



Northern Virginia Transportation Authority

The Authority for Transportation in Northern Virginia

PLANNING COORDINATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, October 23, 2024, 6:30 pm

Northern Virginia Transportation Authority

In-Person Meeting at NVRTA Offices, 2600 Park Tower Drive, Vienna, VA

Live-streamed on YouTube

MEETING SUMMARY

I. Call to Order/Welcome

- Council Member Miles (Town of Dumfries), Vice-chair of the Committee, welcomed Committee members and called the meeting to order at 6:40 p.m.
- Attendees: This was an in-person meeting held at NVRTA's new offices at 2600 Park Tower Drive, Vienna, VA 22180.
 - **PCAC Members:** Council Member Miles (Vice-chair, Town of Dumfries); Supervisor Glass (Loudoun County); Council Member Bagley (City of Alexandria); Mayor Milan (Town of Purcellville).
 - **NVRTA Staff:** Monica Backmon (Chief Executive Officer); Michael Longhi (Chief Financial Officer); Keith Jasper (Principal, Transportation Planning and Programming); Harun Rashid (Planning Analytics Manager).
 - **Other:** Jaleh Moslehi (Town of Herndon).

II. Action Items:

- A. **Summary Notes of June 20, 2024, Meeting:** Due to the absence of a quorum, the June 20, 2024, meeting summary was tabled.

III. Discussion/Information Items:

A. Resubmitted Projects with Cost Overruns – Policy Development Update:

- Mr. Jasper explained the context of this topic to address the project cost overrun issue. Based on this committee's recommendation on June 20, 2024, the Authority directed NVRTA staff to develop a policy for handling resubmitted projects with cost overruns.
- Mr. Longhi stated that in FY2015, the Authority established a contingency reserve. However, after reviewing its potential use for addressing cost overruns, the decision was made against utilizing it for that purpose and subsequently eliminated the reserve. Mr. Longhi outlined several reasons for eliminating the funding of cost overruns, including the potential to shift risk from the project sponsor to NVRTA; the possibility of impacting the project evaluation and selection process by increasing NVRTA funds beyond the original agreement; and could cause project sponsors to reduce their project contingency,

relying on NVTa to provide additional funds needed to complete the project. Mr. Longhi then outlined additional policy considerations that have emerged since the initial review of cost overruns in FY2015/2016.

- Following the update, committee members provided clarification through the following questions/comments:

- *(Mayor Milan) Are we addressing the issues raised in 2015-16 that resulted in the elimination of the contingency fund?* First, we need to decide if the Authority wants to fund project cost overruns. Depending on the outcome, staff will either draft a new policy to fund cost overruns, addressing all issues raised earlier on its applications, or a policy to not fund cost overruns. Staff recommendation is not to fund cost overruns.

- *(Council member Bagley) Within the current project contract (SPA), there exist mechanisms to discuss cost escalation issues, is project phasing an answer to better address this?* This depends on project types; Some projects are naturally subject to longer implementation timelines, which can lead to cost escalations. Note that a project funding application that declares itself to be fully funded, gets an advantage in the evaluation process.

- *(Council member Bagley) Are we to provide formal recommendations in this meeting?* We do not have a quorum, and this was also presented as an information item in this meeting. Staff will offer a set of recommendations to the Authority in November (November 14 meeting) and will come back to this committee for formal recommendations. However, some direction to move forward from this committee will be helpful for staff to draft the next set of recommendations.

- After this discussion, committee members shared similar concerns as presented by Mr. Longhi to fund cost overruns, and informally expressed their support to not fund project cost overruns.

B. Six Year Program Application Evaluation Process (Verbal Update):

- Mr. Jasper explained how NVTa's adopted Core Values of Equity, Safety, and Sustainability could be considered for project evaluation for the upcoming Six Year Program. In the last funding program cycle (FY2024-2029), committee members expressed concerns of double counting in the evaluation process, where core values were considered in both quantitative and qualitative processes. To address this issue, in the next funding cycle (Call for Regional Transportation Projects anticipated in May 2025), NVTa staff will consider keeping the evaluation of core values outside of the formal evaluation workflow, but with a mandatory requirement for applicants to submit a core value statement for each application.
- Committee member discussion:
 - *(Council member Bagley) As NVTa's funding programs evolve, are we considering the short-mid-long term effects of 'induced demands' due to roadway capacity*

projects? Committee members will certainly feel comfortable in signing off on funding recommendations with knowledge on prior NVTA projects' impacts on travel demands. Staff is fully aware of this issue, and constantly seeking additional data sources to monitor and quantify NVTA projects' transportation impacts. These effects may take a considerable amount of time to fully manifest, and there might be other external factors that affect travel demands. NVTA's modeling process considers some short-term effects of increasing roadway capacities. Also, we cannot discuss induced demand without considering the increase in population and employment in the region. MWCOC-TPB's recent travel survey reveals that lower income populations are three times more likely to drive to work due to challenges with housing affordability. We need to be cognizant of the complexities and nuances of the 'induced demand' effects. According to NVTA staff analyses, lane-miles added with NVTA funding are very similar to lane-miles added with transit and active transportation modes.

- C. **NVTA Update:** Mr. Jasper noted that NVTA's inaugural State of the Region's Transportation Network event will be held on October 30, 2024, at the new NVTA offices. At this event, NVTA staff will present several metrics related to transportation system performance, establishing a benchmark for NVTA staff to report changes in the future. In response to a committee member's question, Mr. Jasper mentioned that this event will not be live-streamed, but staff can report back to this committee on event proceedings.

- IV. **Adjourn:** Mr. Jasper noted that due to Thanksgiving Holidays in November, the next meeting of the PCAC is scheduled for the 3rd Wednesday in November (Nov. 20), at 5:00 p.m. (virtual).
The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 pm.