

TMA Certification Review

Tri-Cities Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (TCAMPO)

2017

Based on this review and ongoing oversight by the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration, the transportation planning process carried out by the Tri-Cities Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (TCAMPO) in cooperation with the State and transit operator for the Transportation Management Area is *conditionally* certified as substantially meeting the requirements as described in 23 Code of Federal Register Part 450, Subpart C and 49 Code of Federal Register Part 613. Several *commendations* have been made throughout this report to acknowledge successful practices; *recommendations* that should be strongly considered and that support continued enhancement of the planning process in this region; and *corrective actions* that require attention.



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Description and Overview of MPO

The Tri-Cities Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (TCAMPO) is the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) that serves as the cooperative forum for regional transportation planning and decision-making for the Tri-Cities metropolitan planning area. The MPO Policy Board also provides direction over the selection of projects receiving Federal funds that are suballocated to the region. The TCAMPO planning area is the southern portion of the Richmond, Virginia Urbanized Area. The 2010 Decennial Census population for the Richmond, Virginia Urbanized Area was 953,556, and the Transportation Management Area (TMA) includes the Cities of Colonial Heights, Hopewell, Petersburg, and the Counties of Chesterfield, Dinwiddie and Prince George (a portion of Chesterfield County is within the Richmond Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RRTPO) Planning Area boundary where they are also a member of the (RRTPO)).

According to the TCAMPO's 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), the MPO expects population and employment to grow between 2016 and 2040. Additionally, the MPO expects the counties to grow faster than the cities. The MPO expects to growth of around 1.2% per year. Most of the growth is expected to occur in Chesterfield and Dinwiddie Counties. The proportion of elderly in the Tri-Cities MPO area has increased steadily from 1960 to 2010. As a result, the population over 65 is expected to continue to grow and need more paratransit or demand response transit services.

The Tri-Cities MPO is positioned with access to the international gateway at the Port of Virginia and is proximate to major U.S. population centers. Due to the MPO's geographic location, it is important to maintain and improve the transportation corridor and access to the Port of Virginia facilities. Due to the MPO being situated in between the Washington D.C. to North Carolina corridor; there are many logistics facilities located within the MPO area. It is of importance to the MPO to maintain and improve these corridors and access to the Port of Virginia facilities.

The region continues to grow to accommodate more jobs and more people (including shifting employment and employment centers) and as jobs and households become increasingly further apart, greater demands will be placed on the transportation system. The increase in transportation demand will require the MPO to collaborate with member and neighboring jurisdictions to meet the projected transportation demand.

Part 1: Certification Review Findings

Pursuant to Title 23 and 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations, a joint Planning Certification Review by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) must be conducted not less than once every four years. The Certification Reviews are a more detailed review beyond the TMA's self-certification, and are not just a review of the MPO or its staff; rather it covers all of the agencies (State, MPO, and transit operators) that are tasked with cooperatively carrying out the planning process. This shared responsibility is specifically addressed under 23 CFR 450.314(a).

The TCAMPO was notified on July 31, 2017 that FHWA and FTA would be conducting a joint agency Planning Certification Review of the TMA (see **Appendix A**). The TCAMPO Certification Review consisted of three parts. These parts included a “desk” review of the MPO's planning products and processes, a public meeting, and an on-site review. The on-site portion of the Certification Review was conducted on September 19th – September 20th, 2017 at the Petersburg Area Transit. The agenda for the site visit (see **Appendix B**) and the *Preliminary Findings Presentation* (see **Appendix C**) that was delivered to the TCAMPO Policy Board on November 9th, 2017 is contained within this report. The following agencies and persons participated in the on-site discussions:

- Ivan Rucker (FHWA)
- Tonya Holland (FTA)
- Melisa McGill (FTA)
- John Simkins (FHWA)
- Kevin Jones (FHWA)
- Mack Frost (FHWA)
- Mohamed Dumbuya (FHWA)
- Jill Stark (FHWA)
- Mark Riblett (VDOT)
- Ferrell Solomon (VDOT)
- Ron Svejkovsky (VDOT)
- Jason Robinson (VDOT)
- Jasmine Amanin (VDOT)
- Rachel Taylor (VDOT)
- Ben Mannell (VDOT)
- Mark Irving (VDOT)
- Oliver Rose (VDOT)
- Katie Schwing (VDRPT)
- Queenie Byrd (PAT)
- Charles Koonz (PAT)
- Von Tisdale (Ridefinders)
- Brigitte Tanner Carter (Ridefinders)
- Steve Elswick (Chesterfield County Board of Supervisors)
- Mr. John Wood (Colonial Heights City Council)
- Mr. T.J. Webb (Prince George County Board of Supervisors)
- Wendy Austin – (Friends of the Lower Appomattox)
- David Hyder (Crater PDC/Tri-Cities MPO)
- Denny Morris (Crater PDC/Tri-Cities MPO)
- Christopher Nicholas (Crater PDC/Tri-Cities MPO)
- Christopher Wichman (Richmond TMA)
- Barbara Nelson (Richmond TMA)
- Sarah Rhodes (Richmond TMA)

The Certification Review process ensures that the planning requirements of 23 USC 134 and 49 USC 5303 are being satisfactorily implemented. The Review process is an opportunity for FHWA and FTA to provide advice and guidance to the planning partners in a TMA to enhance the planning process and improve the quality of transportation investment decisions. Discussion topics raised during the review afford an opportunity to provide technical assistance to the TMA planning stakeholders.

FHWA and FTA consistently interact with TMA planning partners on a routine basis, reviewing and approving planning products, providing technical assistance, and promoting best practices. Furthermore, the Certification Review process provides a higher-level functional assessment of the TMA's transportation planning process. Specifically, the FHWA and FTA review the TMA to promote consistency between transportation improvements and planned growth and economic development in order to address the safety and security of the Nation's transportation systems. As well as ensure the development of a performance-based and multimodal program to improve decision-making through better informed planning and programming across national goal areas.

By reviewing and documenting the MPO's activities related to their transportation process, the Federal team can develop case studies and examples of "noteworthy practices," which can be shared with other States, MPOs, and public transportation operators. The Certification Review provides the stakeholders with an opportunity to continue progress in expanding the state of the practice for transportation planning. As it relates to the state of the practice, the review provides FHWA and FTA with an excellent opportunity to provide new information to the MPO on new requirements and nationally recognized best practices.

Commendations Summary

Section 3-4 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

The Federal Team commends TCAMPO for their UPWP, which is a well-developed, detailed, and practical document for the region's transportation planning activities. TCAMPO's UPWP format is readable and clearly explains programs and studies underway with the corresponding work elements.

Section 3-5: Metropolitan Transportation Plan Development / Consultation & Coordination

The MPO is commended on their prioritization process for projects included in the 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). The MPO involved the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) in the preparation of goals, objectives and targets for the region. The development of the rating process for candidate projects by the TAC demonstrated the MPO's commitment to include diverse interests in the project prioritization process. At the conclusion of the prioritization process, the MPO ensured that each project was consistent with regional transportation goals, objectives and performance measures that was identified during the update of the 2040 MTP.

MPO staff is commended on their cooperation with local stakeholders on the Richmond - Crater Hazard Mitigation Plan 2017. The regional jurisdictions have benefited from the convening of representatives of participating jurisdictions and non-governmental stakeholders to provide input at each stage of the planning process for the Mitigation Plan. The regional jurisdictions commitment to address resiliency challenges and opportunities for the Central Virginia region highlights the collaboration between stakeholders.

The Federal Team would like to commend the MPO staff on the extensive analysis of the resiliency and reliability section within the MTP. The resiliency section within the MTP documents the risk assessment that was conducted to consider the likelihood of a hazard affecting the transportation system. It is impressive the level of detail the MPO undertook to analyze and identify critical elements of the region's transportation infrastructure that is at risk from hazards.

The Federal Review Team extends commendations to the MPO with regards to cooperatively working with VDOT and VDRPT to develop a financial plan for the MTP. By accounting for an inflation-adjusted funding stream along with an estimate of likely variability of funding based on historic data; the MPO has allowed for a transparent and accountable process for how public funds are being programmed and expended.

Section 3-7: Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Development & Project Selection

The TCAMPO has demonstrated an excellent transparency with the inclusion of a comment log summary within their MTP and TIP. The comment log summary provides a summary of comments received from stakeholders and a summary of the MPO's response to the comments. The MPO is commended on their accountability to the policy board and public stakeholders by appending the comment log to their planning documents.

Section 3-10: Congestion Management Process (CMP)

The Federal Team commends the MPO for the cooperation amongst the VDRPT, VDOT, RideFinders, and the Petersburg Area Transit (PAT) with implementing the transportation planning process for the region. The involvement of PAT in the congestion management process and the coordination with PAT on recommended transit capital and operation projects into the MTP demonstrates the MPO's awareness for cooperation among local stakeholders.

The review team commends the MPO staff for developing the improved annual CMP documentation and demonstrating commitment to a more meaningful CMP process that becomes an integral part of the day-to-day metropolitan planning process in the region.

