



## PLANNING COORDINATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, May 28, 2025

6:30 p.m. EST

2600 Park Tower Drive, Suite 601

Vienna, VA 22180

*This meeting was held in person and livestreamed via YouTube.*

### MEETING SUMMARY

#### I. Call to Order/Welcome

- Mayor Colbert (Town of Vienna), Chair of the Committee, welcomed Committee members and called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.
- Attendees:
  - **PCAC Members:** In-person - Mayor Colbert (Chair, Town of Vienna); Supervisor Glass (Loudoun County); Council Member Peterson (City of Fairfax); Council Member Underhill (City of Falls Church); Council Member Smith (City of Manassas); Vice Mayor Hedrick (Town of Herndon).
  - **NVTA Staff:** Monica Backmon (Chief Executive Officer); Keith Jasper (Principal, Transportation Planning and Programming); Dr. Nampoothiri (Senior Manager); Kristen Sarik (Regional Transportation Planner).
  - **Other:** William L. Bohner, Manya Ebrahimzadeh (consultant staff), Jaleh Moslehi (Town of Herndon).

#### II. Action Items:

- A. **Summary notes of March 26, 2025, meeting:** The meeting summary notes were approved unanimously.

#### III. Discussion/Information items:

- **Preliminary Public Participation Update on the Draft BRT Action Plan:**
  - Mr. Jasper and Mr. Bohner, the Research Director at WBA Research, presented the public participation update for the draft Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Action Plan. Mr. Jasper updated committee members on current status of the planning process, with a brief background context on the need and purpose of this Plan, and a timeline for adoption. The meeting agenda outline was:
    - BRT Action Plan Status Update

- Phase 3 Preliminary Survey Results
- Lessons Learned, Next Steps
- Discussion Questions

Currently, phase 3 Public Engagement stage of the planning process is almost completed. Staff will request the committee endorse the Action Plan for the Authority's adoption at its June 25 meeting.

- Mr. Bohner explained the public engagement process consisting of 10 pop-up events and an online survey which was open for one month and received 587 total responses. The survey asked the respondents' likelihood of using a BRT system, the extent to which the proposed system does or does not meet their needs, and anticipated route usage. The pop-up events were balanced across NoVA with close proximity to more than one proposed BRT route, targeting both drivers and transit-users. In total, there were 4,614 in-person interactions at these pop-ups.
- Highlights of the survey findings:
  - Those age 18-34 are more likely to say it goes to all or most places they would want to go than those who are age 35 or older (78%, compared to 56%).
  - Public transportation riders rated themselves very/extremely likely to consider using BRT at a higher rate than non-riders (82% compared to 66% of non-riders). Those age 18-34 are extremely/very likely to consider using BRT at a higher rate than those age 35 or older (84%, compared to 66%).
  - White/Caucasian residents were more likely to choose dedicated lanes as the most important BRT feature than People of Color.
  - Residents aged 18 to 54 are more likely to use their chosen route during afternoon peak times (68%, compared to 48% among those 55 or older). Riders, on average, would use BRT more frequently than current non-riders (4.1 days per week compared to 2.5 among non-riders).
  - While the results are not representative of the region and the survey analysis is still ongoing, the results so far have been generally positive towards a regional BRT system.

During and after this presentation, committee members questioned/clarified the following:

Mayor Colbert: *What is the population universe for this survey, have you analyzed destination points for the 18-34 age group population?*

The survey was conducted for the Northern Virginia population. On trip distribution by age groups, we are analyzing survey findings.

Council member Peterson: *Did you capture concerns about dedicated lanes' impact on overall mobility?*

We have received responses from both groups, supporting/not-supporting dedicated lanes for a proposed BRT service. This is a regional level analysis, with varying degree of lane dedications assumed for the analytical process, with nothing definitive or prescriptive.

Council member Underhill: *A comment – in City of Falls Church, travel model analyses have shown that there are minimal negative impacts of dedicated*

*bus lanes. But that may be unique to City's land use and multimodal network conditions.*

- **Next Steps and Preliminary Recommendations on the Draft BRT Action Plan:**

Mr. Jasper reiterated that the draft BRT Action Plan is part of the “think big, start small, and build momentum” approach to regional BRT implementation. The work done thus far will result in a non-binding blueprint for a cohesive regional BRT network. He stressed on the point that while prescribing detailed service characteristics for each of the 28 BRT line is not objective of this Plan, we must plan to ensure high-capacity transit services that are fast, frequent, and reliable. Since we do not expect new Metrorail line extensions in the next 2-3 decades, this holistic regional BRT system offers the best opportunity for meaningful alternatives to driving. He outlined the following next steps:

- Continue to integrate BRT into NVTAs and jurisdictions' planning processes
- Additional research, e.g., performance evaluation, operations, and governance
- Peer exchange
- Expand outreach/education, including business community
- Collaboratively develop holistic BRT implementation interoperability/design guidelines/standards
- Explore/support non-NVTA funding opportunities
- Specify FTA-compliant regional STOPS model
- The following questions were presented to committee members for discussion:
  - What is the biggest opportunity and biggest challenge facing deployment of regional BRT?
  - What steps should be taken to address these challenges, including by NVTA?
  - What additional analysis or more detailed information would you like NVTA to explore?

On the third question, Mr. Jasper clarified that while we cannot guarantee additional analyses now with the current scope/budget/schedule, we need to know what additional analyses may be warranted. He reminded members that there is no NVTA funding commitment with the plan approval, we are approving a regional blueprint of a connected BRT system.

Council member Smith: *Thanks for the great work so far, make sure these proposed BRT lines connect with VRE stations, so commuters will have more destination choices.*

Council member Underhill: *Main challenge will be to actually get travelers to use BRT services. On dedicated lanes, adopt an early public relation campaign to market the benefits for a fast and frequent bus service. We also need to*

*address another issue, when we widen roadways to accommodate bus lanes, the resulting width may make the corridor less walkable.*

Supervisor Glass: *Are we talking about a regional body to run this system?*

We need to operate within the current organizational and governance structure. The Action Plan can be amended to reflect any future changes to the operating landscape.

Council member Peterson: *We need a city council work session to cover the gaps in awareness and knowledge of BRT services.*

Vice Mayor Hedrick: *Data on traffic flow impacts, especially before/after conditions with similar projects from other parts of United States will be helpful. As a part of this plan, have you all analyzed density patterns of origins/destinations of travelers?*

Yes, the plan analyses utilized travel demand data from MWCOG/TPB's cooperative forecasts, with more granular traffic flow analytics for Northern Virginia.

Mayor Colbert: *This plan is not a funding commitment, but will projects from this plan have better chances to get future funding from NVT?*

All funding applications to NVT will have to go through the regular Six Year Program candidate project evaluation process.

- **NVT Update:**

- Ms. Backmon mentioned major deadlines for the ongoing funding application process for the FY2026-2031 Six Year Program, and the upcoming Bicycle-Pedestrian study as requested by the House and Senate Transportation Committee chairs of the Virginia General Assembly.

**IV. Adjourn:** The next meeting of the PCAC is scheduled for June 25<sup>th</sup>.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm.