between each agency's roles in the identification of the approval of activities, programs, budgets, revenue sources, products, public participation initiatives, and oversight responsibilities involving HRTPO's public involvement activities that support the metropolitan transportation planning process.

4.5 Title VI and Nondiscrimination

4.5.1 Regulatory Basis

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, prohibits discrimination based upon race, color, and national origin. Specifically, 42 U.S.C. 2000d states that “No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.”

In addition to Title VI, there are other Nondiscrimination statutes that afford legal protection. These statutes include the following: Section 162 (a) of the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1973 (23 U.S.C. 324), Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973/Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. ADA specifies that programs and activities funded with Federal dollars are prohibited from discrimination based on disability.

4.5.2 Current Status

The 2020 Federal Certification Review Report of the HRTPO contains the following finding:

“Included in the 2017 Federal review was a recommendation that the VDOT conduct a Title VI/Nondiscrimination review of the HRPDC. The recommendation followed a successful effort to address voting issues between the HRTPO and the City of Franklin and Southampton County. A review was conducted in 2017 and the FHWA participated in the review. Following the review, the FHWA requested a copy of the final report from the VDOT detailing the review and findings. However, no report has been made available to the HRPDC and/or FHWA, at the time of the Certification Review.

Since over 3 years have passed, the Federal Review team is now requesting that the VDOT (Hampton Roads District office) conduct a current Title VI/ Nondiscrimination review of the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission (HRPDC) within six months of the final Federal Certification report and submit the final report to the FHWA Virginia Division and FTA Region III office.”

On February 8, 2023, the VDOT delivered a “Final Report” of Title VI Compliance to the HRPDC. Contained in the Title VI compliance report are corrective action findings that include requesting that the HRPDC develop a Title VI Plan and Title VI/Nondiscrimination complaint procedures. These are findings that were apparent following the 2017 Title VI compliance review of the HRPDC.

Contained in VDOT’s Title VI Implementation Plan (reviewed and approved by FHWA) is a section that includes procedures for conducting and completing Title VI Compliance Reviews of MPOs and PDCs (Appendix E). The timeframe is between 3 -7 months. For the HRPDC, the Federal review team is noting that the initial Title VI compliance review was conducted in 2017 and the delivery of a Title VI Compliance Report was in 2023.

In response to a corrective action contained in the 2023 HRPDC Title VI Compliance Report, the HRTPO updated their Title VI & Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan in July 2023. The Plan applies US DOT’s four-

factor analysis. Of the regional population that spoke English less than “very well” no population group represented more than 5% of the regional population. Hispanic residents who did not speak English “very well” represented the largest population by percentage and count, 1.31% or 20,984 individuals. Additional languages spoken by people who spoke English less than “very well” included Tagalog (6,775), Chinese (3,435), Vietnamese (3,112), and Other Indo-European (2,660), among others. To support engagement in other languages, HRTPO offers language interpretation services for public meetings, material translation, telecommunications devices for the deaf/teletypewriters (TDD/TTY) calling options, and bilingual staff. While the HRTPO LEP Plan does not require the translation of specific documents into languages other than English, HRTPO has started distributing public feedback surveys in Spanish. HRTPO is encouraged to include a language “tagline” in their Federally-required documents that include languages of the populations of their region that do not speak English “very well” (Appendix H). This can act as a welcoming gesture to LEP populations, informing the them that they can request language assistance to learn more about HRTPO’s planning documents and investment decisions.

Regarding the newly merged Title VI and Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan for both the HRTPO and HRPDC, the Federal Review Team acknowledges the efforts of the VDOT and the HRPDC and HRTPO to develop a Title VI and LEP Plan. In essence, it is a single document covering both organizations and was developed in response to findings contained in VDOT’s most recent Title VI compliance report of the HRPDC and the HRTPO. The report details the HRTPO and HRPDC’s methods of administration as it pertains to ensuring nondiscrimination.

Regarding the Title VI and LEP Plan endorsed by VDOT and adopted by the HRTPO and HRPDC, the Federal Review Team asked questions regarding core civil rights compliance procedures that are contained in the HRTPO/HRPDC Title VI and LEP Plan.

For example, on page 28 the Plan provides that:

“The HRPDC/HRTPO Title VI Liaison will conduct annual reviews of HRPDC/HRTPO departments, programs, and services as part of the organizational Title VI Goals and Accomplishments report. This review process ensures that all aspects of the organizations comply with the appropriate governing civil rights and nondiscriminatory statutes. Departmental reviews allow the organization to focus on improvement opportunities and reinforce areas of success.”

On page 34, the Plan provides that:

“HRPDC/HRTPO will conduct Title VI compliance reviews and monitoring of its sub-recipients of federal-aid highway or other federal funds, including consultants and contractors, to ensure adherence to Title VI requirements. As needed, the HRPDC/HRTPO will assess additional sub-recipient needs and act accordingly.”

In considering these stated practices, the Federal Review Team asked staff to identify the tools or templates used to conduct compliance reviews of HRPDC and HRTPO programs areas and subrecipients, and to define the subrecipients referenced in the Title VI and LEP Plan. The staff requested the Federal Review team provide assistance with the documented procedures contained in the HRTPO/HRPDC Title VI and LEP Plan.



Pursuant to VDOT's 2025 Title VI Implementation Plan that is submitted for approval to the FHWA Division Administrator (23 CFR 200.9(b)(11)), planning agencies are reviewed at least once every four years as part of VDOT's standard operating procedures. Since the last Title VI compliance review of the HRPDC was conducted on February 9, 2021, the HRPDC and HRTPO are due for another comprehensive Title VI/Nondiscrimination compliance review in CY 2025.

4.5.3 Findings

Commendations: None

Corrective Action: None

Recommendations:

- The Federal Review Team recommends that HRTPO include in its vital documents a language insert that advises people with limited English proficiency how to obtain language assistance services (Appendix H).

Proposed FHWA/FTA Technical Assistance: Tools or templates used to conduct compliance reviews of HRPDC and HRTPO programs areas and subrecipients.

4.6 Unified Planning Work Program

4.6.1 Regulatory Basis

23 CFR 450.308 sets the requirement that planning activities performed under Titles 23 and 49 U.S.C. be documented in a Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). The MPO, in cooperation with the State and public transportation operator(s), shall develop a UPWP that includes a discussion of the planning priorities facing the MPA and the work proposed for the next one- or two-year period by major activity and task in sufficient detail to indicate the agency that will perform the work, the schedule for completing the work, the resulting products, the proposed funding, and sources of funds.

23 CFR 420.115(a): The State DOT and its subrecipients must obtain approval and authorization to proceed prior to beginning work on activities to be undertaken with FHWA planning and research funds. Such approvals and authorizations should be based on final work programs or other documents that describe the work to be performed. The State DOT and its subrecipients also must obtain prior approval for budget and programmatic changes as specified in 49 CFR 18.30 or 49 CFR 19.25 and for those items of allowable costs which require approval in accordance with the cost principles specified in 49 CFR 18.22(b) applicable to the entity expending the funds.

23 CFR 420.117(a): In accordance with 49 CFR 18.40, the State DOT shall monitor all activities performed by its staff or by subrecipients with FHWA planning and research funds to assure that the work is being managed and performed satisfactorily and that time schedules are being met.

23 CFR 450.104 defines a *Unified Planning Work Program* (UPWP) as a statement of work identifying the planning priorities and activities to be carried out within a metropolitan planning area. At a minimum, a UPWP includes a description of the planning work and resulting products, who will perform the work, time frames for completing the work, the cost of the work, and the source(s) of funds.

4.6.2 Current Status

As mentioned in this report, the HRTPO is the MPO that serves the Hampton Roads metropolitan planning area. An MPO is defined in 23 CFR 450.104 as “the policy board of an organization created and designated to carry out the metropolitan transportation planning process.” The HRTPO functions within a metropolitan planning area boundary (MPA) agreed to by the MPO and the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Pursuant to 23 CFR 420.115(a) and 23 CFR 450.308(b), the HRTPO and/or HRPDC (subrecipients) must obtain approval and authorization to proceed prior to beginning work on activities to be undertaken with FHWA PL and SPR Program funds and 49 USC Chapter 53 funds. The approval and authorization are based on the final work programs. Additionally, the UPWP, pursuant to 23 CFR 450.308, “shall identify work proposed for the next 1- or 2-year period by major activity and task (including activities that address the planning factors in § 450.306(b)), in sufficient detail to indicate who (e.g., MPO, State, public transportation operator, local government, or consultant) will perform the work, the schedule for completing the work, the resulting products, the proposed funding by activity/task, and a summary of the total amounts and sources of Federal and matching funds.”

HRTPO's fiscal year is July 1 of one calendar year to June 30 of the following calendar year. The HRTPO's UPWP covers one fiscal year worth of its transportation planning activities and the HRTPO's planning priorities are relatively consistent from year to year. For the FY 2025 UPWP, multimodal transportation was added, and active transportation was removed. At the site visit, HRTPO stated their UPWP is continuously monitored, and often amended during the fiscal year.

The HRTPO's FY 2025 UPWP first draft document made available for public comment in April 2024 did not include the funding amounts for most of the work tasks. Later versions, including the final draft, included the financial information and were available for public comment. At the site visit, HRTPO explained that the public has multiple opportunities to comment on the program (the draft, the final draft, when presented to TTAC, and prior to adoption by the Board) and the final draft of the UPWP includes the budget for each work task.

The UPWP approval or amendments approved by FHWA and/or FTA represent the federal government's authorization to expend federal funds to begin activities contained in the UPWP. UPWPs are contractual obligation between HRTPO, State, local and federal transportation planning partners, and the public. At any time during the timeframe of the UPWP, the document can be and should be amended to reflect known changes in the planning work to be performed by any of the agencies that are tasked to carrying out work items. Amendments to the UPWP are required to be submitted to FHWA and/or FTA for review and approval. This is consistent with Article 1 of *"AN AGREEMENT FOR THE UTILIZATION OF FEDERAL AND STATE FUNDS TO SUPPORT METROPOLITAN PLANNING IN THE HAMPTON ROADS AREA."* The agreement, which governs the administration and use of federal funds, was fully executed on June 29, 2022, between the VDOT and the HRPDC and provides that:

"Any significant modifications or additions to planning activities outlined in the UPWP during the fiscal year (FY) shall trigger the submission of a UPWP amendment by the MPO to the DEPARTMENT (VDOT). The DEPARTMENT will submit the UPWP amendment to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) for review and approval. No reimbursements shall be made to the MPO for work activities conducted prior to FHWA's written approval of the UPWP or amendment."

Many sections of the UPWP remain minimally changed from year to year. This is true even during a UPWP cycle where a planning product is scheduled for a full update, not just "continuous improvement."

HRTPO's current efforts to merge and update the HRTPO and HRPDC PPPs (including Title VI Plan) were not included as an end product in either the MPO's FY 2024 and/or FY 2025 UPWP documents. Rather it was listed as "Update public participation documents, such as the Public Participation Plan, as needed," which does not directly communicate a timeline for work toward this deliverable or demonstrate a product. At the site visit, HRTPO acknowledged they generally do not amend their UPWP to reflect changes in the planned work program versus the work program that unfolds through the year.

Past activities can be referenced in a past accomplishments/work section. Chapter II, Section 4(f) of FTA Circular 8100.1D states incomplete Federally-funded planning work elements or activities from the prior UPWP should clearly be identified in the current UPWP, as well as carryover funds, regardless of source

of the carryover funds. The “Transit Extensions Studies” have been listed in each UPWP over the last 10 years with minimal clarity on the work completed from year to year of being programmed on the UPWP. Additional work items in HRTPO’s UPWPs are carried over or have delayed starts, but the delayed project starts are not referenced in the succeeding UPWP. HRTPO does not update the succeeding UPWP to account for or reference project delays, or update planning schedules for work elements and related products that were included in prior years’ UPWPs. This creates an inaccurate narrative of the planning initiative’s development timeline, and makes for a lack of clarity of when funds were expended on project activities.

HRTPO’s currently includes some projects on both its TIP and UPWP. Generally, capital projects are listed on a TIP and planning projects are listed on a UPWP, however these projects use flexed funds that can eligibly be used for either capital or planning funds. However, when asked about discrepancies between projects and funding included on the two documents, HRTPO identified their TIP was more accurate for these projects’ funding amounts.

The Virginia Department of Transportation (following an early year 2000 consultation with the FHWA), established a Rural/Non-metropolitan Transportation Planning Program for the benefit of Planning District Commissions (PDCs) in Virginia. PDCs are political subdivisions of the Commonwealth of Virginia and are established via State Code and the Rural SPR program is funded with federal SPR funds with a local match. The Virginia PDCs are recipients of federal and state funds.

The purpose of the VDOT’s SPR Rural Transportation Program is as follows:

“The program provides rural transportation planning assistance. The assistance program provides pass-through moneys to eligible PDCs to allow them to develop individual planning capabilities, with a focus on the establishment of rural long-range transportation plans. The amount passed through is \$58,000 for each PDC and must be matched with 20 percent local funding. Each PDC submits their scope of work for review and approval to VDOT as well as FHWA prior to being included in this budget.”

The SPR funding that is approved/authorized by FHWA and VDOT for the stated purpose is authorized via FHWA’s approval of the VDOT’s SPR Work Program. The Scope of Work is also approved by FHWA and VDOT and is typically included in the PDC’s approved Work Program.

More specifically, federal funds are approved/authorized by FHWA (and VDOT) for the discretion and use by Virginia PDCs (including the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission (HRPDC)/HRPDC Board) for rural/non-metropolitan transportation planning. This includes the development of a Rural Long Range Transportation Plan. The HRPDC and VDOT executed an agreement on June 30, 2022, for the use of Federal SPR funds.

The Federal Review team reviewed the most recent Nonmetropolitan/Rural Long-Range Transportation Plan (Hampton Roads 2045 Rural Long Range Transportation Plan - City of Franklin and Southampton County) and we could not find any information to confirm or support that this is a product from the HRPDC/HRPDC Board – the authorized recipient of federal SPR Rural Transportation Program funds. For example,

- The cover page of the Hampton Roads 2045 Rural Long Range Transportation Plan lists the HRTPO and not the HRPDC.
- The inside cover page lists the HRTPO Board members and not the HRPDC Board members.
- The Acknowledgement and Disclaimers section states:

“... The contents of this report reflect the views of the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization (HRTPO). The HRTPO is responsible for the facts and the accuracy of the data presented herein. The contents do not necessarily reflect the official views or policies of the FHWA, VDOT, or Hampton Roads Planning District Commission...”

As an observation and note, the BYLAWS of the HRTPO define the Unified Planning Work Program as:

“A statement of work identifying the planning priorities and activities to be carried out within the metropolitan planning area. A UPWP includes a description of the planning work and resulting products, and specifies who will perform the work, time frames for completing the work, and the source(s) of funds.”

We have advised the HRTPO and/ or HRPDC staff in the past that Federal funds authorized for non-metropolitan or rural activities can be included in the metropolitan work program as an information only item.

4.6.3 Findings

Commendations: None

Corrective Action: None

Recommendations:

- As indicated in this report, during the desk audit and certification review, the Federal team was made aware that in response to VDOT Title VI Findings, the HRPDC and HRTPO jointly updated and merged the Participation Plan/Public Engagement Plan and developed a joint Title VI and LEP Plan. It's not clear to the FHWA if these core activities and the resulting end products were contained in the Work Programs approved by the HRPDC, HRTPO, and subsequently by the State, and the FHWA and FTA. Based on the FHWA's assessment, we are recommending that the FHWA Virginia Division coordinate with VDOT on this matter through a review, to determine if the activities to support the development of the end products by HRTPO and HRPDC were authorized through the approval of the UPWP or any amendment to the UPWP or Scope of Work. The review should also assess the sources of funds used towards the development of the end products (joint Public Engagement Plan and the Title VI and LEP Plan).



- HRTPO should endeavor to clearly identify planning activities and associated funds carried over from prior UPWPs as such, to reduce the impression that the project and its related cost is duplicative from prior years' efforts. Carried over project descriptions should document why the project was carried over, and how it has changed over time (related progress of the effort, remaining work tasks, and an updated project schedule).
- FHWA recommends that the FHWA Virginia Division coordinate with VDOT to conduct a program review of VDOT's SPR Rural/Nonmetropolitan Program (that supports Virginia PDCs and rural transportation planning) to determine if Federal SPR funds that have been authorized by FHWA are being made available to the Virginia PDCs – including the HRPDC/HRPDC Board for their use and discretion to support nonmetropolitan transportation planning activities - including the adoption of a Nonmetropolitan/Rural Long-Range Transportation Plan. The review should consider the executed Master Agreements between the VDOT and PDCs.

4.7 Metropolitan Transportation Plan

4.7.1 Regulatory Basis

23 U.S.C. 134(c), (h) & (i) and 23 CFR 450.324 set forth requirements for the development and content of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). Among the requirements are that the MTP address at least a 20-year planning horizon and that it includes both long- and short-range strategies that lead to the development of an integrated and multi-modal system to facilitate the safe and efficient movement of people and goods in addressing current and future transportation demand.

The MTP is required to provide a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive multimodal transportation planning process. The plan needs to consider all applicable issues related to the transportation systems development, land use, employment, economic development, natural environment, and housing and community development.

23 CFR 450.324(c) requires the MPO to review and update the MTP at least every four years in air quality nonattainment and maintenance areas and at least every five years in attainment areas to reflect current and forecasted transportation, population, land use, employment, congestion, and economic conditions and trends.

Under 23 CFR 450.324(f), the MTP is required, at a minimum, to consider the following:

- Projected transportation demand
- Existing and proposed transportation facilities
- Operational and management strategies
- Congestion management process
- Capital investment and strategies to preserve transportation infrastructure and provide for multimodal capacity
- Design concept and design scope descriptions of proposed transportation facilities
- Potential environmental mitigation activities
- Pedestrian walkway and bicycle transportation facilities
- Transportation and transit enhancements
- A financial plan

4.7.2 Current Status

HRTPO is in a 1997 8-hour ozone NAAQS orphan maintenance area and as such, they follow a five-year Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) update cycle. HRTPO staff adopted their 2045 LRTP on June 17, 2021, to serve as their MTP. The 2050 LRTP is scheduled to be adopted in June 2026. HRTPO's 2050 LRTP webpage is active on their website and is actively soliciting proposed transportation investments/projects. The 2050 plan framework was developed from 2021 to 2022; the 2050 forecast, vision, and goals from 2022 to 2023; and transportation needs from 2023 to 2024. HRTPO is scheduled to evaluate and prioritize

potential projects/investments, and then from 2025 to 2026 define the plan's fiscal constraint. HRTPO performed public outreach regarding scenario planning for the 2050 LRTP update in July and August 2023.

The current 2045 LRTP update is a compendium of reports, which combined represent an expanded analysis of long-range needs and projects in the region. Completed reports include: 2045 Socioeconomic Forecast, Regional Needs, and Title VI Candidate Project Evaluation. Additional supporting material regarding the 2045 LRTP update includes documentation on the development of the Regional Scenario Planning Framework and updates to the HRTPO Project Prioritization Tool. The 2045 LRTP goals are economic vitality; safety and security; connectivity and accessibility; sustainability – the environment, community, and equity; and efficiency, resiliency, and innovation.

The development of the 2045 LRTP update included a re-evaluation of recommended enhancements to HRTPO's Project Prioritization Tool and related scoring weights. Additional scoring factors were added to a project's utility and its economic vitality rating, including items that addressed or strengthened achievement toward State and Federal requirements. The recommendations included incorporating additional measures for congestion, infrastructure condition, system continuity and connectivity, resiliency/flooding vulnerability, safety and security, land use compatibility, and modal enhancement. There were recommendations for projects of all modes of transportation. Most noteworthy is that HRTPO used this process to strengthen their measures for transit and intermodal freight. The project prioritization tool scores transportation investments higher if their project utility, economic vitality, and project viability, remain high in each scenario.

HRTPO is developing a prioritization tool focused on transit connectivity. A goal for this tool is to determine the highest priority locations for future transit stop placement within the region. Additional factors are included, such as eligibility for federal, state, and regional funds.

In developing the 2050 LRTP update, HRTPO plans to implement improved virtual public involvement practices, including a virtual open house space. Visitors of the website can submit projects electronically through the MPO's web-based Candidate Project Portal, or by e-mail, mail, fax, and phone. The website indicates updates will be posted as the developments are finalized along the planning process, including anticipated project story maps. HRTPO's GIS-based Candidate Project Portal gives any member of the public the opportunity to digitally draw their project ideas onto the map. The Portal includes a how-to tutorial to help new users learn how to navigate it and input submissions. The Portal is an innovative tool that both enables users to submit their project ideas and see how they spatially relate to others. It also saves HRTPO staff time, in automatically digitizing and spatially symbolizing the data for use in planning analysis.

HRTPO will continue to incorporate scenario planning in their 2050 LRTP update. The objective of the exploratory scenario planning and analysis is to position HRTPO to draft future resilient policy and investment choices, and to ultimately be prepared for future regional growth scenarios regardless of disruptive trends. The three scenarios planned for in the 2045 LRTP are greater waterfront growth, greater urban growth, and greater suburban growth. A project's score is comprised of three components, each containing several factors: project utility, economic vitality, and project vitality.

HRTPO's scenario planning efforts have been recognized as state and national best practices in transportation planning. This includes recognition from the American Planning Association (APA) Virginia Chapter, "Exploratory Planning for Uncertain Times" (July 2019); Association of Metropolitan Planning Organization (AMPO), "Scenario Planning Best Practices" (October 2019); Transportation Research Board (TRB), "Project Prioritization" (Jan 2022); participation in the VDOT Land Use Forum (May 2024); and reference in the National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP), "Guidance for Agencies to Incorporate Uncertainty into Long-Range Transportation Planning" (due to be completed August 2025). HRTPO's project prioritization process was referenced as best practice in FHWA's Model LRTPs: A Guide for Incorporating Performance-Based Planning.

4.7.3 Findings

Commendations:

- HRTPO's exploration and incorporation of scenario planning into their transportation planning process and project prioritization tool aims to ensure selected transportation investments provide the highest regional benefit across a multitude of different future regional growth patterns.
- HRTPO's Candidate Project Portal allows members of the public to manually add their requested project for investment consideration on a web-based mapping platform. This portal, along with general availability to provide feedback to HRTPO through other mediums, is opened throughout the development of the LRTP (years), not just during the federally required public comment period. This allows the public to provide input that corresponds to current transportation use and infrastructure conditions, not just at a point in time.

Corrective Action: None

Recommendations: None

4.8 Transportation Improvement Program

4.8.1 Regulatory Basis

23 U.S.C. 134(c),(h) & (j) set forth requirements for the MPO to cooperatively develop a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Under 23 CFR 450.326, the TIP must meet the following requirements:

- Must cover at least a four-year horizon and be updated at least every four years.
- Surface transportation projects funded under Title 23 U.S.C. or Title 49 U.S.C., except as noted in the regulations, are required to be included in the TIP.
- List project description, cost, funding source, and identification of the agency responsible for carrying out each project.
- Projects need to be consistent with the adopted MTP.
- Must be fiscally constrained.
- The MPO must provide all interested parties with a reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposed TIP.

4.8.2 Current Status

HRTPO's FY 2021 and FY 2022 UPWP reference in 2015, HRTPO spearheaded the development of guidelines for understanding, developing, and synchronizing the format of TIPs in Virginia on behalf of the Virginia Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (VAMPO), in response to a joint FHWA-FTA Federal Finding. The end product was the "Virginia TIP Preparation Guidance," which is the basis that HRTPO, and the VA MPOs use to develop their TIP updates.

The HRTPO FY2024-2027 TIP was approved by the HRTPO Policy Board on May 18, 2023. The TIP document was prepared in cooperation with VDOT, VDRPT, and the localities within the MPO metropolitan planning area (MPA). The TIP provides available programming information for Hampton Roads transportation projects in a clear and transparent format. Additionally included in the TIP is the "Accomplishments Report" that highlights the MPO's accomplishments since their last self-certification. The (LRTP) project scoring factors and related weights are provided for each of the transportation project types.

The development process of the HRTPO's TIP begins with the approval of the MPO's Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)/Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), then VDOT submits a project list to the MPO, HRTPO reviews the draft TIP project list, prepares the draft TIP document, and presents it for Board approval. After approved by HRTPO's Board, it is sent to VDOT for incorporation in the VA STIP. The TIP development section does not discuss the role of HRTPO, VDRPT, HRT, WATA, Suffolk Transit, in the development of the transit project list that is included as the transit TIP section of HRTPO's TIP.

Each highway and bridge project on the TIP includes information about its description, map of the project, street (route), start and end segments, length, jurisdiction, system, scope, oversight, administrative agency, regionally significant status to be included in the Air Quality Conformity Determination evaluation, expected use of CMAQ or RSTP funds (and if so, its scheduled obligations), schedule, costs and expenditures, and allocation. Transit projects are afforded these data points on the TIP only if expected to be funded by CMAQ or RSTP funds.

HRTPO provides an overview of the project prioritization selection process for the TIP – which is derived from the project prioritization selection process implemented for the MTP. HRTPO has utilized project selection processes for their CMAQ/RSTP, and TA Set-Aside suballocation programs since at least 2021. The HRTPO Board selects the projects that will be awarded CMAQ, RSTP, Carbon Reduction Program (CRP), and TA Set-Aside suballocated funds. HRTPO establishes weighting factors and creates a respective table of these factors for each type of transportation project, including transit. The score from these factors creates a “project utility” score for each proposed project.

HRTPO also outlines the various State and FHWA funding prioritization mechanisms that are to be followed: SMART SCALE (formerly Virginia State 2014 House Bill 2) Statewide Prioritization Process, CMAQ/RSTP Project Selection Process, MAP-21 Transportation Alternatives (TA) Set-Aside Project Selection Process, IJIA Carbon Reduction Program strategy.

In 2024, HRTPO updated its TIP website. The update included upgrades to the information posted about the TIP, updated interactive TIP project map, simplified project search tool, and easier user navigation.

HRTPO utilized their social media accounts to solicit public feedback for development of its FY 2024-2027 TIP. This included publishing posts across their website, Facebook, Nextdoor, and LinkedIn pages reporting updates and requesting feedback, as well as a Facebook campaign to educate the public about the TIP. The public comment period was March 23 through April 5, 2023. HRTPO actively monitors and responds to the comments on their social media pages pertaining to transportation planning or construction concerns. HRTPO also replies to comments expressing misunderstandings of the MPO’s role in transportation planning, demonstrating the MPO’s commitment to provide clarity to the public on transportation planning processes. During TIP development, HRTPO put out a Facebook ad campaign that “ran” 11,680 times. The campaign garnered 330 Facebook user clicks, taking users to the HRTPO TIP Education webpage. HRTPO’s TIP-related posting on Nextdoor reached over 14,000 people. Cumulatively, the HRTPO TIP Education webpage for the FY 2024-2027 TIP received over 8,000 page visits.

HRTPO is diligent on updating the projects on their TIP to be accurate at all times. This includes updating the costs and expenditures, allocation amounts, and scheduled obligations tables. When discrepancies are found between the funding programmed for projects on the UPWP and ALOP compared to the TIP, HRTPO identifies the information on the TIP as the most accurate.

Historically, HRTPO’s exclusively revised their TIP through TIP amendments, which require HRTPO Board and Federal approval. HRTPO found this policy did not add value to its TIP revision process and was overburdensome to organization and its Board. HRTPO updated the TIP revision thresholds to be more aligned with MPOs across Virginia, and now shares the VDRPT TIP amendment threshold limits for transit projects. HRTPO Board is still informed on the revisions made to the HRTPO TIP through administrative modifications.

4.8.3 Findings

Commendations: None



Corrective Action: None

Recommendations:

- The Federal Review Team recommends that HRTPO ensure TIP project descriptions contain consistent level of detail, across all project types, in fulfillment of 23 CFR 450.326(g).

4.9 List of Obligated Projects

4.9.1 Regulatory Basis

23 U.S.C. 134(j)(7) and 23 CFR 450.334 requires that the State, the MPO, and public transportation operators cooperatively develop a listing of projects for which Federal funds under 23 U.S.C. or 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53 have been obligated in the previous year. The listing must include all federally funded projects authorized or revised to increase obligations in the preceding program year and, at a minimum, the following for each project:

- The amount of funds requested in the TIP
- Federal funding obligated during the preceding year
- Federal funding remaining and available for subsequent years
- Sufficient description to identify the project
- Identification of the agencies responsible for carrying out the project

4.9.2 Current Status

HRTPO's FY 2023 Annual List of Obligated Projects (ALOP), referred to locally as the Annual Obligation Report (AOR), was drafted in December 2023 and posted to its website on December 28, 2023. For the development of transit projects in the ALOP, HRTPO's AOR mentioned only coordination with VDRPT, and not other transit providers within the MPA – HRT, WATA, or Suffolk Transit. In the site visit, HRTPO clarified that its AOR is developed cooperatively with the State and public transportation operators.

HRTPO received the transit AOR on November 21, 2023, and the highway and bridge obligation report from VDOT on December 1, 2023. This affords the MPO approximately a month to review, coordinate, approve, and post the ALOP on their website.

In the FY 2023 AOR, HRTPO staff documents several issues relating to their AOR. HRTPO notes there were initially only two transit projects included in the AOR transit project list when this list should have included more projects, as indicated in HRTPO's transit TIP. HRTPO found additional discrepancies with the funding amounts and projects they listed in the AOR compared to their TIP: either the projects did not have planned obligations in the past fiscal year, or the obligated funding amounts listed in the AOR were different than the obligated funding amounts programmed on the TIP. HRTPO stated during the site visit that the ALOP is not later updated to resolve the discrepancies they identify in their initial review of the AOR received by VDRPT and VDOT. To the question of having an AOR with inaccurate information, HRTPO replied with the sentiment that the obligated funding in the TIP is accurate.

The transit section of HRTPO's 2023 AOR does not contain all required elements outlined in 23 CFR 450.334, including the total estimated project cost and amount of funds programmed and remaining on the TIP. As the transit section project list in HRTPO's ALOP is VDRPT's AOR submission, it appears it is the format of VDRPT's AOR that does not include the TIP-related AOR required elements. HRTPO does not provide supplemental information to include the TIP-related required elements in the MPO's AOR.



4.9.3 Findings

Commendations: None

Corrective Action: None

Recommendations:

- The Federal Team Recommends that HRTPO should coordinate with VDOT, VDRPT, HRT, WATA, and Suffolk Transit to identify the role and responsibility of each agency in the development of the AOR to ensure all required elements outlined in 23 CFR 450.334 are included in their AOR documents. Additionally, the respective parties should discuss solutions to HRTPO's self-identified issues relating to the AOR (compared to the TIP document).

4.10 Transit Planning

4.10.1 Regulatory Basis

49 U.S.C. 5303 and 23 U.S.C. 134 require the transportation planning process in metropolitan areas to consider all modes of travel in the development of their plans and programs. Federal regulations cited in 23 CFR 450.314 state that the MPO in cooperation with the State and operators of publicly owned transit services shall be responsible for carrying out the transportation planning process.

4.10.2 Current Status

Public transportation in the Hampton Roads region is primarily provided by three agencies – Hampton Roads Transit (HRT), Williamsburg Area Transit Authority (WATA), and Suffolk Transit.

The two primary groups established to facilitate transit planning through HRTPO are the Regional Transit Advisory Panel (RTAP) and the Regional Transit Cooperation Working Group (RTCWG). These groups were referenced in Section 4.2. RTCWG was established by HRTPO in 2018 as a platform for HRT, WATA, and Suffolk Transit to share their experiences and observations as transit service providers to other regional agencies and HRTPO.

RTAP is a 50+ member advisory panel established by the Virginia General Assembly in 2020 “to provide ongoing advice to the regional planning process.” Membership includes individuals representing major businesses, major employers, shopping destinations, tourist destinations, higher education institutions, military installations, healthcare facilities, real estate, air travel, and non-governmental organizations. Early in the establishment of RTAP, members formed nine workgroups focused on key recommendation areas to improve regional transit in Hampton Roads: tourism, transit-oriented development (TOD), universities, affordable housing, bus stop amenities, military and transit, major employment centers, and technology. RTAP is funded through the State-sponsored Hampton Roads Regional Transit Fund (HRRTF), whose funds are dedicated to improving transit infrastructure throughout the region. This has translated to development of the 757 Express network, a regional backbone network consisting of 13 bus routes, with consistent 15-minute headways and standardized bus stop amenities. The HRRTF also funds HRTPO’s staff support to RTAP and RTCWG, known as “Task 15 – HRRTF Administration and Support.”

Transit planning efforts led by HRTPO in the past four years, in addition to RTAP-derived initiatives, include bus stop enhancements and passenger rail studies. HRTPO’s next “tool” for their “Multimodal Connectivity Toolbox (MCT)” includes one which assists in determining the highest priority locations (10-20) for additional bus stop infrastructure throughout the region, that serve the largest population concentrations and provide access to the largest number of essential services. In February 2024, HRTPO solicited public comment via Nextdoor on bus stop locations to improve transit connectivity in the region. The goal is to have bus stop locations connecting to each essential service agency in the region. They outlined 10 essential service agencies in the region and asked for public feedback to verify they captured all essential service agencies and rank the services that seem the most essential.

HRTPO leads and participates in many transit planning efforts within the region. In 2023, they completed a Bus Stop Audit Pilot for the 757 Express network, evaluating the walkability, pedestrian accessibility, safety, connectivity, and transit stop capital at stop locations across various land use types in the 757 Express network. HRTPO conducted three recent passenger rail studies: one examines the cost to ride Amtrak in Virginia versus other states (2021), another the demographic profiles of Hampton Roads Amtrak passengers (2021), and the third improving Hampton Roads passenger rail service (2024). In FY 2025, HRTPO is scheduled to conduct a location alternatives analysis for the Suffolk Rail Station. Additionally, the MPO has used its social media platforms to promote public engagement efforts led by transit service providers in the Hampton Roads region.

At the site visit, HRTPO relayed that although there has not been a formal RTAP meeting since August 2023, HRTPO keeps monthly correspondence with RTAP members. Within the VA House of Delegates, a Hampton Roads caucus meets weekly, and RTAP members regularly attend these caucuses to advocate for State transit investment. Though created in compliance with new legislation, HRTPO and HRT, WATA, and Suffolk Transit feel the members and initiatives from RTAP have significantly strengthened the regional interest in and commitment to the importance of a robust transit network. Accomplishments that have stemmed from RTAP include efforts to advance the 757 Express Regional Backbone Network, drafting the recommendations for transit improvements in the region, and the implementation of the HRT-operated circulator service at the Naval Station in Norfolk.

During the site visit, HRT, WATA, Suffolk Transit expressed their appreciation of the various groups branching from HRTPO dedicated to advancing transit in the region. RTCWG serves as the primary vessel of the three urban fixed-route transit providers. Prior to the establishment of RTCWG, there lacked a regular coordination structure in the region that facilitated discussion among the three urban fixed-route transit agencies on current and emerging issues of transit in the region. The transit agencies refer to HRTPO as a “partner” to transit, and that transit initiatives in the region were better than last year. Recent discussion includes review of proposed changes to Virginia’s scoring and ranking of grant applications, bus driver recruitment, and transit vehicle procurement challenges. Current RTCWG efforts include examining the transit service among the three agencies to provide greater transit access to mobility to riders in the region, including a focus on creating a more seamless transfer experience for passengers who patronize multiple transit providers’ services. This entails coordinating the transit agencies’ service districts, route schedules, examining the opportunity for shorter layovers were service overlaps, and examining fare payment systems.

Profiles of each transit provider are provided below.

HRT

HRT serves a 432 square-mile area within the Hampton Roads region. HRT service area is divided by the James River. The service area south of the river consists of Chesapeake, Norfolk, Portsmouth, and Virginia Beach, commonly referred to as the Southside. HRT’s service area north of the James River includes the cities of Hampton and Newport News which, together with neighboring communities, are often referred to as the Peninsula or Northside. HRT operates 64 local fixed-route bus lines and express bus service and a 7.4-mile light rail system called “The Tide” operating in the City of Norfolk. HRT additionally provides

passenger ferry as the Elizabeth River Ferry. Paratransit service for persons with disabilities, is operated by a third-party contractor, and HRT operates a successful regional Transportation Demand Management services program (funded through RSTP) “TRAFFIX” that comprises of including vanpools, carpools, and telework options. HRT is represented on HTPPO’s Board, Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC), Transportation Technical Advisory Committee (TTAC), and the LRTP Subcommittee. HRTPO hosts a TRAFFIX subcommittee to advise the TTAC in decision-making.

Notable transit planning initiatives include the Peninsula Multi-Modal Development Corridor Study (PMDCS), and West Corridor Alternatives Analysis (WCAA).

WATA

WATA provides fixed route and paratransit bus service in Williamsburg, James City County, and York County. WATA now operates 13 fixed-route bus lines, and the Yorktown Trolley. Although WATA’s service is operating at pre COVID-19 pandemic levels due to the bus operator shortages, WATA’s service has continued to increase in the last several years. For most of the routes, the service operates hourly Monday through Saturday from 6:00 am through 9:00 pm. Sunday service operates from 8:00 through 6:00 pm.

WATA is represented on the Board, TAC, TTAC, and the LRTP Subcommittee. In FY 2025, HRTPO is scheduled to perform transit planning study to explore the operational feasibility and financial impact of replacing some of WATA’s fixed bus routes with micro-transit service.

Suffolk Transit

Suffolk Transit is operated by the City of Suffolk and offers six fixed-route bus lines. Suffolk Transit expanded its operational hours on September 1, 2023, for five of the six fixed routes. Monday through Friday service operates from 6:30 am through 8:30 pm. Saturday service operates from 7:30 am through 4:30 am. No service is provided on Sunday. Suffolk Transit is represented as the “City of Suffolk” on the Board, TAC, TTAC, and the LRTP Subcommittee.

4.10.3 Findings

Commendations: None

Corrective Action: None

Recommendations: None

4.11 Freight Planning

4.11.1 Regulatory Basis

The MAP-21 established in 23 U.S.C. 167 a policy to improve the condition and performance of the national freight network and achieve goals related to economic competitiveness and efficiency; congestion; productivity; safety, security, and resilience of freight movement; infrastructure condition; use of advanced technology; performance, innovation, competition, and accountability, while reducing environmental impacts.

In addition, 23 U.S.C. 134 and 23 CFR 450.306 specifically identify the need to address freight movement as part of the metropolitan transportation planning process.

4.11.2 Current Status

The Hampton Roads region is home to the Port of Virginia's deep water marine terminals, as well as a host of facilities that include shipping and warehouse distribution facilities and facilities important to national security. Due to the economic magnitude of freight transportation in the region, HRTPO maintains a Freight Transportation Advisory Committee (FTAC) to advocate on behalf of freight issues that are important statewide and to the region.

The Federal team continues to be impressed with the engagement and activity level of members of the Hampton Roads FTAC. It currently consists of nine members representing private industries, supported by staff of HRTPO and the Virginia Port Authority. The FTAC has led and advised on many activities and studies associated with freight movement and bottlenecks, trends and forecasts, updates to the MTP, and recent comments to the USDOT Federal Register regarding the National Multimodal Freight Network, communicating Strategic Highway Network (STRAHNET) additions in the Hampton Roads region, and being recognized and sought out for their contributions in the area of freight resiliency and climate change.

The Hampton Roads Regional Freight Facilities Interactive Map is a valuable resource and represents HRTPO efforts to continually promote and advance visually interactive tools for public information. As the Commonwealth of Virginia finalizes standing up the State Freight Transportation Advisory Committee, the Federal Review Team looks forward to significant coordination with the Hampton Roads FTAC to advocate and advance the regional and statewide interests and investments in freight related infrastructure.

4.11.3 Findings

Commendations:

- The Federal Review Team acknowledges the tremendous value and significant contributions of HRTPO staff to respond to and assist with freight related activities of regional, state, and national significance.

Corrective Action: None

Recommendations: None

5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The FHWA and FTA review found that the metropolitan transportation planning process conducted in the Virginia Beach – Norfolk, VA TMA meets Federal planning requirements as follows.

5.1 Commendations

The following are noteworthy practices that HRTPO is doing well in the transportation planning process:

1. HRTPO is a national example in coordination and engagement with the U.S. military branches located within their MPA and recognizing and valuing the U.S. military's distinct transportation networks within the region. Prompted by road congestion and delay concerns expressed by several military representatives, HRTPO studied military transportation needs within the region. Following the study, transportation investments serving military installations on, connecting, or adjacent to the STRAHNET are now ranked higher in HRTPO's project prioritization tool for long range transportation planning. HRTPO is sought out externally to share their best practices for coordination and partnership efforts among the military community and for incorporating military planning in regional transportation investment project prioritization.
2. HRTPO's exploration and incorporation of resiliency planning into their transportation planning process and as a factor within the MPO's project prioritization tool aims to create a roadway and bridge network that will remain operational for all road users through major weather events. HRTPO receives recognition in federal, state, and national planning best practice citations. Advancements in HRTPO's public real-time navigation data in climate-event related evacuations is particularly noteworthy. HRTPO also regularly collaborates with Federal, local, and private agencies to further the field and access of equitable resiliency planning.
3. HRTPO staff are continuously dedicated in their efforts to evolve external communication and public outreach efforts and more effectively increase public reach. Their online and community-event-based engagement efforts over the past four years have proven particularly exemplary in their ability to expand the organizations reach.
4. HRTPO's exploration and incorporation of scenario planning into their transportation planning process and project prioritization tool aims to ensure selected transportation investments provide the highest regional benefit across a multitude of different future regional growth patterns.
5. HRTPO's Candidate Project Portal allows members of the public to manually add their requested project for investment consideration on a web-based mapping platform. This portal, along with general availability to provide feedback to HRTPO through other mediums, is opened throughout the development of the LRTP (years), not just during the federally required public comment period. This allows the public to provide input that corresponds to current transportation use and infrastructure conditions, not just at a point in time.
6. The Federal Review Team acknowledges the tremendous value and significant contributions of HRTPO staff to respond to and assist with freight related activities of regional, state, and national significance.

5.2 Corrective Action

1. By the end of Fiscal Year 2026, the HRTPO is required to update the Public Participation Plan and make it current to demonstrate and support the process for “periodically reviewing the effectiveness of the procedures and strategies contained in the participation plan to ensure a full and open participation process (23 CFR 450.316(a)(1)(x). The update should be reflected in the next UPWP and approved within the UPWP’s FY.

5.3 Recommendations

The following are recommendations that would improve the transportation planning process:

1. The Federal Review Team recommends that the HRTPO evaluate their process for filling available seats on the CAC. As part of this effort, it is recommended that the HRTPO evaluate if they could increase efforts to recruit members by working with community-based organizations. The process for filling available seats on the CAC should address how new members are nominated to be added to the CAC and evaluate/establish a mechanism for communicating CAC’s role within HRTPO structure.
2. The Federal Review Team recommends that the HRTPO staff and the parties to their signed agreement documents review the documents on a regular basis to ensure that a sufficient level of detail is included that outlines the roles and responsibilities of each agency in the development of the related transportation planning document or process as outlined in 23 CFR 450.314(a).
3. In consideration of 23 CFR 450.312(j), the Federal team requests that the State and MPO provide a clear description (in sufficient detail to assist with delineating areas of metropolitan and statewide and nonmetropolitan planning and programming) of what population areas within PDC-23 fall within the HRTPO’s metropolitan planning area boundary and what population areas fall outside of the HRTPO’s metropolitan planning area boundary or in the statewide and nonmetropolitan area. The statewide and nonmetropolitan planning and programming process is governed by 23 USC 135.
4. HRTPO should document their process to ensure Federally-funded transit investments identified by HRT, WATA, and Suffolk Transit, meet HRTPO’s weighted regional transit TAM and PTASP safety targets, separate from the transit agencies’ respective targets.
5. The Federal Team recommends that the HRTPO and HRPDC joint Public Engagement Plan, developed in response to a VDOT Title VI finding covering the HRPDC; be consistent with the HRTPO 3-C Agreement, HRTPO bylaws, and federal regulations that require the MPO to use, develop, and approve/adopt a Participation Plan and send the adopted Participation Plan to FHWA and FTA. The document should draw a clear distinction between each agency’s roles in the identification of the approval of activities, programs, budgets, revenue sources, products, public participation initiatives, and oversight responsibilities involving HRTPO’s public involvement activities that support the metropolitan transportation planning process.

6. The Federal Review Team recommends that HRTPO include in its vital documents a language insert that advises people with limited English proficiency how to obtain language assistance services (Appendix H).
7. As indicated in this report, during the desk audit and certification review, the Federal team was made aware that in response to VDOT Title VI Findings, the HRPDC and HRTPO jointly updated and merged the Participation Plan/Public Engagement Plan and developed a joint Title VI and LEP Plan. It's not clear to the FHWA if these core activities and the resulting end products were contained in the Work Programs approved by the HRPDC, HRTPO, and subsequently by the State, and the FHWA and FTA. Based on the FHWA's assessment, we are recommending that the FHWA Virginia Division coordinate with VDOT on this matter through a review, to determine if the activities to support the development of the end products by HRTPO and HRPDC were authorized through the approval of the UPWP or any amendment to the UPWP or Scope of Work. The review should also assess the sources of funds used towards the development of the end products (joint Public Engagement Plan and the Title VI and LEP Plan).
8. HRTPO should endeavor to clearly identify planning activities and associated funds carried over from prior UPWPs as such, to reduce the impression that the project and its related cost is duplicative from prior years' efforts. Carried over project descriptions should document why the project was carried over, and how it has changed over time (related progress of the effort, remaining work tasks, and an updated project schedule).
9. FHWA recommends that the FHWA Virginia Division coordinate with VDOT to conduct a program review of VDOT's SPR Rural/Nonmetropolitan Program (that supports Virginia PDCs and rural transportation planning) to determine if Federal SPR funds that have been authorized by FHWA are being made available to the Virginia PDCs – including the HRPDC/HRPDC Board for their use and discretion to support nonmetropolitan transportation planning activities - including the adoption of a nonmetropolitan/rural long-range transportation plan. The review should consider the executed Master Agreements between the VDOT and PDCs.
10. The Federal Review Team recommends that HRTPO ensure TIP project descriptions contain consistent level of detail, across all project types, in fulfillment of 23 CFR 450.326(g).
11. The Federal Team Recommends that HRTPO should coordinate with VDOT, VDRPT, HRT, WATA, and Suffolk Transit to identify the role and responsibility of each agency in the development of the AOR to ensure all required elements outlined in 23 CFR 450.334 are included in their AOR documents. Additionally, the respective parties should discuss solutions to HRTPO's self-identified issues relating to the AOR (compared to the TIP document).

5.4 Training/Technical Assistance

The following training and technical assistance is recommended to assist the MPO with improvements to the transportation planning process:

1. Tools or templates used to conduct compliance reviews of HRPDC and HRTPO programs areas and subrecipients.

APPENDIX A – PAST FINDINGS

The 2020 Certification Review Recommendation findings and their disposition are listed below.

Review Area	2020 Finding Type	Finding Description	Disposition
Metropolitan Transportation Plan 23 U.S.C. 134(c),(h)&(i) 23 CFR 450.324	Recommendation	The title “Regional Priority Projects” has been used in the L RTP to refer to those projects funded in-full or in-part with moneys from the regional Hampton Roads Transportation Fund (HRTF). Since transit projects are not eligible for funding with HRTAC funds, this nomenclature could have the effect of confusing the public by disproportionality demonstrating planned investments in highway only projects over public transportation and non-motorized transportation alternatives in the region. Hence, drawing potential EJ concerns with respect to the regional planning process. The TPO should reconsider this term moving forward.	In HRTPO’s 2045 L RTP, “Candidate Project Evaluation and Prioritization” report, L RTP Candidate Projects of the Project Prioritization include transit projects.
Transit Planning 49 U.S.C. 5303 23 U.S.C. 134 23 CFR 450.314	Recommendation	In support of the TPO’s 2045 L RTP goals and objectives, consider elevating public transportation planning and investments to better demonstrate a balanced approach to meet regional priorities. Through continued TPO and VDRPT cooperation, along with support from the RTAP, investments like the regionally significant Naval Station Norfolk Transit Corridor and Peninsula BRT projects can provide the needed accessibility and connectivity solutions desired in the Hampton Roads area.	The planning study (PMDCS) for the proposed Peninsula Corridor BRT had an environmental determination issued on March 15, 2023 (capital projects are reimbursable). The Tide Extension to Naval Station Norfolk Phase I (Military Circle) (NSNTES) has been on pause since August 2023. HRT is pursuing a Chesapeake High-Capacity Transit Feasibility Study.
Transportation Improvement Program 23 U.S.C. 134(c)(h)& (j) 23 CFR 450.326	Recommendation	For the next TIP update, the financial plan in the TIP should show the summary costs (Table 2) of implementing proposed public transportation system improvements, for each fiscal year (similar to highway projects).	The FY 2024-2027 HRTPO TIP includes a fiscal constraint summary cost table (Table 2 of the Financial Plan section) of implementing proposed public transportation system improvements for each FY (2024-2027.)



Civil Rights Title VI Civil Rights Act, 23 U.S.C. 324, Age Discrimination Act, Sec. 504 Rehabilitation Act, Americans with Disabilities Act	Recommendation	The Federal Review Team is requesting that the VDOT (Hampton Roads District office) conduct a current Title VI/ Nondiscrimination review [2017 update] of the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission (HRPDC) within six months of the final Federal Certification report and submit the final report to the FHWA Virginia Division and FTA Region III office.	VDOT conducted a Title VI Compliance Review of the HRPDC on February 9, 2021. VDOT issued several corrective findings to the HRPDC. These findings are formally outlined in VDOT correspondence sent to the HRPDC and FHWA on February 14, 2023.. Refer also to PP/Title VI Section.
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APPENDIX B – SITE VISIT PARTICIPANTS

The following individuals were involved in the Hampton Roads area virtual on-site review:

Federal Certification Review Team Participants

- Chelsea Beytas, FTA Region III
- Ivan Rucker, FHWA Virginia Division
- Mack Frost, FHWA- HQ
- Mohamed Dumbuya (v) - FHWA Resource Center

HRTPO

- Robert Crum, Jr. - Executive Director
- Pavithra Parthasarathi - Deputy Executive Director
- Kelli Arledge - Deputy Executive Director, Administration and Operations
- Quan McLaurin - DEI & Title VI/Civil Rights Liaison
- Sam Belfield (v) - Senior Transportation Engineer
- Rob Case - Chief Transportation Engineer
- Rob Cofield - Web and Graphic Designer
- Vikas Chhillar (v) - Transportation Data Analyst II
- Kyle Gilmer (v) - Senior Transportation Planner
- Kathlene Grauberger (v) - Transportation Planner II
- Markay Hall - Information Technology Manager
- Matthew Harrington (v) - Transportation Planner
- Matt Klepeisz - Communications Administrator
- John Mihaly - Principal Transportation Planner
- Keith Nichols - Principal Transportation Engineer
- Jeffrey Raliski - Transportation Analyst III
- Dale Stith -Principal Transportation Planner
- Joe Turner - Communications and Web Manager

HRPDC (only)

- Greg Grootendorst - Deputy Executive Director
- Shernita Bethea - PDC Housing/Human Services Administrator
- Amy Jordan - TRAFFIX
- John Sadler - Emergency Management Administrator

Hampton Roads Transportation Accountability Committee (HRTAC)

- Kevin Page - Executive Director

State DOT

- Queen Crittendon - VDOT - Civil Rights
- Carolyn Tanner - VDOT - Civil Rights
- Chris Voigt - VDOT Environmental Division
- Dinah Oliver - VDOT- Programming Director, Hampton Roads District
- Angela Effah-Amponsah - VDOT - Hampton Roads District
- Keisha Wilkins - VDOT- Hampton Roads District
- Marsha Fiol - VDOT – Division Administrator, Transportation & Mobility Planning (TMPD)
- Nadine Golgosky - VDOT- TMPD
- Tiffany Dubinsky - VDRPT (v)

Public Transportation Operators

- Ray Amoruso - Hampton Roads Transit (HRT) - Chief Planning and Development Officer
- Scott Demharter - HRT - Director of Facilities
- Keisha Branch - HRT - Grants Administration and DBE Officer
- Maria Ptakowski - Transit Manager - City of Suffolk
- Matthew Scalia - Williamsburg Area Transit Authority (WATA) - Executive Director
- Ben Goodwill - WATA - Director of Admin & Planning

CAC meeting attendance, 12-2 PM August 14, 2024:

- Mark Geduldig-Yatrofsky, Chair
- Sharon Anderson - Portsmouth
- Frank Cotrupi - Newport News
- Brad Martin - Virginia Beach
- Anthony Piglowski - Suffolk
- Lauren Roberts Carter - Norfolk - Hampton Roads Chamber
- Terry Danaher

- Angela Effah-Amponsah - VDOT
- Queen Crittendon - VDOT
- Marsha Fiol - VDOT
- Dinah Oliver - VDOT
- Carolyn Tanner - VDOT
- Keisha Wilkins - VDOT
- Robert Crum, Jr. - HRTPO
- Pavithra Parthasarathi - HRTPO
- Rob Case - HRTPO
- Matt Klepeisz - HRTPO
- Quan McLaurin - HRTPO
- John Mihaly - HRTPO

- Keith Nichols - HRTPO
- Dale Stith - HRTPO
- Chelsea Beytas - FTA Region III
- Ivan Rucker - FHWA-VA

Public Meeting Attendance, 6-8 PM, August 14, 2024:

- Amy Kearney (v) - Abbitt Realty
- Hannah Warner (v) - ASPIRE Young Professionals
- Tague Counts - Civic Leadership Institute
- Lianne Childress - Civic Leadership Institute
- Morgan Willett - Elizabeth River Trail
- Janice Taylor - RTAP, Paratransit, League of Women Voters
- Angela Rico (v) - Newport News
- Harvey Waters - Norfolk NAACP
- Alis Crider (v) - Hampton Roads Alliance
- Amy Parkhurst (v) - Hampton Roads Alliance
- Steve Harrison (v) - Hampton Roads Alliance
- Rick Dwyer (v) - Hampton Roads Military and Federal Facilities Alliance
- Todd Nichols (v) - Hampton Roads Military and Federal Facilities Alliance
- Noelle Pinkard - Hampton Roads Transit
- Kevin Page (v) - HRTAC
- Reed Nester (v) - Tidewater Trails Alliance
- Judith Brown (v)
- Mary Lou Burke
- June Cooley (v)
- Travis Davidson (v)
- Nichole Davis (v)
- Michael Evans (v)
- Dainan Gibson (v)
- Adelaide Gilmore (v)
- Nancy Grden (v)
- Gary Hartlieb (v)
- Toi Hunter (v)
- Brenda Johnson (v)
- Rachel Johnson (v)
- Bill Landfair (v)
- Max Lichtenstein (v)
- William M. (v)



- Trevor Michealson (v)
- Doug Smith (v)
- Matt Smith (v)
- Marquita Sykes (v)
- Lindsey Watson (v)
- Steve Zollos (v)
- 3 phone dial-in attendees (v)

- Todd Halacy (v) - VDOT
- Nadine Golgosky- VDOT
- Matthew Harrington (v) - HRTPO
- Chelsea Beytas - FTA Region III
- Ivan Rucker - FHWA-VA

(v) indicates virtual attendance

Federal Certification Review Team Report Contributors

- Laura Keeley, FTA Region III
- Chelsea Beytas, FTA Region III
- Dan Sommerville, FTA Region III
- Ivan Rucker, FHWA Virginia Division
- John Simkins, FHWA Virginia Division
- Mary Walker -Johnson, FHWA Virginia Division
- Mack Frost, FHWA- HQ
- Mohamed Dumbuya, FHWA Resource Center



Hampton Roads TPO 2024 TMA Certification Review

Site Visit- DAY 1
The Regional Building
Wednesday, August 14, 2024

Attendance Sheet

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Kelli Arledge	NRTPD/HRPD	
Joe Turner	HRPD	
Chris Voigt	VDOT	
John Sadler	HRPD	
Amy Jordan	TRAFIX	
SAM BELFIELD	HRTPD	

Afternoon



Hampton Roads TPO 2024 TMA Certification Review

~~Site Visit DAY 2~~ CAC meeting
The Regional Building
~~Thursday, August 15, 2024~~
Wednesday, August 14, 2024
Attendance Sheet 12-2 pm

Name	Agency	E-mail
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MEETING SIGN-IN SHEET

FHWA/FTA Certification Review

August 15, 2024

Name	Affiliation Representing
Keisha Wilkins	VDOT-Hampton Roads
ANGELA EFFAH-AMPONSAH	VDOT- Hampton Roads
Marsha Fiol	VDOT-Transportation & Mobility Planning-co
John Mihaly	HRTPO
Carolyn Tanner	VDOT-Civ.1 Rights
Queen Crittendon	VDOT-Civ.1 Rights
Keith Nichols	HRTPO
Dale Stith	HRTPO
Markon Hall	PDC/TPO
Mack Frost	FHWA
Chelsea Beytas	FTA Region 3
FRANK BOCK	FTA



Hampton Roads TPO 2024 TMA Certification Review

Site Visit- DAY 1

The Regional Building
Wednesday, August 14, 2024

Attendance Sheet

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Kevin Page	HRTPD	
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APPENDIX C – PUBLIC COMMENTS AND FEDERAL PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Federal metropolitan transportation planning statute (and regulation) requires that during the Federal certification (compliance) review of large metropolitan areas that involve the Metropolitan Planning Organization, State DOT, and transit operators, the USDOT Secretary of Transportation must provide for public involvement appropriate to the metropolitan area being reviewed for compliance.

Federal regulations provide the following instructions to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA):

“In conducting a certification review, the FHWA and the FTA shall provide opportunities for public involvement within the metropolitan planning area under review. The FHWA and the FTA shall consider the public input received in arriving at a decision on a certification action.” (23 CFR 450.336(b)(4))

The following provides a summary of our observations and findings in support of the statutory and regulatory requirement. We also received correspondence from the HRTPO and have included the correspondence in this report.

Public input was an important part of this certification review. As part our statutorily required public participation within the metropolitan planning area, the Federal held a meeting with the public (coordinated and facilitated through HRTPO) as well as spoke with the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) as an agenda item on one of their scheduled meetings. Both direct public comments solicited from the TPO’s website, as well as input received during the CAC meeting, and a dedicated public meeting session for eliciting public comments on the transportation planning process in the Virginia Beach – Norfolk, VA TMA and the HRTPO MPA. Both the CAC meeting and public meeting were held on August 14, 2024 (CAC from 12- 2 pm (see **Appendix D**), public meeting from 6-8 pm ((See **Appendix E**)) in a hybrid in-person and virtual setting. The virtual setting was facilitated through the Microsoft Teams platform. Notification for the CAC and Public meeting were advertised on HRTPO’s website and forwarded to HRTPO’s e-mail distribution lists on. Public comments were accepted from Wednesday, August 14, 2024 through Tuesday, September 10, 2024.

While not statutorily required, the HRTPO established the CAC in an effort to better connect with community viewpoints. As stated in the CAC Bylaws:

“The Community Advisory Committee (CAC) serves as an advisory committee to the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization (HRTPO) and the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission (HRPDC). The mission of the Hampton Roads Community Advisory Committee (CAC) is to provide the HRTPO and HRPDC with the community’s viewpoint on regional issues, strategies, funding, priorities, and the decision-making process of the HRTPO and HRPDC. The CAC will serve as a strong advocate on behalf of the community by listening to community member’s viewpoints and helping to have their voices heard by the HRTPO and HRPDC leadership and decision makers. The CAC Chair, as a nonvoting member of the HRTPO/HRPDC Boards, will have the responsibility of communicating the work of the CAC back to the HRTPO and HRPDC Boards.”

Prior to our meeting with the CAC, FHWA and FTA provided the group with a list of 10 questions to guide our discussion.

To advertise the CAC and public meeting components of the 2024 Certification Review, the MPO posted MPO's CAC and the public meeting information on the MPO's website as separate public notice posts, on July 29, 2024. HRTPO additionally published on July 19 a post on the MPO's Facebook page notifying the public of public meeting hosted by FHWA and FTA.

The CAC serves as an advisory committee to the HRTPO Board, meeting roughly six times per year and is comprised of citizen representatives of each locality in Hampton Roads. As part of the certification review, the Federal Team participated in one of these meetings.

Observations

CAC

The members of the CAC spoke very highly of MPO staff and were very appreciative of MPO staff and their efforts to engage the public on transportation matters. Efforts are made by some CAC members to serve as conduit between the communities and jurisdictions they represent and their responsibility in communicating community viewpoints to the HRTPO, as contained in the CAC bylaws. When asked if the CAC had a defined or documented processes/procedures for proactively seeking out and considering the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems, such as low-income and minority households, who may face challenges accessing employment and other services, most were not aware.

State Code required the HRTPO to establish a Regional Transit Advisory Panel (RTAP) to provide advice on the Hampton Roads Regional Transit Fund (HRTTF). The action from the Virginia General Assembly to establish a HRTTF is notable as the Federal Review Team documented in our previous HRTPO certification report:

"However as reported by the TPO, Hampton Roads region spends less on public transportation on a per capita basis than many other comparable metropolitan areas, which has contributed to an older fleet of vehicles, as well as an impediment to embark on larger capacity expansion projects connecting major employment centers."

We inquired about the Regional Transit Advisory Panel (RTAP) and the role of the CAC. Some members of the CAC felt that they should receive regular reports from RTAP and that the CAC should be able to provide input to RTAP's reports. Pursuant to state code, the RTAP is a much larger and diverse group than the CAC and its specific charge is regional multimodal transit.

It was mentioned that tolling is one of the great unifying issues of the region and that nobody likes tolls.

Public Comments

Tens of members from the community attended both in-person and virtually, through Microsoft Teams, the public meeting held at HRTPO on Wednesday, August 14 from 6-8 pm. Engagement was active by both in-person attendees and virtual attendees. Several Responses piggybacked off prior comments, though not

always in chronological order. Members of the public brought up current and future infrastructure needs within the region based on the current and future road users with a particular interest in active transportation networks and networks that are more accommodating to vulnerable road users; the challenges of limited truck parking space; comments on HRTPO's role in facilitating the discussion and planning of transportation investments; and ways to better reach the public in soliciting feedback on the public transit planning.

A member of the public asked the Federal Team when in the planning process (local, state, Federal level), are investments chosen: on a need based, or on a usage base. Specifically, related to providing additional funding for an increase in bus service in the region: would the transit agency have to wait for higher ridership to fund additional bus service, or could an increase in bus service be tested out first to see if it would garner additional ridership. FTA responded, it's a local decision how transportation investments are decided within the region. As it relates to bus service, HRT cannot use Federal funds for operating assistance (COVID-relief funds were an exception). Additionally, within the Hampton Roads region (and nationally) there is a shortage in bus operators; increasing service on one route would come at the expense of reduced service for other routes. And that increasing bus service for one or more fixed routes, diverts funding from other transit operating or capital projects. Additionally, HRT has explored additional bus service through past "pilot" programs, and several of their routes run more frequently. The individual appreciated FTA's response, as it clarifies which agencies the public should direct their input. Another individual commented on the state of public transit, that it is quicker to ride a bicycle to a destination than to take public transportation.

A member of HRTAC commented the HRTF Program is a "blessing" for multimodal investments in the HRTPO region.

A member representing the Military community gave kudos to HRTPO for their constant outreach and engagement with the Military and Federal community and seeking their input on specific project's impact on the military community. They pointed out recognition from Volpe on their military planning is commendable.

The President of the League of Women Voters of South Hampton Roads (LWV) attended virtually and started to provide comments on LWV's and HRTPO's longstanding relationship on advancing transit in the Hampton Roads region. After this intro, there are technical difficulties that result in the HRTPO meeting room and the rest of the virtual attendees being unable to hear her. At this HRTPO's ED chimed in that the President has been one of the strongest transit advocates in the region, as well as LWV having transit as their legislative priorities. The President later submits a written public comment and the contents of that are summarized in the section below.

Concerns about reduced mobility amongst those with mobility ailments were also brought up by the impact that roadway and temporary closures of accessible infrastructure makes it difficult for those with physical limitations to reach fixed-route bus stops, including the removal of sidewalks and curb cuts, without providing accessible detour paths. Additionally, this concern was brought up through the lens of the projected aging population of the region which is prone to developing and having limited mobility and prevent one from being able to drive, and ensuring the senior community, especially with the



consideration that the demand of paratransit service will be beyond the capacity of the paratransit system, and might not be able to operate a vehicle, would be able to access destinations for basic needs. Take consideration on the journey on how one arrives at the bus stop, and its amenities. A different individual suggested information on transportation services can be offered to hospital patients who experience a sudden change in mobility allowance (due to acute traumatic events, recent diagnosis), in hopes that when the patients are discharged, they can be informed on those service to assist them in mobility, especially for individuals who are informed during that time that they are issued a medical order not to drive.

Members appreciated HRTPO on their planning work and advocacy for trail and multipurpose transportation planning and investments, including the 757 / Birthplace of America and the Elizabeth River Trail, and the involvement of additional improvements (expansion) of bicycle and pedestrian facilities in the region. A member of the public commented on the necessity of these active transportation facilities as 40% of Norfolk residents live in one-vehicle households, 11% live in no-vehicle households. A resident from Norfolk brought up the concern about road safety in relationship to bicycle and pedestrian users, that bicycle and pedestrian fatalities increased in the region and across the US, and since COVID. Frustration was expressed towards the municipalities within the MPA, regarding the implementation of the active transportation projects after HRTPO concludes the planning study of the proposed project. This individual expressed accountability is needed from the municipalities as the MPO has been “very supportive to the extent they are capable of,” as plans to build the bicycle and pedestrian facilities have been around for 25 years with the intent of the facilities being built (such as the South Hampton Trail, which is at 30% complete, connecting Virginia Beach to Suffolk and then to the Jamestown Ferry, with very limited funding in the Suffolk portion of the trail). The individual, who’s managed thousands of projects across the region, and overseas, expressed during numerous project follow-up from the municipalities on the advancement of the trails, that the municipalities “were working on it.”

A different member of the public, who attending virtually, provided a comment that piggybacks off accountability on a strong regional transportation system. He commented, municipalities within HRTPO’s MPA sometimes pursue items that benefit the municipality exclusively that seem to negatively impact the surrounding communities, and he appreciates the work HRTPO performs to unify the regional transportation system and make it better.

A member of the public and a former CAC member, joining virtually, brought up the issue of limited truck parking availability within the region, with truck drivers having to often park in areas not designated for truck parking, which they are later fined for. She asked how the MPO is addressing this issue. HRTPO staff in attendance replied they are aware of the limited truck parking availability, that because of the limited number of spots and increase in truck freight movement, many truck drivers resort to parking in any spot, whether legal or not, that will accommodate the size of the truck: shopping center, highway ramps, highway rest stops. A different attendee suggested the region should interview truck drivers and big box store employees to learn more about the challenges from both the truck drivers and the businesses that are impacted by the limited tuck parking availability in the region. HRTPO Freight Advisory Committee is in discussion of this topic and that VDOT gave an update on truck parking last year. Additionally, HRTPO

is looking into Federal and state funds that would fund additional truck parking, as well as partnering with State agencies.

In response to the discussion on improving intercity travel within HRTPO's MPA, HRTPO mentioned their advocacy to increase passenger rail service. HRTPO advocated for, and now there are three-intercity passenger rail trains that pass through the region each day, two on peninsula that will pass through a new multimodal transit center. Continue to advocate for improvements on the main line Hampton roads to Richmond, VA to improve the travel time. Third train to the Peninsula is expected in 2026.

A member of VDOT asked this attendee what keeps her involved in the regional transportation planning process as a former CAC member and now as a member of the public. This member commented that she does not possess a drivers' license, so she relays on public transportation to get around, that she's live on multiple continents, and that she has found the Hampton Roads region to be the most difficult to get around by public transit. The attributes this to the lower State investments in transit per capita compared to other regions she's lived in. She found attending CAC meetings as a member of the CAC cost prohibitive from where she lives in the region (northern Newport News). She provides the suggestion that it would be more accessible for member of the public, if the CAC or HRTPO Board meetings were hosted in the Peninsula every once in a while. On the topic of having CAC and Board meetings more accessible for individuals who live throughout HRTPO's MPA, the individual noted a better solution would be to challenge (appeal) the Virginia legislature to allow the authorization of Boards to convene and vote in a virtual setting.

A Gen Z member of the public that joined virtually mentioned it is challenging to find information on how members of the public can be more involved in providing feedback for high profile, multi-jurisdictional proposed transit project, HRBT expansion, TIDE extension. He mentioned he is involved in transit advocacy facilitated through HRT and the municipalities. HRTPO staff requested follow-up discussion with this individual to solicit his suggestions to improve knowledge of was to get involved. He suggests advertisements, posting on HRT's vehicles, facilities, sidewalks, intersections, locations where bus riders pass while using HRT's system. HRTPO staff additionally directed the young man to add his input to HRTPO's Candidate Project Portal for HRTPO's 2050 LRTP update. Another member of the public piggybacked on this topic, adding, members' awareness of the transportation planning process stems from those who "stumble" upon it, rather than being explicitly introduced formally. The individual later mentions he learned about the public comment session through an active member of the public who spoke earlier in-person at the public comment session.

Comments received outside of scheduled CAC and Public Meeting

The Federal team received four public comments outside of the public comment session held Wednesday, August 14, 2024. Each comment was sent through e-mail. A summary of the comments are included below in this report.

One of the e-mails was sent by the President of the League of Women Voters of South Hampton Roads (LWV). She provided further elaborated on her comments provided during the public meeting. She commented on the LWV's working relationship than spans decades with HRTPO and Hampton Roads



Transit (HRT), including LWV members serving on HRT and HRTPO committees and working groups. LWV described their initiatives in improving the public transit landscape in the Hampton Roads as partners to HRTPO and HRT. LWV developed their own regional vision for mobility, accessibility, and connectivity, the “Position on Transportation.” LWV advocated for the extension of HRT’s light rail system, as well as additional funding for transit.

One of the members of the public represented herself and commented on her positive experience with HRT; a helpful website, bus stop signs with related travel information, accessing HRT customer service through phone, their pamphlets and staff who assisted a friend who has a disability, navigating the system. She commended HRTPO on their in-person public outreach on the Connecting Chesapeake study: including attendance at community events, media appearances, presentations at the Chesapeake City Council, as well as HRT’s outreach efforts.

Another member of the public provided two comment correspondences; one that answers the questions proposed by the Federal team to the CAC (to guide the CAC meeting discussion), and one that addressed the questions the Federal team asked during the public hearing session. The individual is a former CAC member and does not drive an automobile and travels primarily through public transportation. In the 10-question guiding the CAC meeting, the individual mentions she was welcomed to sit on the CAC board from previous HRTPO staff, but that once staff switched, there was pressure from the MPO to have her membership tied to representing an organization, in addition to her “citizen-at-large” title. She referenced CAC members receive numerous reports and were encouraged to address the HRTPO Board during the Board meetings. She expressed concerns about RTAP’s discussion and investment recommendations as it pertains to the directive of the purpose of the state legislature, specifically that the majority of the discussion of RTAP is focused on the “757 Express” project, and not a general discussion of transit planning discussion and projects throughout the region, as directed by the State legislature § 33.2-286 of the Code of Virginia. Additionally, the individual brings concerns. The individual references a 10-page paper that she sent to a previous HRTPO staff on these concerns. In response to the concerns, HRTPO offered to set up a meeting with HRT staff. The individual felt she “failed” her goal of the report, to impact the regional transit planning process. The individual commented that CAC did not have a specific process for engaging with low income and minority people, but that HRTPO does host environmental justice (EJ) round tables. The individual referenced four projects whose outcome was impacted by the public input on the proposed projects. The individual gave several suggestions to improve public involvement, including outreach (using HRTPO committee e-mail distribution list) to the public to explain what an MPO is, consider virtual engagement, engagement with mass transportation riders while they are using mass transportation (transit, train, airports), connecting with residents on Nextdoor.

In response to the questions asked by the Federal team during the public meeting, the individual responding with the following. She felt she did not have an adequate opportunity to participate in the transportation planning and programming process. The reason stems from the difficulty to attend in-person, HRTPO public involvement events, as she does not drive, and she cannot get to HRTPO’s office easily using public transit. When she comes in person, she has to use a ride-sharing service. The individual reiterated her concerns with the approval process of how HRTF are applied to regional transportation projects. The individual provides numerous efforts where she was involved in the transportation planning

process within the region. She commented that the number of CAC members has decreased since she was a member in leaving CAC in 2017. She goes on to add that Civil Rights considerations is crucial for the transportation planning process. She adds additional discussion on what's to improve the transportation planning process, which include getting to know the community better, bringing awareness of the MPO to the community members, work on increasing digital access to the meetings, and the importance of investing in transportation infrastructure in areas that lack political power to advocate for themselves.

Full comment 1: received August 5, 2024, by e-mail.

Federal Team Meeting with the 2024 Community Advisory Committee (CAC) Questionnaire

1. Does the CAC have defined or documented processes/procedures for proactively seeking out and considering the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems, such as low-income and minority households, who may face challenges accessing employment and other services? As an advisory committee to the HRTPO and HRPDC, how are transportation related feedback from underserved populations communicated to you and how is that feedback communicated to the Boards.

I have not been a member of the CAC since 2017. On a personal note, I am a lifelong non-driver and used public transportation in about 15 states and nearly as many other countries. I've shared information from fellow transit and rail riders as well as the numerous UBER and Lyft drivers with whom I rode. In the ten years I've been here, I have traveled throughout Hampton Roads at my expense to participate in numerous forums on light rail; the peninsula corridor study; HRBT studies, proposals, and decision; the proposed transportation center in Newport News and travel related events. These have given me ample opportunity to gather information, provide feedback, and engage with other members of the Hampton Roads community on transportation issues. I was happy to bring this perspective to CAC.

I was welcomed to the CAC by HRTPO's Public Involvement and Title VI Administrator Kendall Miller and acting Executive Director Camelia Ravanbakht after appointment and I had many discussions with both. CAC members also received any number of reports from HRTPO's public outreach staff for review and discussion often generated by HRTPO's public outreach staff through EJ outreach and EJ Roundtable. All outreach, engagement, and surveys for LRTP and TIP were conveyed to the CAC and the Board in the forms of reports and updates. Ms. Miller attended our meetings, answered our questions, provided data and information, provided experts and speakers, and facilitated visits to other facilities as requested. We discussed a wide range of topics in our forum and CAC leadership would attend Board meetings and pass on our recommendations, concerns, and observations. We, and other citizens, were also encouraged to address the board at their meeting either in person or through written communication. I addressed the board on transit's role on both moving and uniting people and submitted a white paper concerning the HRBT options.

2. State code required the HRTPO to establish a Regional Transit Advisory Panel (RTAP) composed of various stakeholders to provide ongoing advice to the regional planning process on the long-term vision for the multimodal regional public transit network in the Hampton



Roads. With CAC members also being members of the RTAP, describe your role and the process for ensuring that the advice and recommendations from RTAP are communicated broadly to the Hampton Roads citizens and directly to the HRTPO?

"That the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization shall establish a regional transit advisory panel composed of representatives of major business and industry groups, employers, shopping destinations, institutions of higher education, military installations, hospitals and health care centers, public transit entities, and any other groups identified as necessary to provide ongoing advice to the regional planning process required pursuant to § 33.2-286 of the Code of Virginia on the long-term vision for a multimodal regional public transit network in Hampton Roads."

Brad Martin and Garry Harris were appointed to represent CAC. Ms. Miller asked if I would be interested in serving on the new panel. I was appointed as a citizen-at-large representative, although almost immediately Mr. Crum seemed to need to attach me to an organization to lend legitimacy to my appointment. I was eager to tackle the challenges of one of the worst transit systems I had ever experienced. To be fair, it is also one of the worst funded in the nation. If COVID taught us anything, it was how much we all depend on "essential workers", many on the lower end of the pay scale. Many of my early questions included business resistance to bus stops/shelters on their property; how many electric buses HRT was obtaining and where they would be deployed; how much federal funding HRT received through the Rescue Act/how it was being used; first mile/last mile transit access, the interplay of all three regional transit services, improved service to underserved communities, use of ferries to move more people across the water and how the recent outcry of Norfolk citizens impacted HRT's planning, etc.

It quickly became clear to me this was not a "regional transit advisory panel" but a booster club for HRT's "757 Express" project. Neither Williamsburg nor Suffolk, cities with transit in this region, were included in the fund. There was little to no interest in moving the area's workers other than those in service to the Navy either at the shipyards or the base itself. Regional planners, developers, and real estate interests were being encouraged to plan housing adjacent to the "757 Express" route rather than trying to reach people where they currently live and need to go. Planning which could lead to the age old "urban renewal" issues of reinforced segregation and gentrification/displacement, not to mention increased air quality and environmental justice concerns. RTAP was being used as ambassadors to find sponsors for shelters and sell the 757 Express message to the masses.

TDCHR was performing the regional transit advisory role to HRTAC's Regional Transit Committee which consisted of the six mayors representing those cities served by HRT. They were making decisions with zero connection to RTAP or any other public participation. Indeed, they made major expenditure decisions months after the legislation created RTAP but before its first meeting and never briefed on these decisions. I discovered them by combing HRTPO's website about transit.



In June 2021 I wrote a 10-page paper entitled “RTAP Observations” which I sent to Kendall Miller, Administrator, Office of Civil Rights and Community Affairs; Robert Crum, Executive Director, Hampton Roads Planning District Commission, Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization; and Ivan Rucker, FHWA, USDOT. In it I explained in great detail the issues I had with RTAP and its use/misuse. One only has to look at the Jan 2022 RTAP Key Recommendations for Transit in Hampton Roads to see RTAP has no connection to guidelines outlined in § 33.2-286. Urban Transit Agency Strategic Plans: assessment of state of good repair needs; review of the performance of fixed-route bus service, including schedules, route design, connectivity, and vehicle sizes; evaluation of opportunities to improve operating efficiency of the transit network, including reliability of trips and travel speed; examination and identification of opportunities to share services where multiple transit providers' services overlap; examination of opportunities to improve service in underserved areas.

Though put off several times, I finally met with Mr. Crum about my concerns with Ms. Miller in attendance. Mr. Crum offered the opportunity to speak to Mr. Harrell about my concerns. I already had access to Mr. Harrell as I had formerly served on a citizens advisory panel to HRT. My goal was to impact the regional transit planning process and, reportedly, the third worst funded transit systems in the country at the MPO level in accordance with § 33.2-286 of the Virginia Code. I failed.

3. Does the CAC have a process for engaging organizations that represent underserved communities in the Hampton Roads Region? Please describe.

The CAC did not have a process for engaging organizations that served low income and minority populations when I was a member, but Public Involvement staff did via the EJ Roundtable and direct engagement with the vast database staff compiled of those organizations, churches and initiatives serving low and minority populations throughout the region. As I mentioned in my response to question 1, I also personally came in contact with underserved communities through various transportation activities as well as volunteer work with the Red Cross, Family Support Center at Fort Eustis, Habitat for Humanity, and the former Downtown Hampton Child Development Center.

4. Please describe situations where public involvement has had an impact on the planning and decision-making process. For example, consider how public involvement contributed to developing transportation priorities and strategies in the long-range plan, prioritizing, and selecting investments to be programmed on the TIP, or any other activities.

Just a few:

--I believe the light rail initiative failed due to lack of engagement of the region's regular citizens and a narrow scope of the initiative. I only became aware and engaged due to a chance meeting and discussion with then State Senator Monty Mason. There was massive “stakeholder” buy-in and discussion, but Virginia Beach based, citizen led, anti-transit forces were able to mobilize and defeat the measure.



--The Virginia Capital Trail: Bike and pedestrian trails stretching from Richmond to Hampton Roads
--VDOT held massively well-attended public engagement events concerning HRBT. Four options emerged and there was a lot of discussion and examination of the options. As a CTAC member we received all the reports, recommendations, executive summary.
--Overhaul of Norfolk's bus system rejected over concerns about effects on poor and black residents

5. How might the HRTPO and/or the HRPDC improve public involvement? For example, consider changes to the structure of advisory groups, use of media, use of facilitators, or efforts to reach a broader more diverse range of groups.

There's a lot to approach here but bare minimums:

--If HRTPO and HRPDC are going to put forth a Public Participation Plan created by Kendall Miller several years ago, at least familiarize yourselves with it and use it. For example, where is the Environmental Justice Roundtable? Who oversees Public Involvement for LRTP?
--When I was on CAC there were 25-30 members. Site shows nine. Where did they all go?
--Use the database and RTAP connections to actually do outreach explaining what an MPO is, what it does, what you are doing, get feedback not just from representatives of the organizations but members of respective organizations themselves
--CAC members are appointed by their respective mayors. Get on city council agenda to speak, connect with neighbors on Next Door, etc.
--Expand the idea of stakeholders beyond Chambers of Commerce and CEOs when considering groups to speak to, or engage with
--Engage transit/train/airport users where they are and ask them.
--Consider virtual engagement

6. What methods to encourage public involvement are working and what are not? Please provide examples.

7. How does the CAC assist the region to reach consensus on difficult and controversial issues related to transportation?

8. How can public viewpoints successfully be communicated to decision-makers in an area as large and complex as Hampton Roads? What is the role of CAC in this process?

See item 5

9. How has the CAC changed since the last compliance review (4-years ago)?

I don't know from the inside, but it sure is a lot smaller

10. The CAC is referenced in the updated 2023 HRTPO and HRPDC Title VI compliance review reports. Have you reviewed the reports? Are you aware of any transportation related environmental justice or civil rights concerns based on your community engagement?

Members of the public should be made aware of any audits, findings, issues in the public participation and civil rights arena of the HRTPO and this is not being done. The website is

effectively blocking information and it's not on the Board agendas either. Nothing has been shared since 2021.

Full comment 2: received August 15, 2024, by e-mail

To the Quadrennial Federal Planning Certification Review Team in Hampton Roads:

The League of Women Voters of South Hampton Roads has worked with HRTPO and HRT for decades. We have learned a great deal about our region and how we connect. LWV members have served on HRT and HRTPO committees and working groups. We use and encourage others to use public transportation.

Our League has developed a "Position on Transportation", which contains our regional vision for mobility, accessibility, and connectivity for all our residents and visitors. In recent years, that "Position" has allowed the LWV to advocate strongly. Two examples: continuation of light rail into Virginia Beach (defeated in that city), and regional funding mechanisms so that public transit can connect our cities more effectively (successful in the Virginia General Assembly).

We hope the DOT listeners have caught the interest and commitment of the many citizen groups in our region. We are all partners in improving transportation across our Hampton Roads region.

We know our neighbors and our communities. We find out what is needed and how that can happen. Thank you for making us part of your planning process.

Full comment 3: received August 19, 2024, by e-mail

To the Quadrennial Federal Planning Certification Review Team in Hampton Roads:

I am a resident of the Greenbrier section of Chesapeake who attended and spoke at the event on Woodlake Drive on the evening of August 14, 2024. I have one correction to my comments there and some additional comments.

First, the correction. I mentioned that my husband and I have been medically advised not to drive in the Commonwealth. This is correct. However, I misstated that this was under Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) policies. I confused this with another agency, the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles. I was thinking of the policies published here when I spoke. My husband and I were both advised not to drive with our discharge paperwork from area hospitals. My correction pertains to the agency the hospitals and doctors cited as the basis for the restrictions.

For my follow-up comment, my experience of Hampton Roads Transit's outreach and communication processes has been very different from the experiences reported by Max



Lichtenstein at that same meeting. Mine have been much more positive. While I liked Max' idea of more signage at locations like bus stops and on buses themselves, I must commend the other ways that HRT performs outreach. As a transit rider, I have found the website helpful for information on fares and payment as well as route information linked to Google Maps. Signage for route numbers at bus stops has been superior to even much bigger cities' such as Atlanta, Georgia's, where I've also taken transit. The HRT bus stop numbers and QR codes provide timely information about buses and routes, and HRT makes its information available to my favorite Transit App as well.

In addition, the agency makes a customer-service phone number available during business hours, which I have used both when I needed help with a route home from Virginia Beach and when I lost a hat on a bus. I also used it to get advice and assistance for a friend with Asberger's who was having trouble learning and navigating the system due to his disability. The agency also has pamphlets and online resources to assist and educate those new to riding transit to help them get started.

Since I live in Greenbrier, I have been very interested in the Connecting Chesapeake study with its potential of bringing light rail, an express bus, or bus rapid transit to Greenbrier from the Norfolk area. If recommendations are implemented, this effort will increase transit ridership and improve regional connectivity. HRT's process to publicize this study and seek public input has been especially commendable, with in-person rider surveys, pop-up events, tents and tables at community events, online surveys, presentations at Chesapeake City Council meetings and work sessions, media releases and subsequent coverage, and appearances on Chesapeake television. HRT communicates closely with the city, which puts updates and information on the city's website and social media as well. HRT's Sherri Dawson has been spearheading this project and deserves commendation for HRT's exceptional outreach and tireless efforts on this project.

Since I mentioned QR codes above, codes added to Max's suggested signage might be helpful for riders if his suggestion is implemented. And while I'd like to be able to pay for fares on my phone, and also desire an option for an annual pass (currently only available through a college or employer), I highly appreciate how HRT makes its various passes available in bulk at highly-frequented stores like Food Lion. It also publicizes online where to find them.

Full comment 4: received September 10, 2024, by e-mail

Response to Quadrennial Review Public Input Questions

1. Do you feel that you have an adequate opportunity to participate in the transportation planning and programming process?

Short answer, no.

I am retired and have more resources to participate than the average citizen. Yet, I have found it more trouble than it is worth. I live in northern Newport News and all participation opportunities are in Chesapeake. As a non-driver, the cost for me to participate is easily \$130 round trip under



ideal circumstances. For many in the region that would represent about a week's worth of childcare for one child in many households. That's if I can even get across the water in time to participate. I have often experienced traffic clogs of an hour or more. In a digital age, this is ridiculous. And yes, I know I can submit input in writing. It is attached to the board's packet with no obligation to acknowledge or discuss.

Yet, I would make the sacrifice if public participation in the planning process in this region was not more form than substance. There is no fulsome embrace of the concept that when spending the people's money, the people should have a say. It is more a matter of "dotting i's and crossing t's", giving us opportunities to "have our say" and then ignoring our questions, challenges, and input. This region has innumerable and well-practiced ways of saying no: "we can't", "the budget", "not now" and "we're working on it". There is no clearer example of this frustration than when trying to address transit, the single largest concern on transportation in this region.

I did not miss the poke in the feds' (and my) eyes through explanation of the source of revenues supporting the Regional Transit Fund when discussing RTAP. I will point out the legislation that created the fund and RTAP also says "...disbursements from the Regional Transit Fund shall be approved by the Commission consistent with the regional transit planning process...". Title VI, Environmental Justice, and Public Outreach are part of the regional planning process. But apparently that's another challenge for a different milieu. I could easily submit the equivalent of a small book addressing concerns about: Regional Transit Planning, OTR Trucking Parking, Passenger Rail Scheduling and Access, Newport News Airport, Newport News Transportation Terminal, Newport News Citizens' Air Quality Concerns Due to Coal transport, and others. But my experience says I would spend hours writing it and it would have little to no interest or impact upon those making the decisions in this region.

2. How have you been involved in the transportation planning process?

Since arriving in the region ten years ago: Numerous forums on the Light Rail Initiative; HRT's Peninsula Corridor Study; personal PowerPoint presentation to HRT on the difficulty of using HRT for VA appointments in comparison with San Antonio transit and suggestions in using HRT for public events; white paper submission on the HRBT Crossing; in-person address to HRTPO Board on the importance of public transportation; visit to members of state legislature to discuss the importance of funding transit in the Hampton Roads region; HRT Citizens Advisory Panel, proposed Newport News Transportation Center public outreach; HRTPO Citizens Transportation Advisory Council (CTAC now CAC), Hampton Roads Regional Transportation Advisory Panel (RTAP); and submission of 10-page RTAP Observations to HRTPO and FHWA staff.

3. What are the positive aspects of the transportation process?

When fully embraced and properly applied Title VI, Environmental Justice and Public Outreach are the rehabilitative and positive cornerstone of the transportation planning process that has historically decimated communities, particularly those of color and national origin. The process is



designed to provide early, continuous, and extensive outreach to all communities, but particularly to ensure that project selection does not subject populations to disparate, adverse effects based on race, color, or national origin. The DOT, the State Transportation Board, and MPOs are meant to scrutinize planning projects, screening them to identify and categorize the various impacts and enhancements of planned projects through the lens of these three crucial elements.

4. What suggestions do you have for improving the process?

Find ways to know your communities and engage them where they are. I've got a million and one ideas and I'm just one old lady. Does the average Hampton Roads citizen even know the process exists, how it impacts their lives, how they can engage and why they should be engaged? This MPO's worked to ensure digital access throughout the region; now use it to inform your citizenry and get their feedback. We can't all travel to Chesapeake during the middle of the day and fit in that boardroom.