Section 3-13: Transportation Safety and Security Planning

The Federal Team commends TCAMPO for the level of detail included within their plans and programs related to safety and security. The MPO included an analysis of security incidents, which informed their strategies and policies that support security and safeguard the personal security of all motorized and non-motorized users.

Section 3-14 Integrating Freight in the Transportation Planning Process

The MPO has demonstrated their plans and programs have current and up-to-date travel demand forecast estimates and traffic data for the regional transportation network, and has the ability to identify areas of recurring congestion. Origin-destination studies performed by the MPO reflect passenger as well as freight movements within the metropolitan area.

Section 3-15: Transit Planning

We also commend the MPO on their use of FTA 5303 funds to jointly develop the Transit Development Plan (TDP) in cooperation with PAT and VDRPT. The development of the TDP will assist PAT improve their efficiency and effectiveness by modifying and providing enhancements to their existing services. The TDP will allow PAT to allocate resources to appropriately plan and program projects within the transportation planning process.

Section 3-16: Title VI Civil Rights and Non-Discrimination -General

The Federal Team noted that TCAMPO presented the Petersburg Area Transit's (PAT) *reorganized bus service project* which will expand bus service throughout Petersburg. Petersburg Area Transit is conducting initial research through surveys and exploring with the public which bus routes need expanded times or additional runs. Changes in the PAT's bus operation schedule would address many of the affected EJ populations in Tri-Cities MPA.

Section 3-19: Performance Based Planning and Programming

TCAMPO has already begun performance based planning with congestion management and safety measures working very closely with VDOT.

Recommendations Summary

Section 3-1 MPO Organizational Structure and Bylaws

We recommend the MPO review their bylaws to ensure that officials of public agencies that administer or operate major modes of transportation in the MPA (including transit representative) have responsibilities, actions, duties, voting rights, and any other authority commensurate with other officials on the Policy Board [23 USC 134 (d)(3), 23 USC 134(d)(2)].

To ensure that the Commonwealth's interest in passenger and freight rail, transportation demand management, ridesharing, and public transportation are appropriately represented, the Secretary of Transportation for the Commonwealth should review the current representation on TCAMPO's Policy Board. We request a response from the Secretary of Transportation for the Commonwealth (90 days after the issuance of the final report) on this recommendation for how the Secretary will ensure that the Commonwealth's interest in passenger and freight rail, transportation demand management, ridesharing, and public transportation are appropriately represented.

Section 3-4: Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

The clear and concise illustration of the MPO's utilization of Federal, State, and local funds is vital to the supporting documentation for all transportation planning activities within the UPWP. Each UPWP should build upon the previous UPWP. The Federal Team recommends the MPO to use its "Roll-over" Planning funds to carry out special studies that identify potential projects to address major transportation issues facing the region. The roll-over of Federal, State, and local planning funds should be documented within subsequent UPWP's. In addition, the Federal Team has provided an example of how the roll-over funds are illustrated for the Staunton Augusta Waynesboro MPO Fiscal Year 2019 Unified Planning Work Program.

Section 3-5: Metropolitan Transportation Plan Development / Consultation & Coordination

A comprehensive and inclusive public involvement effort that complies with Title VI and the Executive Order on Environmental Justice (EJ) should support the analysis within the MTP. The MTP does not analyze the impacts to EJ populations from the priorities, program and project within the MTP. The Federal Team strongly recommends the MPO revisit their Environmental Justice Analysis to include a finding based on the conducted analysis. See additional discussion in ***Section 3-16 Title VI Civil Rights and Non-discrimination General***.

The federal requirement states that the MTP must cover at least a 20-year planning horizon and identify projected transportation demand for the movement of persons and goods in the metropolitan planning area over that period. The MTP contains a fiscally constrained list of highway projects. However, the list of fiscally constrained rail and public transportation projects contained in the MTP only include projects scheduled to be implemented within the first six years, not meeting the spirit of the 20-year planning horizon. The Federal team strongly recommends the MPO identify transit projects over the entire span of the MTP. The MPO should coordinate with VDRPT to provide 20 years of forecasted

transit revenues for inclusion into the MTP.

Additionally, the MPO should also consider the inclusion of a regional vision statement for the next LRTP update.

Section 3-7: Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Development & Project Selection

The TIP shall be financially constrained by year and shall include a financial plan identifying projects that can be implemented using current revenue sources and projects requiring proposed additional sources. The TIP must include all reasonably available highway and transit funds proposed to be obligated during each program year of the TIP document. The Federal Team requests the MPO to coordinate with the State and public transportation operators to demonstrate and maintain fiscal constraint through the entire time horizon of the TIP.

TCAMPO's STBG and CMAQ project selection is a cooperative process between the MPO, VDOT, and VDRPT. The results of the ratings and project recommendations are reported to the MPO Policy Board for funding consideration. The SMARTSCALE selection process is led by the State and is documented on-line however the process is not included in the MPO's TIP process. The MPO should begin to develop a description of the SMARTSCALE project selection and funding process similar to the RSTP and CMAQ project selection process. This could be a simple visualization or graphic showing both workflows in the TIP document.

Section 3-8: Public Outreach/Public Involvement/Public Participation

The Public Participation Plan (PPP) articulates the MPO's commitment to provide transparent communications and engagement with the public and public agencies to support the regional transportation planning process, including the development of the MTP and the TIP. The Federal Team noted that the MPO's PPP does not have a documented procedure for how the MPO takes action for determining TIP amendments versus an administrative adjustment (i.e., modifications). The MPO, as part of the next update of the Public Participation Plan (PPP), should review the language contained in 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 MTP.

The MPO indicates that the PPP will be periodically updated to determine the effectiveness of procedures and strategies. The Federal Team recommends the website be kept up to-date, especially in regard to timely posting of meeting agendas and minutes. The meetings and agendas of the Policy Board and TAC should be posted online in advance of each meeting.

Section 3-10: Congestion Management Process

There are opportunities for continued improvement in CMP implementation efforts, including improvements to regional coordination with the Richmond Transportation Planning Organization (RRTPO), enhanced monitoring of project effectiveness of implemented strategies and projects identified as outcomes of the CMP. The Federal Review Team recommends TCAMPO staff improve efforts and techniques to coordinate a metropolitan-wide strategy with the RRTPO.

Section 3-14: Integrating Freight in the Transportation Planning Process

Origin-destination studies performed by the MPO need to reflect passenger as well as freight movements within a metropolitan area. The Federal Team recommends the MPO consider future studies related to types of surface transportation modes, including improvements to rail, trans-load (transferring bulk shipments from the vehicle/container of one mode to that of another at a terminal interchange point), and freight intermodal connectors in order to enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight.

The MPO should have current and up-to-date travel demand forecast estimates and traffic data for the regional transportation network, and have the ability to identify areas of recurring congestion. The MPO project selection process could also be reviewed to see how freight-related intermodal projects and programs are being funded and prioritized as part of the TIP development, consistent with the MTP. Freight-related intermodal connectors may also be accounted for as part of the development of congestion management processes to ensure improved system-wide linkages via operations and management within the metropolitan planning area.

Section 3-15: Transit Planning

Section 5303 of Title 49 and Section 134 of Title 23 require the transportation planning process in metropolitan areas to consider all modes of travel in the development of their plans and programs. The public's perceived lack of transit options in the Petersburg area was also a concern in the 2014 Certification Review. VDRPT, the State's transit and freight representation within the region, is not a voting member of the MPO Policy Board. For additional information, refer to the recommendation on the MPO's Bylaws' in *Section 3-1: MPO Organization Structure and Bylaws*.

Section 3-16: Title VI Civil Rights and Non-Discrimination -General

A comprehensive and inclusive public involvement effort that complies with Title VI and the Executive Order on Environmental Justice (EJ) should support the analysis within the MTP. The MTP does not analyze the impacts to EJ populations from the priorities, program and project within the MTP. The Federal team recommends that TCAMPO continue their EJ analysis with developing an expanded list of transit projects that could address the minority and low-income communities. Additionally, the MPO should continue the EJ analysis updates to their regional plans and document the transit improvements and the public participation process associated with the transit changes.

Section 3-19: Performance Based Planning and Programming

TCAMPO demonstrates in its local plans that preliminary performance planning and programming is occurring on a regional level that includes participation from PAT and VDOT. TCAMPO should address a more specific regional vision so that it can develop an expanded list of comprehensive targets and measures in the (metropolitan planning area) MPA by the October 2018 deadline. Throughout all the local plans presented by TCAMPO and reviewed by the Federal team—there was little evidence of cohesive regional goals. Starting with a regional goal would allow for tangible transit priorities and

surface transportation goals to be established for local communities in the MPA. Creating a regional goal through a continuing, comprehensive, and cooperative (3C) multimodal transportation planning process and prioritizing investments based on performance targets, in coordination with the transit provider and the State DOT, is new required direction that MPOs must incorporate in their local planning.

Corrective Actions Summary

Section 3-1: MPO Organizational Structure and Bylaws

Each MPO that serves a designated Transportation Management Area (TMA) or areas over 200,000 in population as determined by the most recent census shall consist of (a) local elected officials, (b) officials of public agencies that administer or operate major modes of transportation within the metropolitan area, and including representation by providers of public transportation, (c) appropriate State transportation officials. TCAMPO should develop and execute updated Bylaws that provides the transit operator, Petersburg Area Transit (PAT) with the responsibilities, actions, duties, voting rights, and any other authority commensurate with other officials on the Policy Board. The TCAMPO should meet with their policy board within 120-days after the issuance of the final report, to make final changes to their MPO Bylaws.

The statutory requirement in 23 U.S.C. 134(d) is for all MPO's to consist of local elected officials, officials of public agencies that administer or operate major modes of transportation in the MPA, and appropriate State transportation officials. The MPO must ensure that the Policy Board Committee consists of local elected officials, officials of public agencies that administer or operate major modes of transportation in the MPA, and appropriate State transportation officials.

Section 3-3: Agreements and Contracts

In cases, where two or more MPOs serve the same urbanized area, the MPOs, the State and the public transportation operator are required to establish official, written agreements that clearly describe and identify how the metropolitan transportation planning process will be coordinated to assure the development of consistent metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs across the MPA boundaries. The State and TCAMPO should (within 180 days of approval of the certification report) develop and execute a written agreement among the Richmond TPO, Tri-Cities MPO, GRTC, PAT, and the State 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 Virginia urbanized area.

Section 3-4: Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

The Federal Team understands that the TCAMPO has approved resolutions to adjust the scope and estimated costs for budgeted line items within the FY 17 UPWP prior to receiving Federal approval. The MPO and State must obtain Federal approval prior to adjustments in the scope and estimated costs for budgeted line items within the UPWP. For any subsequent amendments or changes to previously approved UPWP's, the MPO must obtain prior approval from the Federal Team.

Section 3-9: Self-Certifications

The State and the MPO are required to certify to FHWA and FTA that the planning process is addressing the major issues facing the area and is conducted in accordance with all applicable requirements. The verbiage in the State/Tri-Cities MPO self-certification did not match the text of 23 CFR 450.336. The State/Tri-Cities MPO self-certification references Title VI of the Civil Rights Act but does not reference 49 CFR Part 21. VDOT and the MPO should sign an updated Joint Self-Certification Statement with all statutory references to the applicable requirements of 23 CFR 450 and send it to FHWA and FTA.

Section 3-16: Title VI Civil Rights and Non-Discrimination -General

The planning regulations [23 CFR 450.336(a)(3)] require the MPO to self-certify that “the planning process... is being carried out in accordance with all applicable requirements of ...Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended (42 U.S.C. 2000d-1) and 49 CFR part 21.” At the time of the review, the MPO was not able to produce the Title VI Assurances to the Federal Team. The Federal team expected the TCAMPO Executive Director to review and sign the Title VI Assurances (DOT Order No. 1050.2A) and then forward them to FHWA. The MPO reviewed and signed the Assurances on October 2nd, 2017 and on December 22nd, 2017 VDOT sent the signed Title VI Assurance to FHWA.

As of September 19, 2017, no regional Title VI training has been taken by the TCAMPO Coordinator or support staff assisting with Title VI issues. The MPO should ensure there is a Title VI coordinator in place who is knowledgeable and familiar with the Title VI program, and VDOT should conduct a review to ensure the Title VI coordinator is knowledgeable. The Federal team notes that the Title VI coordinator for TCAMPO received Title VI: Non-Discrimination in the Federal-Aid Program training on March 9, 2018.

CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

Based on this review and ongoing oversight by the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration, the transportation planning process carried out by the Tri-Cities Metropolitan Planning Organization in cooperation with the State and transit operator is *conditionally* certified as substantially meeting the requirements as described in 23 Code of Federal Register Part 450, Subpart C and 49 Code of Federal Register Part 613. Several *commendations* have been made throughout this report to acknowledge successful practices; *recommendations* that should be strongly considered and that support continued enhancement of the planning process in this region; and *corrective actions* that require attention.

Part 2: FHWA and FTA Public Meeting [23 CFR 450.336(b)(4)]

Section 2-1: Public Meeting

Basic Requirement:

Providing opportunities for public involvement within the certification review process is an essential part of the transportation planning process as defined in Titles 23 and 49. The federal requirement is to ensure there is an opportunity for public involvement or public input during the certification review process. The public meeting is an informal opportunity for the Federal Review Team to inform the public of the certification review as well as provide them with an opportunity to voice their concerns or questions about the transportation planning process. FHWA and FTA are required to hold a public meeting as part of the Certification review of TMAs and we must consider the public input received in arriving at a certification action [23 CFR 450.336(b)(4)].

Finding of FHWA and FTA Public Meeting:

The Federal Review Team would like to acknowledge and appreciate the following members of the Tri-Cities MPO, VDOT, PAT, MPO Staff, and the public for their participation:

- Tonya Holland (FTA)
- Melisa McGill (FTA)
- Mack Frost (FHWA)
- Ron Svejkovsky (VDOT)
- Queenie Byrd (PAT)
- Charles Koonz (PAT)
- Mr. T.J. Webb (Prince George County Board of Supervisors)
- David Hyder (Crater PDC/Tri-Cities MPO)
- Christopher Nicholas (Crater PDC/Tri-Cities MPO)
- Karen (Private Citizen)

On September 19th, 2017 at 5:00pm the FHWA and FTA met with members of the Tri-Cities MPO staff and public as part of a public involvement meeting.

The public meeting was attended by one private citizen. She was generally interested in transit accessibility of the region. Specifically, she was focused on her daily commute from home to work and how current or future transit decisions would impact her daily commute. The citizen gave praise to PAT for the transit solutions they have provided related to employment accessibility. Her recommendation for the TCAMPO related to the lack of transit options after the 5pm – 7pm timeframe. Many of the employment opportunities within her means, would require a position working the 3rd shift (overnight into the early mornings). Her request of the regionally body is to address the transit accessibility for populations that depend on transit for employment. During the public discussions, the Federal Review Team was impressed with her knowledge with respect to regional issues related to transportation.

The public meeting also allowed FHWA, FTA, VDOT, PAT, and TCAMPO to openly discuss some of the general issues that were brought forth by the private citizen. The topic of employment accessibility and how transit can or could play a role in that accessibility was discussed at length amongst the group. Most this discussion is captured within this certification report in Part 3: RESULTS OF CERTIFICATION REVIEW.

Part 3: RESULTS OF CERTIFICATION REVIEW

Section 3-1: MPO Organizational Structure and Bylaws

Basic Requirement

Federal legislation (23 U.S.C. 134(d) and 49 U.S.C. 5303) requires the designation of an MPO for each urbanized area with a population of more than 50,000 individuals. No later than October 1, 2014, each metropolitan planning organization that serves a designated Transportation Management Area (TMA) or areas over 200,000 in population as determined by the most recent census shall consist of (a) local elected officials, (b) officials of public agencies that administer or operate major modes of transportation within the metropolitan area, and including representation by providers of public transportation, (c) appropriate State transportation officials.

Finding of Federal Review

The TCAMPO is the organization responsible for conducting the continuing, comprehensive, and coordinated (3-C) planning process for the region in accordance with Federal requirements. Staff of the transportation planning division of the Crater District Planning Commission (CPDC) performs the day-to-day operations of the TCAMPO including providing technical staff, administrative support, and serving as the TCAMPO's contracting agent. Staff members also prepare materials for use at Board and Committee meetings.

The MPO structure consists of a Policy Board and one standing advisory group, the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). The Policy Board consists of nine voting members. The voting membership of the Policy Board consists of one representative each from the City of Petersburg, the City of Hopewell, the City of Colonial Heights; and the Counties of Chesterfield, Dinwiddie and Prince George; and the Petersburg Area Transit, the Virginia Department of Transportation, and the Crater Planning District Commission. Other agencies with non-voting membership on the MPO Policy Board include: the FHWA, FTA, and the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (VDRPT). Policy Board and TAC meetings are open to the public, and held at a location that is accessible by local transit and is American with Disability Act (ADA) compliant.

The Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) serves in an advisory role to the Policy Board of the TCAMPO. TAC also coordinates with the staffs of the Crater District Planning Commission, PAT, VDOT, VDRPT, and other stakeholders on any proposal related to regional transportation within the MPO area. The TAC is specifically charged with advising the MPO in the development of the regional constrained long-range Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), the Transportation Improvement Program, the Congestion Management Process (CMP) Plan and the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) within the Richmond Virginia urbanized area.

The statutory requirement in 23 U.S.C. 134(d) is for all MPO's to consist of local elected officials, officials of public agencies that administer or operate major modes of transportation in the MPA, and appropriate State transportation officials. A staff person from the Crater Planning District Commission is noted within the MTP and TIP as a voting member of the Policy Board Committee. MPO's may increase their representation of local elected officials, public transportation agencies, or appropriate State officials on their policy boards and other committees. However, the planning regulations in 23 CFR 450.310 continues the reference to "local elected officials." Under Federal law, an appointed or

other non-elected person does not satisfy the requirement of “local elected official.”

It is noted that the current MPO Bylaws states that there will be one (1) non-voting representative designated by and representing Petersburg Area Transit. It is understood that PAT serves as the transit operator within the Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA). The current Memorandum of Understanding on Metropolitan Transportation Planning Responsibilities for the Tri-Cities Area designates one (1) representative of the Public Transit Operator (in this case PAT) as a voting member of the Policy Board Committee. As documented in the MPO’s Policy Board committee meeting minutes, PAT has been designated as a voting member.

The VDRPT is a state agency that administers Federal transit funds apportioned to Virginia and to the TCAMPO. VDRPT is responsible for representing the Commonwealth on local and regional committees having the responsibility for “passenger and freight rail, transportation demand management, ridesharing and public transportation;” [Code of Virginia (section 33.2-285)]

A VDOT official represents the voting interests of the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), the Department of Rail and Public Transportation (VDRPT), and the Secretary of Transportation. However, the Federal Team notes that for the other Transportation Management Areas (TMA’s) in Virginia that serve the Hampton Roads and Roanoke region, the Commonwealth of Virginia’s voting interest in highway/rail/public transportation/etc. is represented by a State official representing the VDOT agency as well as a State official representing the VDRPT agency.

During previous Federal reviews of the TCAMPO, FHWA and FTA have required the transportation planning process to consider all modes of travel in the development of plans and programs. In addition to the consideration of federal regulations, our past recommendations for all modes of travel to be represented were in response to the “bifurcated missions” and responsibilities between VDOT and VDRPT, public feedback concerns regarding the region’s public transportation and accessibility, and the recognition of VDRPT’s presence and leadership as a voting member on other TMA’s in Virginia in comparison to the TCAMPO.

Recommendation

In consideration of:

1. Federal law [23 U.S.C 134(d)(2), 23 USC 134(d)(3)(c)] regarding TMA MPO voting membership.
2. The Code of Virginia (section 33.2-285) regarding the responsibility of VDRPT.
3. The application of the Commonwealth of Virginia's voting representation by appropriate State officials of public agencies (i.e. VDRPT) on other TMA MPOs in Virginia.

We recommend the MPO review their bylaws to ensure that officials of public agencies that administer or operate major modes of transportation in the MPA (including transit representative) have responsibilities, actions, duties, voting rights, and any other authority commensurate with other officials on the Policy Board [23 USC 134 (d)(3), 23 USC 134(d)(2)].

To ensure that the Commonwealth's interest in passenger and freight rail, transportation demand management, ridesharing, and public transportation are appropriately represented, the Secretary of Transportation for the Commonwealth should review the current representation on TCAMPO's Policy Board. We request a response from the Secretary of Transportation for the Commonwealth (90 days after the issuance of the final report) regarding how the Secretary will ensure that the Commonwealth's interest in passenger and freight rail, transportation demand management, ridesharing, and public transportation are appropriately represented.

Corrective Action

The Federal Team request that the TCAMPO develop and execute updated Bylaws that provides the transit operator, Petersburg Area Transit (PAT) with the responsibilities, actions, duties, voting rights, and any other authority commensurate with other officials on the Policy Board. The Federal Team suggested that TCAMPO meet with their policy board within 120-days after the issuance of the final report, to make final changes to their MPO agreement.

The statutory requirement in 23 U.S.C. 134(d) is for all MPO's to consist of local elected officials, officials of public agencies that administer or operate major modes of transportation in the MPA, and appropriate State transportation officials. The MPO must ensure that the Policy Board Committee consists of local elected officials, officials of public agencies that administer or operate major modes of transportation in the MPA, and appropriate State transportation officials.

Section 3-2: Metropolitan Planning Area Boundaries

Basic Requirement

The metropolitan planning area (MPA) boundary defines the geographic area in which the MPO, the State, and transit operators have agreed to conduct transportation planning under 23 U.S.C. 134 and 49 U.S.C. 5303-5305. The MPA shall, at a minimum, cover Census-defined, urbanized areas (UZA's) and the contiguous geographic area(s) likely to become urbanized within the 20-year forecast period covered by the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP).

In accordance with 23 U.S.C. 134(e), the MPA boundary should foster an effective and efficient planning process that ensures connectivity between modes. For any area that may be subject to air-

quality conformity, the MPA may also include the nonattainment/maintenance boundary for ozone or carbon monoxide as defined by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The nonattainment/maintenance boundary represents a number of counties around an area with pollution readings that are higher than the National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS)

Finding of Federal Review

The TCAMPO is the federally designated regional transportation planning organization that serves as the cooperative forum for regional transportation planning and decision-making for the TCAMPO metropolitan planning area. The Tri-Cities area forms the southern portion of the Richmond, Virginia Urbanized Area. The 2010 U.S. Census population estimate for the Richmond, Virginia Urbanized Area is 953,556. The MPA for TCAMPO encompasses the cities of Colonial Heights, Petersburg, Hopewell, and parts of Chesterfield County, Dinwiddie County, and Prince George County.

In 2000, the census-defined urbanized areas of the Richmond and Tri-Cities merged and created one urbanized area – Richmond/Tri-Cities urbanized area. Instead of combining MPOs to serve the new urbanized area, the Richmond MPO and Tri-Cities MPOs decided to maintain separate MPOs but would agree to coordinate planning activities.

The MPO meets the Federal requirements for metropolitan planning area boundaries.

Section 3-3: Agreements and Contracts

Basic Requirement

In accordance with 23 U.S.C. 134 and 23 CFR 450.314, MPOs are required to establish relationships with the State and public transportation agencies with specified agreements between the parties to carry out a continuing, cooperative and comprehensive (3 C's) metropolitan planning process. The Planning agreements should document the roles and responsibilities among stakeholder agencies participating in the planning process for a TMA and how they cooperate to meet Federal requirements.

In cases, where two or more MPOs serve the same urbanized area, the MPOs, the State and the public transportation operator shall establish official, written agreements that clearly describe and identify how the metropolitan transportation planning process will be coordinated to assure the development of consistent metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs across the MPA boundaries. Where applicable, agreements must identify the designated agency for air quality planning under the Clean Air Act and address the responsibilities and situations arising from there being more than one MPO in a metropolitan area or serving one urbanized area (23 CFR 450.314(e)).

Finding of Federal Review

The Federal Team has reviewed the MPOs agreements with MPO staff and has concluded that TCAMPO has a documented 3-C Agreement (*Memorandum of Understanding on Metropolitan Transportation Planning Responsibilities for the Tri-Cities Area*) that was executed on January 20, 2009 between the Commonwealth of Virginia, Tri-Cities Area MPO, Petersburg Area Transit (PAT), and Crater Planning District Commission.

Since the Richmond MPO and Tri-Cities MPO serve as a single urbanized area as defined by the census (Richmond Virginia Urbanized Area), there is a requirement that there be a written agreement among the Richmond TPO, Tri-Cities MPO, Greater Richmond Transit Company (GRTC), PAT, and the State that describes how the planning process will be coordinated to assure the development of consistent metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs across the MPA boundaries.

It is understood that the TCAMPO and its partners are updating the 3-C agreement to accurately reflect the roles and responsibilities among stakeholder agencies participating in the planning process and ensuring compliance with the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act) and the requirements associated with transportation performance management.

Corrective Action

The State and TCAMPO should (within 180 days) develop and execute a written agreement among the Richmond TPO, Tri-Cities MPO, GRTC, PAT, and the State 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 Virginia urbanized area.

Section 3-4: Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

Basic Requirement

The MPOs are required to develop Unified Planning Work Programs (UPWPs) in cooperation with the State and public transit agencies to govern work programs for the expenditure of FHWA and FTA metropolitan planning and research funds (23 CFR 450.308). The MPOs, in cooperation with the State and public transportation operator, must develop a UPWP that includes a discussion of the planning priorities facing the region 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 costs estimates for each activity, the proposed funding, and share of funding to be provided from Federal, State and local sources.

Finding of Federal Review

TCAMPO cooperatively develops an annual UPWP that describes all transportation planning activities utilizing Federal funding. The TCAMPO's 2018 UPWP was adopted on June 22, 2017, and identifies Federal, state and local matching funds for all activities. Each UPWP builds upon the previous UPWP, and is the result of close cooperation among the transportation agencies in the region. The UPWP is prepared with the involvement of these agencies, acting through the MPO and reviewed by the TTC.

It has been demonstrated that the MPO was inclusive in the development of the UPWP by soliciting input from MPO member agencies, local government, and other transportation agencies in the region and the State. Furthermore, the MPO could further advance the stakeholder engagement process by soliciting input from the public and documenting this process within the UPWP.

The UPWP should provide a snapshot of current planning activities in support of Federal guidelines, regional priorities, and local initiatives. The MPO does an excellent job of incorporating a table with completed and ongoing planning studies in the MPO's study area. The table includes the name of the study, description of the study, and date study completed or adopted.

The clear and concise illustration of the MPO's utilization of Federal, State, and local funds is vital to the supporting documentation for all transportation planning activities within the UPWP. It is understood that each UPWP should build upon the previous UPWP. The illustration of the "roll-over" of planning funds to carry out task items is not clearly identified within TCAMPO's UPWP.

It is understood that the UPWP is adjusted annually to focus on new and emerging regional priorities and Federal planning emphasis areas. The Federal Team understands that the TCAMPO has approved resolutions to adjust the scope and estimated costs for budgeted line items within the FY 17 UPWP prior to receiving Federal approval. The State and the MPO must obtain prior approval for budget and programmatic changes to the UPWP [23 CFR 420.115(a)].

The TCAMPO meets the Federal requirements for development of the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP).

Commendation

TCAMPO is commended for their UPWP, which is a well-developed, detailed, and practical document for the region's transportation planning activities. TCAMPO's UPWP format is readable and clearly explains programs and studies underway with the corresponding work elements.

Recommendation

The Federal Team recommends the MPO to use its "Roll-over" Planning funds to carry out special studies that identify potential projects to address major transportation issues facing the region. The roll-over of Federal, State, and local planning funds should be documented within subsequent UPWP's. In addition, the Federal Team has provided an example of how the roll-over funds are illustrated for the Staunton Augusta Waynesboro MPO Fiscal Year 2019 Unified Planning Work Program.

Corrective Action

The MPO and State must obtain Federal approval prior to adjustments in the scope and estimated costs for budgeted line items within the UPWP. For any subsequent amendments or changes to previously approved UPWP's, the MPO must obtain prior approval from FHWA or FTA.

Section 3-5: Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) Development / Consultation & Coordination

Basic Requirement

In accordance with 23 CFR 450.322 (a) "The metropolitan transportation planning process shall include the development of a transportation plan addressing no less than a 20-year planning horizon...the transportation plan shall include both long-range and short-range strategies/actions that lead to the development of a multi-modal transportation system to facilitate the safe and efficient movement of people and goods in addressing current and future transportation demand." The requirements for consultation in developing the MTP is set forth primarily in 23 CFR 450.316(b-e). Consultation also is addressed specifically in connection with the MTP in 23 CFR 450.322(g)(1)(2) and (f)(7) related to environmental mitigation. The MPO should engage in a consultation that includes (1) comparison of the MTP with State conservation plans or maps, if available, or (2) comparison of the MTP with inventories of natural or historic resources, if available. Additionally, the Federal planning regulations identifies a number of required elements that must be addressed in the MTP [23 CFR 450.324]

Finding of Federal Review

TCAMPO's Long-range Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) process brings together project recommendations from local governments, the state DOT, PAT, and other transportation providers (i.e. RideFinders). The priorities established by these stakeholders are the primary source of projects submitted for the region's long-range transportation plan, which was adopted in August 2017. The MTP has a horizon of at least 20 years. The MPO has a documented process for identifying projects needed to maintain the integrity of the transportation system, enhance safety, improve mobility, and to meet current and future transportation demand. At the regional level, the MPO assists in identifying problems and needs by monitoring current travel conditions and forecasting future travel demand through the Congestion Management Process (CMP), which has been integrated into the MTP.

The MTP should seek to link land use and transportation planning in the region and should address planning factors outlined in 23 CFR 450.306(b). The ten planning factors in Federal legislation under FAST-ACT are identified throughout the planning process and products of the MPO. TCAMPO addresses the planning factors through their constrained long-range 2040 MTP.

TCAMPO has consulted with agencies and officials responsible for other planning activities that are affected by transportation or coordinate the planning process with such planning activities. The consultation and coordination on the Richmond - Crater Hazard Mitigation Plan 2017 is an example of the TCAMPO coordinating with external agencies that are affected by transportation.

In developing the MTP, the MPO shall consult as appropriate with State and local agencies responsible for land use management, natural resources, environmental protection, conservation, and historic preservation. The consultation shall involve, as appropriate (1) comparison of the MTP with State conservation plans or maps, if available, or (2) comparison of the MTP with inventories of natural or historic resources. TCAMPO has asked the resource agencies to review and comment on the metropolitan transportation plan. The interagency consultation provided the resource agencies with the opportunity to compare the MTP with their resource plans, identify opportunities and, potential mitigation options, and with potential to restore and maintain environmental resources.

The MTP provides a critical opportunity for the planning agencies to communicate the priorities, critical choices, and general directions for the region to a broad audience, including planning partners, other stakeholders, elected officials, and the public. The project prioritization process should be developed and adopted through an interactive process with the MPO policy board that covers policy options, transportation needs analysis, alternative transportation investment options and development scenarios, and analysis of reasonably available financial resources and alternative funding options. TCAMPO's candidate projects were prioritized for the 2040 MTP based on rating criteria developed by the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC).

The federal requirement states that the MTP must cover at least a 20-year planning horizon and identify projected transportation demand for the movement of persons and goods in the metropolitan planning area over that period. The Federal Team noted that TCAMPO's MTP includes a list of fiscally constrained rail and public transportation projects contained in the MTP scheduled to be implemented within the first six years and not the remaining time bands, which does not meet the spirit of the 20-year planning horizon.

A comprehensive and inclusive public involvement effort that complies with Title VI and the Executive Order on Environmental Justice (EJ) should support the analysis within the MTP. The MPO's EJ assessment of the MTP identifies the concentration and distribution of minority populations, employment, zero vehicle households, limited English proficiency, percent of persons in living poverty, percent population over 65 years old, and percent of persons with disabilities. However, the MTP does not analyze the impacts to EJ populations from the priorities, program and project within the MTP.

The MPO meets the Federal requirements for development of the long-range metropolitan transportation plan, as well as consultation and coordination.

Commendation

The MPO is commended on their prioritization process for projects included in the 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). The MPO involved the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) in the preparation of goals, objectives and targets for the region. The development of the rating process for candidate projects by the TAC demonstrated the MPO's commitment to include diverse interests in the project prioritization process. At the conclusion of the prioritization process, the MPO ensured that each project was consistent with regional transportation goals, objectives and performance measures that was identified during the update of the 2040 MTP.

Commendation

MPO staff is commended on their cooperation with local stakeholders on the Richmond - Crater Hazard Mitigation Plan 2017. The regional jurisdictions have benefited from the convening of representatives of participating jurisdictions and non-governmental stakeholders to provide input at each stage of the planning process for the Mitigation Plan. The regional jurisdictions commitment to address resiliency challenges and opportunities for the Central Virginia region highlights the collaboration between stakeholders.

Commendation

The Federal Team would like to commend the MPO staff on the extensive analysis of the resiliency and reliability section within the MTP. The resiliency section within the MTP documents the risk assessment that was conducted to consider the likelihood of a hazard affecting the transportation system. It is impressive the level of detail the MPO undertook to analyze and identify critical elements of the region's transportation infrastructure that is at risk from hazards.

Commendation

The Federal Review Team extends commendations to the MPO with regards to cooperatively working with VDOT and VDRPT to develop a financial plan for the MTP. By accounting for an inflation adjusted funding stream along with an estimate of likely variability of funding based on historic data; the MPO has allowed for a transparent and accountable process for how public funds are being programmed and expended.

Recommendation

The Federal Team strongly recommends the MPO revisit their Environmental Justice Analysis to include a finding based on the conducted analysis. See additional discussion in *Section 3-16 Title VI Civil Rights and Non-discrimination General*.

Recommendation

The MTP contains a fiscally constrained list of highway projects. However, the list of fiscally constrained rail and public transportation projects contained in the MTP only include projects scheduled to be implemented within the first six years, not meeting the spirit of the 20-year planning horizon. The Federal team strongly recommends the MPO identify transit projects over the entire span of the MTP. The MPO should coordinate with VDRPT to provide 20 years of forecasted transit revenues for inclusion into the MTP.

Recommendation

Additionally, the MPO should also consider the inclusion of a regional vision statement for the next LRTP update.

Section 3-6: Air Quality

Basic Requirement

Special requirements apply to the metropolitan planning process for MPOs that the U.S. EPA classifies as air quality nonattainment or maintenance areas. Section 176 (c)(1) of the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990 (CAAA) states: “No metropolitan planning organization designated under section 134 of title 23, United States Code, shall give its approval to any project, program, or plan which does not conform to an implementation plan approved or promulgated under section 110”. The Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 includes provisions in response to the CAAA mandates.

Finding of Federal Review

Currently, the TCAMPO is classified as being in attainment of national air quality standards.¹

Section 3-7: Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Development & Project Selection

Basic Requirement

23 CFR 450.326 requires the MPO to develop a TIP in cooperation with the State and public transit operators. Specific requirements and conditions, as specified in the regulations, include, but are not limited to:

- An updated TIP covering a period of at least four years that is compatible with the STIP development and approval process; [23 CFR 450.324 (a)]
- The TIP should identify all eligible Transportation Control Measure’s (TCM) included in the SIP and give priority to eligible TCM’s and projects included for the first two years which have funds available and committed; [23 CFR 450.324 (i)]
- The TIP should include capital and non-capital surface transportation projects, bicycle and pedestrian facilities and other transportation enhancements; Federal Lands Highway projects and safety projects included in the State’s Strategic Highway Safety Plan. The TIP and STIP must include all regionally significant projects for which an FHWA or the FTA approval is required whether or not the projects are to be funded with Title 23 or Title 49 funds. In addition, all Federal and non-Federally funded, regionally significant projects must be included in the TIP and STIP and consistent with the MTP for information purposes and air quality analysis in nonattainment and maintenance areas; [23 CFR 450.324 (c), (d)]
- Procedures or agreements that distribute suballocated Surface Transportation Program funds or funds under 49 USC 5307 to individual jurisdictions or modes within the TMA by pre-determined percentages or formulas are inconsistent with the legislative provisions that require the MPO, in cooperation with the State and the public transportation operator, to develop a prioritized and financially constrained TIP and shall not be used unless they can clearly be shown to be based on considerations required to be addressed as part of the metropolitan transportation planning process [23 CFR 450.324 (j)]

¹ The U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit recently issued a decision in *South Coast Air Quality Management District v. EPA*, No. 15-1115, which struck down portions of the *2008 Ozone NAAQS SIP Requirements Rule* concerning the ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). FHWA and FTA are reviewing the decision and will provide updates as soon as possible.

