

Rappahannock Rapidan Regional Commission
Rural Transportation Technical Committee
July 7, 2016
Minutes

Attendees: Salem Bush (Town of Culpeper), Patrick Mauney (RRRC), Sam McLearen (Culpeper County), Mark Nesbit (VDOT), Dan Painter (VDOT), Marie Pham (Fauquier County), Thomas Wysong (Orange County)

Welcome and Introductions, Agenda, Minutes, Matters from the Public

P Mauney called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

The agenda was approved as presented. Motion by M Pham, 2nd by T Wysong.

The minutes from the May 5, 2016 meeting were approved as presented. Motion by M Pham, 2nd by S Bush.

There were no comments from the public.

Overview of 2010 RRRC Regional Freight Study

As a follow up to the May committee meeting discussion of regional truck and freight traffic, P Mauney presented a broad overview of the regional freight study completed by the Regional Commission in 2010 with funding obtained from the Multimodal Planning Grant program offered at that time by VDOT and the Office of Intermodal Planning and Investment (OIPI). The presentation can be viewed in full at <http://www.rrregion.org/trancmte.html>.

The regional freight study includes a Freight Infrastructure profile, Quantitative Freight Movement profile, Survey of regional freight industries, and Recommendations and Strategies. All documents can be accessed at <http://www.rrregion.org/publications.html>.

Major findings from the study are that freight movement in the region is almost entirely comprised of through traffic. 96.5% of freight tonnage is pass-through traffic. Likewise, freight movement is primarily via trucks, with 93% of tonnage and 99.8% of freight value originating in the region moving by truck. Similarly, 90% of tonnage and 96% of freight value destined for the region moves by truck, with the remainder via rail. The data for the quantitative analysis comes from the Transearch database, which projects freight tonnage moving into, out of, and through the region to triple in tonnage by 2035 and quadruple in value by the same year.

The recommendations from the study included incorporating truck traffic in roadway deficiency identification, coordinate land use and zoning decisions with regard to the location of freight-intensive industries, participation in statewide freight planning efforts, and continued focus on proposed freight expansion (rail, air and/or Virginia Inland Port in Front Royal).

S McLearen asked about any regional railroad crossing studies in existence. P Mauney indicated that he was not aware of a comprehensive study other than intersection maps included in the freight study. D Painter and M Nesbit indicated that VDOT may have studies specific to individual crossings, but nothing region-wide. M Nesbit indicated that a crossing on Rectortown

Road near Marshall in Fauquier County may have some data. S McLearn asked about the crossing on Route 666 between Route 15/29 business and Route 15/29 in Culpeper County.

Regional Truck Traffic Update

D Painter presented information on the current value and role of freight and truck traffic in the region. Freight and truck traffic impacts the region in a number of ways, including congestion impacts on the major primary corridors, and impacts to residential and passenger vehicle movement in the region's small towns. All roads are open to truck traffic, unless a truck restriction is in place. Such restrictions require local resolution and approval by the Commonwealth Transportation Board. The committee briefly discussed existing restrictions in Gordonsville and on Route 17 in Fauquier County, as well as GPS routing issues in Culpeper and Fauquier counties.

The primary freight corridors in the region are Interstate 66, Route 15, Route 17, and Route 29. Route 15/17/29 carried 17M tons of freight valued at \$19 billion in 2012. Route 17 carries in excess of 5,000 trucks per day. In general, truck traffic accounts for less than 12% of total vehicle traffic on the region's corridors.

Future impacts are anticipated due to the increased capacity for mega ships through the Panama Canal and the ability of the Port of Virginia to handle additional freight. This will lead to an increase in the number of trucks hauling freight through Virginia, as well as the potential for additional distribution centers in the state.

The committee discussed the issue of truck parking and rest areas. VDOT is looking to make use of an exit off of I-66 as a westbound truck rest area, and will host a public information meeting on August 31st in the Marshall area. D Painter also referenced a statewide truck parking study completed by VDOT that delves into the topic. That study is linked here:

http://www.virginiadot.org/projects/resources/VirginiaTruckParkingStudy_FinalReport_July2015.pdf.

Smart Scale Discussion/Potential Projects

The committee reviewed proposed changes to the Smart Scale (recently rebranded from HB2) policy and technical guides. Comments regarding the proposed changes are due by July 20th to the Commonwealth Transportation Board. For applicants, the most important change is a pre-submission deadline of August 15th. Submitting basic project information by that date will ensure that VDOT has enough staff to respond to local project needs in advance of the September 30th application deadline.

The committee also discussed changes to the economic development category, which will have tiered scoring based on project type (larger projects such as lane widening or interchanges will have a wider radius to receive economic development points) and the safety category, where projects will receive points from all crashes, rather than only fatal or severe injury crashes.

Local representatives briefly discussed potential project submissions. P Mauney asked that brief write-ups of project submissions be provided to Regional Commission staff by mid-August in order for consideration of support by the Regional Commission at its August meeting. Requests received after that date will likely go to the Regional Commission in October, and then provided to localities for submission to the CTB and VDOT.

Planning Roundtable

Committee members provided brief updates on local planning and transportation activities.

M Pham referenced a recent meeting in Fauquier County regarding a potential train storage facility for use by Virginia Railway Express as part of its Haymarket extension. VRE and its consultant indicated that Fauquier County sites were no longer under consideration at this time.

S McLearen discussed ongoing projects in Culpeper County on Route 3, at Route 29/Route 666 and at Mountain Run Lake Road. He also referenced a potential rezoning on Nalles Mill Road. D Painter and S Bush indicated that the project may have impacts on the Town of Culpeper, as well.

S Bush discussed Town of Culpeper projects, including the widening on Route 229, upcoming multimodal project on Sperryville Pike, and potential roundabout at Route 3 and McDevitt Drive.

M Nesbit announced that the Louisa residency office is open, with Alan Saunders in charge. They will work with Orange County on land use issues. Madison County will work with Charlottesville for land use issues. In addition, phase one of a safety improvement project at Opal is going to begin soon, with a left-in/left-out at the Quarles service station that will include a southbound acceleration lane for left-turns out of the service station.

P Mauney referred to notes from the 7/6 webinar on Highway Safety Improvement Program funding, and will forward information along with the meeting summary.

Announcements & Other Business

P Mauney announced that the current chairs of the committee – John Egertson and Debbie Kendall – have been in the position for many years and have recently accepted promotions that preclude their regular participation on the committee. P Mauney requested that any committee member interested in serving as Chair or Vice-Chair contact him between now and September. The requirements are minimal, but include running the bi-monthly meetings and coordinating with RRRC staff regarding agenda items in advance of the meetings.

The next Rural Transportation Committee is scheduled for **Thursday, September 1, 2016**.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:30 a.m.