

# U.S. Department of Transportation Planning Certification Review

Mack Frost  
November 09, 2017

Preliminary Report for the Tri-Cities Area Metropolitan  
Planning Organization (TCAMPO)



U.S. Department of Transportation  
**Federal Highway Administration**  
**Federal Transit Administration**

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# Definition, Purpose and Frequency of Review

- What is it?** In depth, documented review of planning process
- What for?** To ensure planning and program process consistent with federal law and regulations
- How often?** At least every 4 years



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# Joint Certification

## ❑ What is it?

FHWA and FTA shall take action after jointly reviewing the TMA's planning process

## FHWA and FTA Action 23 CFR 450.336(b)

If the process **substantially meets** the requirements of the Federal law and regulation

Jointly certify the transportation planning process.

Jointly certify the transportation planning process **subject to the specified corrective actions being addressed.**

If the process **does not meet** the requirements of the Federal law and regulation

Jointly certify the planning process as the basis **for approval of only those categories of programs or projects that the FHWA and the FTA jointly determine**, subject to certain specified corrective actions being taken.



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# Certification Review

The Certification is not just a review of the MPO or its staff; rather, it is a review of the planning process conducted by all agencies (State, MPO, and transit operators) charged with carrying out the process on a daily basis. This shared responsibility is specifically addressed in the regulations:

*The MPO, State(s), and the providers of public transportation shall cooperatively determine their mutual responsibilities in carrying out the metropolitan transportation planning process.*

*[23 CFR 450.314(a)]*



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# Planning Certification Review

❑ **Date: September 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>, 2017**

❑ **Participants:**

- ❖ **Federal Transit Administration, Region III**
- ❖ **Federal Highway Administration**
  - ❖ Virginia Division
  - ❖ Headquarters
  - ❖ Resource Center
- ❖ **Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT)**
- ❖ **Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)**
- ❖ **Tri-Cities Area MPO (TCAMPO) Staff**
- ❖ **Petersburg Area Transit (PAT)**
- ❖ **RideFinders**
- ❖ **Friends of the Lower Appomattox River (FOLAR)**



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Regional Public Meeting: September 19, 2017  
5:00pm – 7:00pm

## Comment from Public Meeting

### General Input

- ❖ Provide increased access to employment centers for transit dependent populations.
  - ❖ Example:
    - ❖ Increased headway times for transit
    - ❖ Increase route choices for transit

\*The FHWA and FTA shall consider the public input received in arriving at a decision on a certification action. [23 CFR 450.336(b)(4)]





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## Highlights:

### Commendations:

- √ Cooperation (VDOT, DRPT RideFinders, MPO, Petersburg Area Transit)
- √ Diverse Public Involvement Techniques
- √ 2040 Long Range Plan Process
  - √ Visualization Techniques
- √ Congestion Management Process
- √ RideFinders
- √ PAT
- √ Safety



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## Corrective Actions

### ❑ Title VI/Nondiscrimination Assurance [49 CFR 21.7(a)(1)]

- ❖ The TCAMPO have a signed Title VI Assurance (DOT Order No. 1050.2A). The Assurance must be reviewed and executed by the head of the PDC/MPO, and we recommend it be attached to the MPO Title VI Plan.
- ❖ Also refer to FY 2018 Federal Planning Finding for additional information.

**Addressed by:** The Commonwealth sending the signed Title VI Assurance to FHWA by December 31, 2017 as referenced in the FY 2018 Federal Planning Finding.





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## Corrective Actions

### ❑ Title VI Coordinator [23 CFR 200.9 (b), VDOT Title VI Implementation Plan, 2016]

- ❖ Ensure that there is an individual in place who is knowledgeable and has an understanding of the effective and efficient implementation of the Title VI/Nondiscrimination program, or the Title VI Coordinator be trained to effectively implement the TCAMPO's Title VI Program. (FHWA/FTA can provide assistance/training upon request).

**Addressed by:** The MPO having an individual in place who is knowledgeable of the Title VI program and VDOT conducting a review to ensure the Title VI coordinator is knowledgeable.