Finding of Federal Review

The TCAMPO 2018-2021 TIP was developed in cooperation with the VDOT, VDRPT, local public transportation operators, and the local governments encompassing the urbanized area's transportation system. The preparation of the TIP is driven, in large part, by the Six-Year Improvement Program (SYIP²). The Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) has lead responsibility for selecting and programming federally funded Interstate Maintenance, Bridge, National Highway Performance Program, Statewide (non-metropolitan) Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG), Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP), Enhancement and projects, while local governments have lead responsibility for selecting projects within the urban and secondary roadway systems. The MPO however has lead responsibility for the project review, selection and funds-allocation process for Regional STBG, CMAQ, and Transportation Alternatives (TA) programs. The project selection process involves coordination and consultation among all parties. Federal transit capital funds under the Section 5310 program for elderly individuals and individuals with disabilities are administered at the State level by the VDRPT. Qualified local agencies apply to VDRPT for Section 5310 grants on an annual basis for eligible projects.

STBG and CMAQ funds are apportioned by the State to their TMAs within Virginia. TCAMPO's STBG and CMAQ project selection is a cooperative process between the MPO, VDOT, and VDRPT. The procedure for selecting and prioritizing projects includes the development of candidate project lists by the MPO's Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). The results of the ratings and project recommendations are reported to the MPO Policy Board for funding consideration. The SMARTSCALE selection process is led by the State and is documented on-line however the process is not included in the MPO's TIP process.

The TIP should be developed and adopted through an interactive process with the MPO policy board, interested stakeholders, and the public. The process must be supported by a comprehensive and inclusive public involvement effort that complies with Title VI and the Executive Order on Environmental Justice. TCAMPO has demonstrated this interactive process with the MPO policy board, interested stakeholders, and the public through meeting agendas, meeting minutes, and discussions with board members. The public involvement process for the TIP development provided stakeholder groups with complete information, a timely notice, and full public access to key decisions.

TCAMPO's TIP contains regionally significant projects funded by FTA and FHWA. Project listings for "roadway" and transit sections included sufficient descriptive material and total project costs. In accordance with the TCAMPO's Public Participation Plan, the public was afforded several opportunities to comment upon the development the 2018-2021 TIP.

The TIP shall include information for each project including: sufficient descriptive material to identify the project or phase; estimated total cost; amount of Federal funds proposed to be obligated during each program year; proposed source of Federal and non-Federal funds; identification of funding

² The SYIP is updated annually and is the means by which the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) meets its statutory obligation under the Code of Virginia to allocate funds to interstate, primary, secondary and urban highway systems, public transit, ports and airports and other programs for the immediate fiscal year. The CTB allocates funds for the first fiscal year of the SYIP but the remaining five years are estimates of future allocations. Fiscal years start on July 1 and end on June 30. The STIP unlike the SYIP is the federally approved regional transportation programming document covering four years.

recipient/project sponsor; in nonattainment and maintenance areas, identification of TCMs and sufficiently detailed description for conformity determination [23 CFR 450.326(g)]. TCAMPO has demonstrated compliance with the federal planning regulations by including sufficient detail for individual line item projects.

Projects that are not considered to be of appropriate scale for individual identification may be grouped by function by MPOs through regional consensus with stakeholders [23 CFR 450.326(h)]. When applied correctly, these categories can be an effective tool for streamlining the process. The Federal Team identified TCAMPO's appropriate use of grouping projects as well as listing out the projects contained within the group in Appendix G of the TIP document. The listing of individual grouped projects continues to demonstrate the level of transparency illustrated by the MPO.

The TIP is a short-term capital programming document that is used to implement the MTP. The TIP shall be financially constrained by year and shall include a financial plan identifying projects that can be implemented using current revenue sources and projects requiring proposed additional sources. The State and the transit operators must provide the MPO with estimates of Federal and State funds available for the transportation system serving the metropolitan area [23 CFR 450.326(j)]. The Federal Team understands that VDOT informed the MPO that the financial information used by the MPO to develop its funding table was outdated and needed to be corrected to ensure that the MPO's TIP matched the adopted SYIP and the draft STIP. VDOT requested the MPO adopt a new TIP by August of 2017. The updated TIP included a revised funding tables showing that obligations matched projected funding.

Additionally, Federal planning regulations required that the MPO illustrate fiscal constraint through the complete time horizon for the TIP. After review the Federal Team noted that Table 5: *Fiscal Constraint by Year* does not contain Federal Transit revenue to illustrate fiscal constraint of the TIP.

The TPO meets the Federal requirements for development of the Transportation Improvement Program.

Commendation

The TCAMPO has demonstrated an excellent transparency with the inclusion of a comment log summary within their MTP and TIP. The comment log summary provides a summary of comments received from stakeholders and a summary of the MPO's response to the comments. The MPO is commended on their accountability to the policy board and public stakeholders by appending the comment log to their planning documents.

Recommendation

The TIP must include all reasonably available highway and transit funds proposed to be obligated during each program year of the TIP document. The Federal Team requests the MPO to coordinate with the State and public transportation operators to demonstrate and maintain fiscal constraint through the entire time horizon of the TIP.

Recommendation

The MPO should begin to develop a description of the SMARTSCALE project selection and funding process similar to the RSTP and CMAQ project selection process. This could be a simple visualization or graphic showing both workflows in the TIP document.

Section 3-8: Public Outreach/Public Involvement/Public Participation

Basic Requirement

The MPO is required, under 23 CFR 450.316, to engage in a metropolitan planning process that creates reasonable opportunities for public involvement in the transportation planning process. Furthermore, the development of the Participation Plan – 23 CFR 450.316(a) (1)) delineates, “The participation plan shall be developed by the MPO in consultation with all interested parties” and at a minimum shall describe explicit procedures, strategies, and desired outcomes. Public participation and consultation throughout the development of the MTP and the TIP is also included in 23 CFR 450.322 (f) (7) and (g) (1) (2), (i) and 23 CFR 450.324 (b).

Federal regulations at 23 CFR 200.5(c) define citizen participation as “an open process in which the rights of the community to be informed, to provide comments to the Government and to receive a response from the Government are met through a full opportunity to be involved and to express needs and goals.”

Finding of Federal Review

The Public Participation Plan (PPP) articulates the MPO’s commitment to provide transparent communications and engagement with the public and public agencies to support the regional transportation planning process, including the development of the MTP and the TIP. The current PPP was adopted on September 10, 2015 and outlines the framework to ensure public involvement in the planning process.

The PPP provides an overall framework for participation in the MPO planning process. A review of the MPO’s PPP indicates that the representatives on Policy Board and Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) are their primary avenues for soliciting and gaining insight transportation issues impacting the region.

The MPO indicates that the PPP will be periodically updated to determine the effectiveness of procedures and strategies. When the plan is revised, it will undergo public review and TCAMPO Policy Board approval. The meetings of all standing committees are not posted online in advance of each meeting. However, there is an opportunity for public comment at the standing committee meetings. The Federal Team noted that the MPO’s PPP does not have a documented procedure for how the MPO takes action for determining TIP amendments versus an administrative adjustment (i.e., modifications).

The MPO noted that traditional outreach methods like community newspapers and social media were also used to engage various populations groups.

The MPO meets the Federal requirements for public participation of the metropolitan transportation planning process.

Recommendation

The MPO, as part of the next update of the Public Participation Plan (PPP), should review the language contained in 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 MTP.

Recommendation

The Federal Team recommends the website be kept up to-date, especially in regard to timely posting of meeting agendas and minutes. The meetings and agendas of the Policy Board and TAC should be posted online in advance of each meeting.