Know where to invest. As a public education advocate I often heard the harangue's of parents over dollars spent to educating their respective children, but I feel the nation has a responsibility to all our children. My yardstick is the crackhead's kids. Do our policies and initiatives ensure children with no advocates get the quality education this nation can afford? Our next Einstein or Tesla could come from such children. I view transportation planning through a similar lens. What about the CNA, Walmart employee or fast food worker? If COVID taught us nothing else, it was that we depend on workers like these for our very survival. If we can't all be humanitarians, we should at least recognize it is in our best interest to ensure they can get back and forth to work, keep a roof over their heads and afford childcare.

I've looked at many MPO's throughout the country. I'm inspired by initiatives such as Dream Austin "...fueled by ideas and contributions from the Austin community". But I am dismayed by what I see in this region, this state and across the country. Where is the motivation for Title VI, EJ, and Public Outreach compliance or, more to the point, real consequence for noncompliance? In his "I Have A Dream Speech", Dr. King said: "All we say to America is, 'Be true to what you said on paper...' That is my message to HRTPO, HRPDC, VDOT, and all 11 operating administrations of DOT. Make the process work as designed.

APPENDIX D – DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (CAC) MEETING

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Certification/Compliance Review of the Hampton Roads Metropolitan Area’s Transportation Planning and Programming Process

Federal Team Meeting with the 2024 Community Advisory Committee (CAC)

Dates/Times: Wednesday, August 14, 2024, 12:00 PM – 2:00 PM

Location: The Regional Building
723 Woodlake Drive
Chesapeake, VA 23320

Background: Every four years the FHWA and FTA conduct a Certification Review of the metropolitan transportation planning process that must include public involvement. Per federal statute and regulation, “in conducting a certification review, the FHWA and the FTA shall provide *opportunities* for public involvement within the metropolitan planning area under review. The FHWA and the FTA *shall consider the public input received in arriving at a decision on a certification action.*” (23 USC 134 (K)(6)(D), 23 CFR 450.336(b)(4))

The Certification formalizes continuing oversight and evaluation of the planning process by U.S. DOT to help ensure that the planning requirements of 23 U.S.C. 134 and 49 U.S.C. 5303 to 5305 are being satisfactorily implemented in a nondiscriminatory manner.

The Certification provides an opportunity to provide advice and guidance to enhance the metropolitan planning process and improve the quality of transportation decisions. Although FHWA and FTA routinely interact with the metropolitan planning organization and its partner agencies in reviewing and approving planning products and providing technical assistance, this formal external review can be a catalyst to improve the effectiveness of the planning process and its ability to address major issues facing the metropolitan area.

Purpose: The Federal Review Team will participate in a meeting with the Hampton Roads CAC to better understand their role in the transportation planning and program development process for the Hampton Roads Metropolitan area. Our focus areas will include:

- Methods and procedures available for the public to participate.
- Public contributions to the transportation planning and regional decision-making process
- Opportunities for underserved communities to participate in the transportation decision-making process and how is their feedback is reflected in plans and programs

- Equity, environmental justice, and civil rights considerations

CAC Format: In advance of our meeting and to help guide our discussions, the Federal Review Team is providing the attached questions. The Federal Team will introduce each question and lead an informal discussion with CAC members.

For members who are not able to join in-person and choose to join virtually, the following link is being provided for you participation:

Microsoft Teams Need help?

Join the meeting now

Meeting ID: 289 707 173 374

Passcode: tbkzMe

Dial in by phone

+1 972-301-8039,,124652116# United States, Dallas

Find a local number

Phone conference ID: 124 652 116#

If you require assistance or additional accommodations to participate, please contact Quan McLaurin (qmclaurin@hrpdcva.gov) by Friday, August 2, 2024.

Questions guiding the discussion with the Community Advisory Committee (CAC)

Following introductions, the Federal team will use the following questions to guide our discussion.

1. Does the CAC have defined or documented processes/procedures for proactively seeking out and considering the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems, such as low-income and minority households, who may face challenges accessing employment and other services? As an advisory committee to the HRTPO and HRPDC, how are transportation related feedback from underserved populations communicated to you and how is that feedback communicated to the Boards.
2. State code required the HRTPO to establish a Regional Transit Advisory Panel (RTAP) composed of various stakeholders to provide ongoing advice to the regional planning process on the long-term vision for the multimodal regional public transit network in the Hampton Roads. With CAC members also being members of the RTAP, describe your role and the process for ensuring that the advice and recommendations from RTAP are communicated broadly to the Hampton Roads citizens and directly to the HRTPO?
3. Does the CAC have a process for engaging organizations that represent underserved communities in the Hampton Roads Region? Please describe.



4. Please describe situations where public involvement has had an impact on the planning and decision-making process. For example, consider how public involvement contributed to developing transportation priorities and strategies in the long-range plan, prioritizing, and selecting investments to be programmed on the TIP, or any other activities.
5. How might the HRTPO and/or the HRPDC improve public involvement? For example, consider changes to the structure of advisory groups, use of media, use of facilitators, or efforts to reach a broader more diverse range of groups.
6. What methods to encourage public involvement are working and what are not? Please provide examples.
7. How does the CAC assist the region to reach consensus on difficult and controversial issues related to transportation?
8. How can public viewpoints successfully be communicated to decision-makers in an area as large and complex as Hampton Roads? What is the role of CAC in this process?
9. How has the CAC changed since the last compliance review (4-years ago)?
10. The CAC is referenced in the updated 2023 HRTPO and HRPDC Title VI compliance review reports. Have you reviewed the reports? Are you aware of any transportation related environmental justice or civil rights concerns based on your community engagement?

**La Certificación/Revisión de Cumplimiento de la Administración Federal de Carreteras (FHWA)
y la Administración Federal de Tránsito (FTA)
del Área Metropolitana de Hampton Roads -
Proceso de planificación y programación del transporte**

Reunión del Equipo Federal con el Comité Asesor Comunitario (CAC) 2024

Fecha/Hora: 14 de agosto de 2024, mediodía – 2:00 p.m.

Ubicación: Edificio regional
723 Woodlake Drive
Chesapeake, VA 23320

Antecedentes: Cada cuatro años, la FHWA y la FTA realizan una Revisión de Certificación del proceso de planificación del transporte metropolitano que debe incluir la participación del público. Según los estatutos y regulaciones federales, “al realizar una revisión de certificación, la FHWA y la FTA brindarán oportunidades para la participación pública dentro del área de planificación metropolitana bajo revisión. La FHWA y la FTA considerarán los comentarios del público recibidos para llegar a una decisión sobre una acción de certificación” (23 USC 134 (K)(6)(D), 23 CFR 450.336 (b)(4)).

La Certificación formaliza la supervisión y evaluación continua del proceso de planificación por parte del U.S. DOT para ayudar a garantizar que los requisitos de planificación de 23 U.S.C. 134 y 49 U.S.C. 5303 se implementen satisfactoriamente de manera no discriminatoria.

La Certificación brinda la oportunidad de ofrecer asesoramiento y orientación para mejorar el proceso de planificación metropolitana y la calidad de las decisiones de transporte. Aunque la FHWA y la FTA interactúan habitualmente con la organización de planificación metropolitana y sus agencias asociadas para revisar y aprobar productos de planificación y brindar asistencia técnica, esta revisión externa formal puede ser un catalizador para mejorar la efectividad del proceso de planificación y su capacidad para abordar los principales problemas que enfrenta el área metropolitana.

Objetivo: El equipo de revisión federal participará en una reunión con el CAC de Hampton Roads para comprender mejor su papel en el proceso de planificación y desarrollo de programas de transporte para el área metropolitana de Hampton Roads. Nuestras áreas de enfoque incluirán:

- Métodos y procedimientos disponibles para que el público participe.
- Contribuciones públicas a la planificación del transporte y al proceso de toma de decisiones regionales.
- Oportunidades para que las comunidades desatendidas participen en el proceso de toma de decisiones sobre transporte y cómo se reflejan sus comentarios en los planes y programas.
- Consideraciones de equidad, justicia ambiental y derechos civiles.

Formato del CAC: Antes de nuestra reunión y para ayudar a guiar nuestras discusiones, el equipo de revisión federal proporciona las preguntas adjuntas. El Equipo Federal presentará cada pregunta y dirigirá una discusión informal con los miembros del CAC.

Para los miembros que no pueden unirse en persona y elijan hacerlo virtualmente, se proporciona el siguiente enlace para su participación:

Microsoft Teams ¿Usted necesita ayuda?

Unete a la reunion ahora

Numero de identificacion de la reunion: 289 707 173 374

Codigo: tbkzMe

Usa este numero de telefono

+1 972-301-8039, 124652116# Estados Unidos (EEUU), Dallas

Encuentra un numero local

Numero de identificacion de conferencia de telefono: 124 652 116#

Si necesita asistencia o adaptaciones adicionales para participar, por favor contacte a Quan McLaurin (qmclaurin@hrpdcva.gov) antes del viernes, 2 de agosto de 2024.

Preguntas que guiarán la discusión con el Comité Asesor Comunitario (CAC)

Después de las presentaciones, el equipo federal utilizará las siguientes preguntas para guiar nuestra discusión.

1. ¿El CAC ha definido o documentado procesos/procedimientos para buscar y considerar proactivamente las necesidades de aquellos tradicionalmente desatendidos por los sistemas de transporte existentes, como los hogares de bajos ingresos y minorías, que pueden enfrentar desafíos para acceder al empleo y otros servicios? Como comité asesor de HRTPO y HRPDC, ¿cómo se le comunican a usted los comentarios relacionados con el transporte de las poblaciones desatendidas y cómo se comunican esos comentarios a las Juntas?
2. El código estatal requeriría que la HRTPO estableciera un Panel Asesor de Tránsito Regional (RTAP) compuesto por varias partes interesadas para brindar asesoramiento continuo al proceso de planificación regional sobre la visión a largo plazo para la red de transporte público regional multimodal en Hampton Roads. Dado que los miembros del CAC también son miembros del RTAP, describa su función y el proceso para garantizar que los consejos y recomendaciones del RTAP se comuniquen ampliamente a los ciudadanos de Hampton Roads y directamente a la HRTPO.
3. ¿Tiene el CAC un proceso para involucrar a organizaciones que representan a comunidades desatendidas en la región de Hampton Roads? Por favor, describa.
4. Describa situaciones en las que la participación pública haya tenido un impacto en el proceso de planificación y toma de decisiones. Por ejemplo, considere cómo la participación pública contribuyó al desarrollo de prioridades y estrategias de transporte en el plan de largo plazo, priorizando y seleccionando inversiones a programar en el TIP, u otra actividad.
5. ¿Cómo podrían la HRTPO y/o el HRPDC mejorar la participación pública? Por ejemplo, considere cambios en la estructura de los grupos asesores, el uso de los medios de comunicación, el uso de facilitadores o los esfuerzos para llegar a una gama más amplia y diversa de grupos.
6. ¿Qué métodos para fomentar la participación pública están funcionando y cuáles no? Por favor, proporcione ejemplos.
7. ¿Cómo ayuda el CAC a la región a alcanzar un consenso sobre cuestiones difíciles y controversiales relacionadas con el transporte?
8. ¿Cómo se pueden comunicar exitosamente los puntos de vista del público a los tomadores de decisiones en un área tan grande y compleja como Hampton Roads? ¿Cuál es el papel del CAC en este proceso?



9. ¿Cómo ha cambiado la CAC desde la última revisión de cumplimiento (hace 4 años)?
10. 10. Se hace referencia al CAC en los informes de revisión de cumplimiento del Título VI actualizados de HRTPO y HRPDC de 2023. ¿Has revisado los informes? ¿Está usted al tanto de alguna inquietud relacionada con la justicia ambiental o los derechos civiles relacionada con el transporte basada en su participación comunitaria?

APPENDIX E – PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT FLIER

Public Meeting Announcement

Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization (HRTPO)

Wednesday, August 14, 2024

6:00 PM – 8:00 PM

Presentation will begin promptly at the start of the meeting

Please share your views and comments with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Virginia Division and Federal Transit Administration (FTA), Region III at a public meeting regarding the transportation planning and program development process for the Hampton Roads region. The public meeting will be held in-person **on Wednesday, August 14, 2024, from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM** located at:

The Regional Building
723 Woodlake Drive
Chesapeake, VA 23320

If you would like to participate in the meeting virtually or by phone, please visit or click the following link:

Microsoft Teams

[Join the meeting now](#)

Meeting ID: 230 043 922 62

Passcode: Gu7ydY

Dial in by phone

[+1 972-301-8039, 231994292#](#) United States, Dallas

[Find a local number](#)

Phone conference ID: 231 994 292#

Background: Every four years, the FHWA and FTA conduct a Certification Review of the metropolitan transportation planning process that must include public involvement. Per federal statute and regulation, “in conducting a certification review, the FHWA and the FTA shall provide opportunities for public involvement within the metropolitan planning area under review. The FHWA and the FTA shall consider the public input received in arriving at a decision on a certification action.” (23 USC 134 (K)(6)(D), 23 CFR 450.336(b)(4))

The Certification formalizes continuing oversight and evaluation of the planning process by U.S. DOT to help ensure that the planning requirements of 23 U.S.C. 134 and 49 U.S.C. 5303 to 5305 are being satisfactorily implemented in a nondiscriminatory manner.

The Certification provides an opportunity to provide advice and guidance to enhance the metropolitan planning process and improve the quality of transportation decisions. Although FHWA and FTA routinely interact with the metropolitan planning organization and its partner agencies in reviewing and approving planning products and providing technical assistance, this formal external review can be a catalyst to

improve the effectiveness of the planning process and its ability to address major issues facing the metropolitan area.

The HRTPO is created and designated to carry out the metropolitan transportation planning and programming process for the Hampton Roads region. The HRTPO is staffed by the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission (HRPDC).

The scheduled public meeting is a component of the statutorily required Federal review of the transportation planning process cooperatively conducted by the HRTPO, the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission (HRPDC), the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (VDRPT), Hampton Roads Transit (HRT), Williamsburg Area Transit Authority (WATA), Suffolk Transit, and local governments serving the Hampton Roads region to assess compliance with Federal statutes and regulations. To learn more about the HRTPO, please visit: <https://www.hrtpo.org/>.

Participant Information

If participating virtually, public comments may be shared two ways:

- 1) Once connected to the meeting, please type your comments into the chat box or unmute your line to speak.
- 2) Submit comments via e-mail to [Chelsea Beytas or Ivan Rucker \(e-mails provided below\)](#)

[If you require assistance or additional accommodations to participate, please contact](#) Quan McLaurin (qmclaurin@hrpdca.gov) [by Friday, August 2, 2024.](#)

If you are not able to attend the in-person or virtual meeting, you may also address your comments to:

Federal Transit Administration, Region III
c/o Chelsea Beytas
1835 Market Street, Suite 1910 | Philadelphia, PA 19103
(215) 656-7961, chelsea.beytas@dot.gov

or

Federal Highway Administration, Virginia Division
c/o Ivan Rucker
400 N. 8th Street | Richmond, VA 23219
(804) 775-3350, ivan.rucker@dot.gov

All public comments are due by Wednesday, September 10, 2024.