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## Corrective Actions

- ❑ **Bylaws [23 USC 134 (d)(2)(B), 23 USC 134 (d)(3)(c)]**
  - ❖ Adopt bylaws that are consistent with federal requirements.
  - ❖ Voting Membership
    - ❖ Include the Petersburg Area Transit (PAT) as a voting member.
    - ❖ Include the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (VDRPT) as a voting member. The federal regulations require public agencies that administer a major mode of transportation in the MPA and appropriate state officials be voting members [23 CFR 450.310(d), 23 USC 134 (d)].
    - ❖ MPO staff should not be a voting member of the MPO.

**Addressed by:** MPO developing and adopting by-laws consistent with federal requirements.



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## Corrective Actions

### □ UPWP [23 CFR 450.308 (c), 23 CFR 420.111 (a), 23 CFR 420.115]

- ❖ Work tasks that lapse/carry-over into the next UPWP cycle be clearly identified in the UPWP. Additionally the surplus or deficit of budgeted funds for carry-over tasks be clearly identified in UPWP. A clearly defined section for task products is needed.
- ❖ MPO must obtain federal approval for changes to UPWP [23 CFR 420.115(a)].

Addressed by: MPO including the activities above in the next UPWP update.

MPO obtaining approval from FHWA and FTA for changes to UPWP.



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## Corrective Actions

### Transportation Improvement Program

The following items be updated:

- ❖ VDOT and MPO Joint Self-certification Statement [23 CFR 450.336(a)]
- ❖ Fiscal Constraint
  - ❖ Must include all reasonably available highway and transit funds over the span of the document.

**Addressed by:** VDOT and MPO sign an updated Joint Self-certification Statement and sending it to FHWA and FTA.

MPO must approve a TIP amendment to demonstrate fiscal constraint.



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## Corrective Actions

### ❑ **Agreements [23 CFR 450.314 (e), also see 23 USC 134 (g)]**

- ❖ Have a written agreement among the Richmond TPO, Greater Richmond Transit Company (GRTPC), Petersburg Area Transit, and the Commonwealth that describes how the planning process will be coordinated to assure development of consistent metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs across the MPA boundaries. This includes a reflection of coordinated data collection, analysis, and planning assumptions across the Richmond and Tri-Cities MPA.

**Addressed by:** TCAMPO, Richmond TPO, GRTC, Petersburg Area Transit and the Commonwealth develop a written agreement.



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## Recommendations

### □ Long Range Transportation Plan

We strongly recommend the MPO:

- ❖ Revisit Environmental Justice Analysis to include a finding based on the analysis.
- ❖ Financial Planning
  - ❖ Must identify highway and transit projects over the span of the document.
- ❖ Include a Regional Vision Statement for the next LRTP update.





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## Recommendations

### □ Public Participation Plan

We recommend the following be included in the next Public Participation Plan update:

- ❖ MPO should review language within their PPP to confirm that a clear timeframe is established for providing the public a reasonable opportunity to comment on proposed amendments to the TIP and LRTP.<sup>1</sup>
- ❖ Clear and concise language should be included for public notices.
- ❖ Public Participation Feedback

<sup>1</sup> As referenced in the FY 2018 Federal Planning Finding.



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## Recommendations

### □ TCAMPO Website

We recommend the following activities:

- ❖ Include all agendas and meeting materials on the website prior to the scheduled meetings.
- ❖ Update and manage MPO website.



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## Recommendations

### □ **Planning Performance Measure Assessment**

We recommend the following activity:

- ❖ VDOT and DRPT should assess the potential resource requirements for the MPO to effectively implement Performance Based Planning and Programming (PBPP).



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## **FHWA/FTA Joint Finding:**

The TCAMPO's transportation planning and program development process substantially meets federal requirements, and we jointly certify the transportation planning process subject to the specified corrective actions being addressed. In addition, we strongly recommend that the MPO consider action on all recommendations.



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