Section 3-9: Self-Certifications

Basic Requirement

Self-certification of the metropolitan planning process, at least once every four years, is required under 23 CFR 450.334. The State and the MPO shall certify to FHWA and FTA that the planning process is addressing the major issues facing the area and is conducted in accordance with all applicable requirements of 23 CFR 450.300 and:

- 23 U.S.C. 134 and 49 U.S.C. 5303 and Sections 174 and 176(c) and (d) of the Clean Air Act (if applicable)
- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Title VI assurance executed by each State
- 49 U.S.C. 5332, prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, sex, or age in employment or business opportunity
- Section 1101(b) of SAFETEA-LU and 49 CFR Part 26, regarding involvement of DBE in U.S. DOT-funded planning projects
- 23 CFR Part 230, regarding the implementation of an equal employment opportunity program on Federal and Federal-aid highway construction contracts
- ADA and U.S. DOT regulations governing transportation for people with disabilities [49 CFR Parts 27, 37, and 38]
- Older Americans Act as amended, prohibiting discrimination on the basis of age Section 324 of Title 23 U.S.C., regarding the prohibition of discrimination based on gender
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and 49 CFR Part 27, regarding discrimination against individuals with disabilities
- All other applicable provisions of Federal law (e.g., while no longer specifically noted in a self-certification, prohibition of use of Federal funds for “lobbying” still applies and should be covered in all grant agreement documents (see 23 CFR 630.112).

A Certification Review by FTA and FHWA of the planning process in TMAs is required at least once every four years, in addition to the required self-certification by the MPO and State.

Finding of Federal Review

The 2017 self-certification comprehensive documentation is collaboratively prepared by the MPO and VDOT, and addresses Federal planning regulations. The self-certification is adopted by resolution, and signed by the MPO chair and VDOT. The Federal Team noted that the Self Certification Resolution statement appended to the amended June 22, 2017 TIP did not include all statutory references to the applicable requirements of 23 CFR 450.

Corrective Action

The verbiage in the State/Tri-Cities MPO self-certification did not match the text of 23 CFR 450.336. The State/Tri-Cities MPO self-certification references Title VI of the Civil Rights Act but does not reference 49 CFR Part 21. VDOT and the MPO must sign an updated Joint Self-Certification Statement with all statutory references to the applicable requirements of 23 CFR 450 and send it to FHWA and FTA.

Section 3-10: Congestion Management Process (CMP)

Basic Requirement

According to the latest Metropolitan Transportation Planning final rules, effective June 27, 2016, reflecting MAP-21 and FAST Act changes, 23 CFR 450.322 states “that the transportation planning process in a TMA shall address congestion management through a process that provides for safe and effective integrated management and operation of the multimodal transportation system, based on a cooperatively developed and implemented metropolitan-wide strategy, of new and existing transportation facilities eligible for funding under title 23 U.S.C. and title 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53 through the use of travel demand reduction, job access projects and operational management strategies.” Specifically, the section mandates, among other things, that a CMP contain the following elements: Methods to monitor and evaluate the performance of the transportation system, defining parameters for measuring congestion including development of objectives and performance measures, establishment of a program for data collection to monitor congestion and identify its causes, identification and evaluation of the benefits of the various strategies to address the identified congestion locations, identification of an implementation schedule for each of the identified strategies, and implementation of a process for assessing the effectiveness of the strategies once implemented.

Finding of Federal Review

The TCAMPO staff and planning partners have been involved in congestion management planning activities. The most recent Congestion Management Process (CMP) was adopted by the TCAMPO in 2003. A major update to the CMP documentation occurred in 2017 and further implemented the CMP in the context of updating the MTP.

The most recent documentation of CMP work activities, as reflected in the “Tri Cities Area MPO Congestion Management Process”, dated December 2016, demonstrates improved CMP integration into the overall metropolitan planning process in the region. The methodology and integration with the future 2040 MTP and recurring TIP preparation activities should continue to display enhancements to the region’s planning products. For example, the congestion relief benefits of each strategy chosen as an alternative as well as a cost analysis will be prepared for each strategy. The MPO will choose those projects that should be included in the TIP from these chosen strategies. In updating the MTP, the MPO

may revisit or develop new congestion management objectives, which may lead to development of new performance measures.

The TCAMPO implementation of various mitigation strategies are undertaken in coordination with VDOT and local jurisdictions. There are opportunities for continued improvement in CMP implementation efforts, including enhanced monitoring of project effectiveness of implemented strategies and projects identified as outcomes of the CMP. The effort to track projects that may have been implemented to manage congestion and their expected benefits in identified corridors or intersections is a desired outcome of the CMP.

A possible improvement would be to enhance discussion of non-recurring congestion in the context of the CMP through incorporation of an incident management performance measure to assess non-recurring congestion in the region. VDOT may be a useful partner to aid in this discussion as incident management measures are being considered, such as the Instant Tow program and the Towing and Recovery Incentive Program (TRIP), which includes a clearance time target.

The staff should continue their recent conscientious efforts to improve the CMP by also creating awareness of the Federally mandated travel time reliability measures and how those measures can be addressed and analyzed in the current CMP framework.

Recommendation

The Federal Review Team recommends TCAMPO staff improve efforts and techniques to coordinate a metropolitan wide strategy with the Richmond Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RRTPO).

Commendation

The review team commends the MPO staff for developing the improved annual CMP documentation and demonstrating commitment to a more meaningful CMP process that becomes an integral part of the day-to-day metropolitan planning process in the region.

Commendation

The Federal Team was impressed with the cooperation amongst the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (VDRPT), RideFinders, and the Petersburg Area Transit (PAT) implementing the transportation planning process for the region. The involvement of PAT in the congestion management process and the coordination with PAT on recommended transit capital and operation projects into the MTP demonstrates the MPO's awareness for cooperation among local stakeholders.

Section 3-11: Annual List of Obligated Projects

Basic Requirement

The MPO, public transportation operators and the State must cooperatively develop a listing of projects for which Federal funds have been obligated in the previous year in accordance with 23 CFR 450.332. 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 or phase
- Identification of the agencies responsible for carrying out the project or phase

Finding of Federal Review

The MPO produces an “Annual Listing of Transportation Project Obligations” based on the preceding Federal fiscal year which is accessible on the MPO’s website. Project obligations are reported by project or phase, fund source, as well as project category including maintenance.

The MPO meets the Federal requirements for Annual List of Obligated Projects of the metropolitan transportation planning process.

Section 3-12: Management and Operations Considerations

Basic Requirement

Federal statute 23 U.S.C. 134 (h)(1)(G), requires the metropolitan planning process to include the consideration of projects and strategies that will *promote efficient system management and operation*; Federal statute 23 U.S.C. 134(i)(2)(D), which provides the basis for 23 CFR 450.322(f)(3), specifies that: *Operational and management strategies to improve the performance of existing transportation facilities to relieve vehicular congestion and maximize the safety and mobility of people and goods*; Additionally, 23 CFR 450.322(f)(10)(i) further requires that the financial plan for the MTP – and per the 23 CFR 450.324(h), the financial plan for the TIP – must include: *For purposes of transportation system operations and maintenance, the financial plan shall contain system-level estimates of costs and revenue sources that are reasonably expected to be available to adequately operate and maintain Federal-aid highways and public transportation.*

Finding of Federal Review

Maintenance and Operations (M&O) encompasses the day-to-day actions and agency responses to the region's transportation system. TCAMPO’s TIP includes financial projections for routine activities such as reconstruction and maintenance, preventive maintenance on buses, snow removal, and traffic signalization.

Section 3-13: Transportation Safety and Security Planning

Basic Requirement

49 U.S.C. 5303 requires MPOs to consider safety as one of eight planning factors. As stated in 23 CFR 450.306, the metropolitan transportation planning process provides for consideration and implementation of projects, strategies, and services that will increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users. Federal legislation has also separated security as a stand-alone element of the planning process (both metropolitan 23 CFR 450.306(a)(3) and Statewide 23 CFR 450.206(a)(3) planning). The regulations also state that the degree and consideration of security should be based on the scale and complexity of many different local issues.

Finding of Federal Review

TCAMPO staff cooperated with the Central Virginia Emergency Management Alliance, to address safety in the transportation planning process through:

Working in coordination with the Richmond Regional Planning District Commission and the Crater Planning District Commission, the TCAMPO planning work is benefiting from the development of the Richmond-Crater Multi-Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan that identifies local and regional risks and vulnerabilities associated with natural disasters, and creates long-term strategies for protecting people and property from future hazard events.

The MPO addresses safety in the transportation planning process by incorporating specific line items within the FY 2017 UPWP. The work task for Safety Conscious Planning will include a review of available information on hazardous traffic locations and accident information within the transportation study area. This information will be profiled and reviewed by the MPO committees and considered as a factor in evaluating RSTP candidate projects and for the prioritization of candidate projects for the MTP and TIP.

Working in cooperation with the Central Virginia Emergency Management Alliance, the RRTPO is beginning to address security in the transportation planning process through information sharing and coordination. The Central Virginia Emergency Management Alliance (CVEMA) was previously a federally defined Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI). Today, CVEMA is a voluntary coalition of emergency management and public safety professionals from the 25 localities surrounding the Richmond-Petersburg metropolitan area (VDEM Region 1, plus Caroline, Cumberland, and Louisa Counties).

The MPO has reviewed potential security risks to transportation and believes that there is a need for additional secure truck parking in the Commonwealth and inside the MPO area. TCAMPO has also evaluated the potential for terrorism and believes they should continue to support Fort Lee's security efforts as they relate to controlling post access. Historically the TCAMPO has cooperated with Fort Lee's security efforts at the Sisisky and Mahone gates. The MPO will continue to collaborate with Fort Lee on force protection and gate security.