Anuncio de Reunión Pública

Organización de Planificación del Transporte de Hampton Roads (HRTPO)

Miércoles, 14 de agosto de 2024

5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

La presentación comenzará puntualmente al inicio de la reunión

Por favor, comparta sus opiniones y comentarios con la Administración Federal de Carreteras (FHWA), la División de Virginia y la Administración Federal de Tránsito (FTA), Región III, en una reunión pública sobre el proceso de planificación y desarrollo de programas de transporte para la región de Hampton Roads. La reunión pública se celebrará en persona el **miércoles, 14 de agosto de 2024, de 5:30 p.m. a 7:30 p.m.**, en:

The Regional Building
723 Woodlake Drive
Chesapeake, VA 23320

Si desea participar en la reunión de manera virtual o por teléfono, visite o haga clic en el siguiente enlace:

Microsoft Teams [¿Usted necesita ayuda?](#)

[Únete a la reunión ahora](#)

Numero de identificación de la reunión: 230 043 922 62

Código: Gu7ydY

Usa este numero de telefono

[+1 972-301-8039,,231994292#](#) Estados Unidos (EEUU), Dallas.

[Encuentra un numero local](#)

Numero de identificación de conferencia de telefono: 231 994 292#

Antecedentes: Cada cuatro años, la FHWA y la FTA realizan una Revisión de Certificación del proceso de planificación del transporte metropolitano que debe incluir la participación del público. Según los estatutos y regulaciones federales, “al realizar una revisión de certificación, la FHWA y la FTA brindarán oportunidades para la participación pública dentro del área de planificación metropolitana bajo revisión. La FHWA y la FTA considerarán los comentarios del público recibidos para llegar a una decisión sobre una acción de certificación” (23 USC 134 (K)(6)(D), 23 CFR 450.336 (b)(4)).

La Certificación formaliza la supervisión y evaluación continua del proceso de planificación por parte del Departamento de Transporte de Estados Unidos (U.S. DOT) para ayudar a garantizar que los requisitos de planificación de 23 U.S.C. 134 y 49 U.S.C. 5303 se implementen satisfactoriamente de manera no discriminatoria.

La Certificación brinda la oportunidad de ofrecer asesoramiento y orientación para mejorar el proceso de planificación metropolitana y la calidad de las decisiones de transporte. Aunque la FHWA y la FTA interactúan habitualmente con la organización de planificación metropolitana y sus agencias asociadas para revisar y aprobar productos de planificación y brindar asistencia técnica, esta revisión externa formal

puede ser un catalizador para mejorar la efectividad del proceso de planificación y su capacidad para abordar los principales problemas que enfrenta el área metropolitana.

La HRTPO está creada y designada para llevar a cabo el proceso de planificación y programación del transporte metropolitano para la región de Hampton Roads. La HRTPO está conformada por la Comisión de Planificación del Distrito de Hampton Roads (HRPDC).

La reunión pública programada es un componente de la revisión federal estatutaria requerida del proceso de planificación del transporte, realizada en cooperación por la HRTPO, la Comisión de Planificación del Distrito de Hampton Roads (HRPDC), el Departamento de Transporte de Virginia (VDOT), el Departamento de Ferrocarriles y Transporte Público de Virginia (VDRPT), Hampton Roads Transit (HRT), la Autoridad de Tránsito del Área Williamsburg (WATA), Suffolk Transit y los gobiernos locales que sirven a la región de Hampton Roads para evaluar el cumplimiento de los estatutos y regulaciones federales. Para obtener más información sobre la HRTPO, por favor visite: <https://www.hrtpo.org/>.

Información para participantes:

Si participa de manera virtual, los comentarios públicos pueden compartirse de dos maneras:

- 1) Una vez conectado a la reunión, por favor escriba en el cuadro de chat o desactive el silencio de su línea para hablar.
- 2) Envíe sus comentarios por correo electrónico a [Chelsea Beytas o Ivan Rucker \(correos electrónicos proporcionados a continuación\)](#).

[Si necesita asistencia o adaptaciones adicionales para participar, por favor contacte a Quan McLaurin \(\[qmclaurin@hrpdcva.gov\]\(mailto:qmclaurin@hrpdcva.gov\)\) antes del **viernes, 2 de agosto de 2024.**](#)

Si no puede asistir a la reunión en persona o virtualmente, también puede enviar sus comentarios a:

Federal Transit Administration, Region III
c/o Chelsea Beytas
1835 Market Street, Suite 1910 | Philadelphia, PA 19103
(215) 656-7961, chelsea.beytas@dot.gov

O

Federal Highway Administration, Virginia Division
c/o Ivan Rucker
400 N. 8th Street | Richmond, VA 23219
(804) 775-3350, ivan.rucker@dot.gov

Todos los comentarios públicos deben ser enviados antes del miércoles, 10 de septiembre de 2024.

APPENDIX F – HAMPTON ROADS TMA SITE VISIT AGENDA

**FHWA/FTA Certification Review of the
Hampton Roads Metropolitan Area
Transportation Planning Process
August 14-15, 2024**

Location: Hybrid in-person, virtual option
Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization
723 Woodlake Drive,
Chesapeake, Virginia 23320

August 14-15, 2024 Certification Review Agenda

Format for all sessions: Each topic is introduced by the Federal team discussion leader, followed by a five-minute overview and update by HRTPO staff (and other local agencies identified by the Federal team). The Federal team will then lead a discussion involving all participating agencies:

Federal Review Team Members: FHWA/FTA Division, Regional and HQ staff
Chelsea Beytas, FTA Region III
Ivan Rucker, FHWA Virginia Division
Mary Walker-Johnson, FHWA Virginia Division
Mack Frost, FHWA HQ
Mohamed Dumbuya, FHWA Resource Center

DAY 1 – Wednesday, August 14, 2024

8:30 AM **Introductions and Overview of the Certification of the Transportation Planning Process**
This opening session will provide a brief overview of the Risk Based Certification Process, preview of the agenda, summarize findings of previous review.

Federal Discussion Leaders: Chelsea Beytas & Ivan Rucker

9:00 AM **Agreements, MPO Structure, and Coordination**
This session will focus on how the MPO cooperatively determines their mutual responsibilities in carrying out the metropolitan and rural transportation planning process.

Federal Discussion Leaders: Chelsea Beytas

9:30 AM **Unified Planning Work Program and Rural Work Program**

This session will focus on the financial plan and system-level estimates of costs and revenues reasonably expected to be available to carry out the LRTP and TIP.

Federal Discussion Leaders: FHWA & FTA

10:00 AM Break

10:15 AM Public Transportation/Transit Coordination/Transit Asset Management Plan

This session will focus on the region's public transportation providers and coordination efforts with the MPO.

Federal Discussion Leader: FTA

11:15 AM Adjourn for CAC meeting

12:00 PM -2:00 PM: Meeting with CAC

Microsoft Teams [Need help?](#)

[Join the meeting now](#)

Meeting ID: 289 707 173 374

Passcode: tbkzMe

Dial in by phone

[+1 972-301-8039,,124652116#](#) United States, Dallas

[Find a local number](#)

Phone conference ID: 124 652 116#

2:15 PM: Reconvene for Long Range Plan Process and Update

This session will focus on the region's transportation blueprint guiding multimodal transportation investments over the next 20 years.

Federal Discussion Leader: Chelsea Beytas & Ivan Rucker

2:45 PM Break

3:00 PM Transportation Improvement Program and Annual Listing of Projects

This session will focus on the short-term program cycle for the implementation of surface transportation projects, project prioritization and listings.

Federal Discussion Leader: FTA & FHWA

3:30 PM Break

4:00 PM Congestion Management Process/Operations/Freight

This session will focus on the CMP integration into the overall metropolitan planning process and planning and Freight mobility.

Federal Discussion Leader: Ivan Rucker

4:30 Safety, Resiliency and Climate Change

Federal Discussion Leader: Ivan Rucker

5:00 PM Adjourn and Prepare for Public Meeting

6:00 – 8:00 PM: Public Meeting

Microsoft Teams

[Join the meeting now](#)

Meeting ID: 230 043 922 62

Passcode: Gu7ydY

Dial in by phone

[+1 972-301-8039,,231994292#](#) United States, Dallas

[Find a local number](#)

Phone conference ID: 231 994 292#

8:00 PM Public Meeting ends; Adjourn for Day 1

DAY 2 – Thursday, August 15, 2024

8:00 AM Follow-up from Day One (Federal Team only)

Time for Federal Team to discuss first day observations.

8:30 AM Title VI, Americans with Disabilities Act, Environmental Justice, Limited English Proficiency,

Discussion will focus on the Title VI Reviews, TIP Certification and required elements of Title VI ADA, LEP and EJ and other nondiscrimination statutes and authorities.

Federal Discussion Leader: FHWA

10:00 AM BREAK

10:15 AM Public Participation Plan/Public Outreach

Discussion will focus on the region's Public Involvement Plan, public involvement process and engagement activities, as well as information received from the CAC and Public Hearing from Day 1

Federal Discussion Leader: Chelsea Beytas & Ivan Rucker

11:15 AM Performance Based Planning and Programming, Transportation Performances Management, Transit Asset Management Plan

Discussion will focus on integrating performance measures and targets into metropolitan planning processes and progress achieved.

Federal Discussion Leader: Ivan Rucker

11:45 AM BREAK

12:00 PM Closeout Discussion and Certification Review Next Steps

12:30 PM Adjourn for Day 2, HRTPO site visit

APPENDIX G – LIST OF ACRONYMS

ADA: Americans with Disabilities Act
ALOP: Annual Listing of Obligated Projects
AMPO: Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations
AOR: Annual Obligation Report
CAA: Clean Air Act
CFR: Code of Federal Regulations
CMAQ: Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality
CMP: Congestion Management Process
CO: Carbon Monoxide
CRP: Carbon Reduction Program
CTB: Commonwealth Transportation Board
DOT: Department of Transportation
EJ: Environmental Justice
E.O.: Executive Order
EPA: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
FAST Act: Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act
FHWA: Federal Highway Administration
FTA: Federal Transit Administration
FY: Fiscal Year
HRT: Transportation District Commission of Hampton Roads (TDCHR), dba Hampton Roads Transit
HRPDC: Hampton Roads Planning District Commission
HRTPO: Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization
HSIP: Highway Safety Improvement Program
IIJA: Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act
ISTEA: Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act
ITS: Intelligent Transportation Systems
JLUS: Joint Land Use Studies
LEP: Limited-English-Proficiency
MERIT: Making Efficient and Responsible Investments in Transit, VDRPT's Capital Assistance Program
M&O: Management and Operations
MAP-21: Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century
MOU: Memorandum of Understanding
MPA: Metropolitan Planning Area
MPO: Metropolitan Planning Organization
MTP: Metropolitan Transportation Plan
NAAQS: National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NEPA: National Environmental Policy Act
NO₂: Nitrogen Dioxide
O₃: Ozone



PBPP: Performance Based Planning and Programming
PDC: Planning District Commission
PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}: Particulate Matter
PTASP: Public Transit Agency Safety Plan
SHSP: Strategic Highway Safety Plan
STIP: State Transportation Improvement Program
TAM: Transit Asset Management
TDM: Travel Demand Management
TDD/TTY: Telecommunications Devices for the Deaf/Teletypewriters
TDP: Transit Development Plan
TIP: Transportation Improvement Program
TMA: Transportation Management Area
TPM: Transportation Performance Management
TPO: Transportation Planning Organization
USC: United States Code
UPWP: Unified Planning Work Program
USDOT: United States Department of Transportation
VDOT: Virginia Department of Transportation
VDRPT: Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transit
UZA: Urbanized Area
WATA: Williamsburg Area Transit Authority

APPENDIX H – EXAMPLE LANGUAGE TAGLINES

English

ATTENTION: If you speak another language, language assistance services, free of charge, are available to you. Call xxx-xxx-xxxxx (TTY: XXX-XXXXX).

Español

ATENCIÓN: Si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al xxx-xxx-xxxxx (TTY: XXX-XXXXX).

中文

注意：如果您講廣東話或普通話，您可以免費獲得語言援助服務。請致電 xxx-xxx-xxxxx (TTY: XXX-XXXXX)。

tiếng việt

CHÚ Ý: Nếu bạn nói Tiếng Việt, có các dịch vụ hỗ trợ ngôn ngữ miễn phí dành cho bạn. Gọi số xxx-xxx-xxxxx (TTY: XXX-XXXXX)..

한국어

주의: 한국어를 사용하시는 경우, 언어 지원 서비스를 무료로 이용하실 수 있습니다. xxx-xxx-xxxxx (TTY: XXX-XXXXX). 번으로 전화해 주십시오.

Français

ATTENTION : Si vous parlez français, des services d'aide linguistique vous sont proposés gratuitement. Appelez le xxx-xxx-xxxxx (ATS: XXX-XXXXX).

العَرَبِيَّة

. المبرقة 1-888-206-4697 ملحوظة: إذا كنت تتحدث اللغة العربية، فإن خدمات المساعدة اللغوية تتوافر لك بالمجان. اتصل برقم xxx-xxx-xxxxx (TTY: XXX-XXXXX). الكاتبة:

Hmoob

LUS CEEV: Yog tias koj hais lus Hmoob, cov kev pab txog lus, muaj kev pab dawb rau koj. Hu rau xxx-xxx-xxxxx (TTY: XXX-XXXXX).

Русский

ВНИМАНИЕ: Если вы говорите на русском языке, то вам доступны бесплатные услуги перевода. Звоните 1 xxx-xxx-xxxxx (телетайп: xxx-xxx-xxxx).

Tagalog



PAUNAWA: Kung nagsasalita ka ng Tagalog, maaari kang gumamit ng mga serbisyo ng tulong sa wika nang walang bayad. Tumawag sa xxx-xxx-xxxxx (TTY: XXX-XXXXX).

Deutsch

ACHTUNG: Wenn Sie Deutsch sprechen, stehen Ihnen kostenlos sprachliche Hilfsdienstleistungen zur Verfügung. Rufnummer: xxx-xxx-xxxxx (TTY: XXX-XXXXX).

ລາວ

ໂປດຊາບ: ຖ້າວ່າ ທ່ານເວົ້າພາສາ ລາວ, ການບໍລິການຊ່ວຍເຫຼືອດ້ານພາສາ, ໂດຍບໍ່ເສັຽຄ່າ, ແມ່ນມີພ້ອມໃຫ້ທ່ານ. ໂທສ xxx-xxx-xxxxx (TTY: XXX-XXXXX).

日本語

注意事項：日本語を話される場合、無料の言語支援をご利用いただけます。xxx-xxx-xxxxx (TTY: XXX-XXXXX)。まで、お電話にてご連絡ください。



Report prepared by:

FTA Region III and FHWA Virginia Division