The TPO meets the Federal requirements for integrating safety and security into the planning process.

Commendation

The Federal Team commends TCAMPO for the level of detail included within their plans and programs related to safety and security. The MPO's included an analysis of security incidents which informed their strategies and policies that support security and safeguard the personal security of all motorized and non-motorized users.

Section 3-14: Integrating Freight in the Transportation Planning Process

Basic Requirement

The FAST Act specifically calls for the need to address freight movement as part of the transportation planning process [23 U.S.C. 134 (a) and 23 CFR 450.306(4), 450.316(a), 450.316(b), 450.104]. The metropolitan transportation planning section indicates that: “It is in the national interest to encourage and promote the safe and efficient management, operation, and development of surface transportation systems that will serve the mobility needs of people and freight and foster economic growth and development within and between States and urbanized areas, while minimizing transportation related fuel consumption and air pollution through metropolitan and Statewide transportation planning processes identified in this chapter; and encourage the continued improvement and evolution of the metropolitan and Statewide transportation planning processes by MPOs, State departments of transportation, and public transit operators as guided by the planning factors identified in subsection (h) and section 135(d)”.

Finding of Federal Review

The MTP and TIP documents should be periodically reviewed to ensure they contain direct references to the current and future proposed intermodal freight-related transportation connections and their relationships to the surface transportation system. National Highway System (NHS) intermodal connectors and their maps should be periodically updated and addressed to incorporate freight rail and other systems that are currently in place (or planned to be in place) and operating within the metropolitan planning area. TCAMPO has documented and demonstrated the role the MPO plays in regional freight corridors such as the Washington to North Carolina Corridor.

The MPO should have current and up-to-date travel demand forecast estimates and traffic data for the regional transportation network, and have the ability to identify areas of recurring congestion. Origin-destination studies performed by the MPO need to reflect passenger as well as freight movements within a metropolitan area. The results from TCAMPO’s travel demand forecasts are used to:

- analyze regional transportation scenarios in the planning process;
- determine future transportation infrastructure needs;
- analyzing the regional effects of different groups of transportation projects to aid project selection;
- forecast future traffic congestion the CMP network analysis;
- validating or checking other CMP data sources; and
- analyzing driver route choices to better inform the CMP

Relating to integrating freight into the transportation planning process the MPO has identified that there is a shortage of truck parking along the I-95 and I-295. The MPO has also identified a potential need for truck parking for oversize and overweight loads near the North Carolina state line because of differing regulations on the hours of movement of oversize/overweight vehicles in the Commonwealth and North Carolina.

The TPO meets the Federal requirements for integrating freight into the planning process.

Commendation

The MPO has demonstrated their plans and programs have current and up-to-date travel demand forecast estimates and traffic data for the regional transportation network, and have the ability to identify areas of recurring congestion. Origin-destination studies performed by the MPO reflect passenger as well as freight movements within the metropolitan area.

Recommendation

The Federal Team recommends the MPO consider future studies related to types of surface transportation modes, including improvements to rail, trans-load (transferring bulk shipments from the vehicle/container of one mode to that of another at a terminal interchange point), and freight intermodal connectors in order to enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight

Recommendation

The MPO project selection process could also be reviewed to see how freight-related intermodal projects and programs are being funded and prioritized as part of the TIP development, consistent with the MTP. Freight-related intermodal connectors may also be accounted for as part of the development of congestion management processes to ensure improved system-wide linkages via operations and management within the metropolitan planning area.

*Section 3-15: Transit Planning***Basic Requirement**

Section 5303 of Title 49 and Section 134 of Title 23 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 450.312 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.

Finding of Federal Review

The Petersburg Area Transit (PAT) is the Federally-designated local transit operator for public mass transit service in the Tri-Cities Area. PAT is a department in the City of Petersburg, and the Transit General Manager is a department head of the city and reports directly to the City Manager. PAT provides fixed route and complementary paratransit service with its own employees and vehicles to serve the City of Petersburg, portions of Prince George, Colonial Heights, Hopewell, Dinwiddie and the village of Ettrick, located in Chesterfield County.

PAT operates a fleet of 20 buses for 13 fixed-routes, and 6 vehicles for paratransit service. Service is provided Monday through Friday from 5:45 a.m. to 6:15 p.m., and Saturday from 7:15 am to 6:15 pm, and there is no service on Sundays or on major holidays. PAT operates from a bus garage on Fairgrounds Road, and the Transit Center and administrative offices are located at 100 West Washington Street. The population of PAT's service area is 136,667 persons. PAT is very active in the transportation planning process and is a voting member of the TCAMPO Board.

Greater Richmond Transit Company (GRTC) operates an express transit route between Richmond and Petersburg. Ridefinders, a division of GRTC, is the primary sponsor of a ridesharing program that markets and coordinates the use of vanpools and park and ride lots for employees of major businesses and organizations in the Tri-Cities area. GRTC receives consistent financial support for the Ridefinders program from TCAMPO, and attends the TCAMPO monthly TAC meeting.

A Transit Development Plan (TDPs) is a needs analysis and planning tool that assists operators with identifying required resources for modifying and enhancing transit services provided to the general public, and is a requirement by the VDRPT to receive state funds. Public transit projects are selected from the TDP by the Petersburg City Council and the TCAMPO Policy Committee for inclusion in the metropolitan TIP. The 2010 Transit Development Plan (TDP), adopted by the MPO in January of 2011, identified PAT's anticipated capital and operating needs for the FY15 – FY18 time period. PAT anticipates updating their TDP by the end of 2018.

As a result of the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure Act (BRAC), the size and number of employees doubled at Fort Lee, the main economic center in Petersburg. That increase, coupled with continued economic development, and expansions at major academic and healthcare employment centers have created significant unmet demand for transit services. Expansion of PAT services to meet this demand however, cannot be financially supported by several of the TCAMPO jurisdictions at this time. In an effort to decrease operating costs and increase efficiency, PAT is considering replacing current high-mileage buses with smaller buses for its fixed route services, when funding is available. As the transit provider waits for funding, the General Manager is working with the City of Williamsburg, VA to improve Tri-Cities' bus routes and plans to work with the MPO to target service in neighborhoods highlighted in their LRTP Environmental Justice analysis. The updated TDP will provide insight for these decisions.

An open-house style public meeting was held in concert with the Certification Review at the Petersburg local bus/Greyhound bus station, to allow citizens to provide input to the federal team on the TCAMPO transportation planning process. An open discussion ensued with the single attendee, who corroborated the need for expansion of PAT services into more areas of the region, as well as longer and more frequent service. The citizen indicated that access to health care and employment is extremely limited in the region for those who rely on transit.

Recommendation

The public's perceived lack of transit options in the Petersburg area was also a concern in the 2014 Certification Review. VDRPT, the State's transit and freight representation within the region, is not a voting member of the MPO Policy Board. For additional information, refer to the recommendation on the MPO's Bylaws' in *Section 3-1: MPO Organization Structure and Bylaws*.

Section 3-16: Title VI Civil Rights and Non-Discrimination -General

Basic Requirement Title VI: It has been the long-standing policy of U.S. DOT to actively ensure nondiscrimination under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Title VI 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.” Title VI bars intentional discrimination (i.e., disparate treatment) as well as disparate-impact discrimination stemming from neutral policy or practice that has the effect of a disparate impact on protected groups based on race, color, or national origin. The planning regulations [23 CFR 450.336(a)(3)] require the MPO to self-certify that “the planning process... is being carried out in accordance with all applicable requirements of ...Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended (42 U.S.C. 2000d-1) and 49 CFR part 21.”

Finding of Federal Review

TCAMPO is a federally mandated MPO with a policy board that is comprised of representatives from local, state, and federal governments, the local transit provider, and other stakeholders. TCAMPO does have an applicable Title VI Plan. In addition, the MPO explained that the Title VI coordinator shares the Executive Director role of Crater Planning Commission. During the site visit presentation, it became evident that the MPO is a small planning entity and lacks staff to assist the Title VI Coordinator perform his tasks in a consistent manner.

Per materials submitted for the 2017 certification review, noted deficiencies were found in the 2015 Title VI program—specifically with advertising public meetings with minority media. It appears that these issues were resolved but now there are questions about appropriate annual Title VI training for local TCAMPO staff. As of September 19, 2017, no regional Title VI training has been taken by the TCAMPO Coordinator or support staff assisting with Title VI issues.

The TCAMPO explained during the site visit how the Title VI Plan outlines how the MPO meets Title VI requirements of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Environmental Justice. The plan should also demonstrate if TCAMPO has procedures for filing complaints, working with the procurement process, understanding how to handle MPO stakeholders that could be subject to discrimination under federal Title VI guidelines and policies. However, the Title VI Assurance were not sent to FHWA for review and approval.

Corrective Action

At the time of the review, the MPO was not able to produce the Title VI Assurances to the Federal Team. The Federal team expected the TCAMPO Executive Director to review and sign the Title VI Assurances (DOT Order No. 1050.2A) and then forward them to FHWA. The MPO reviewed and signed the Assurances on October 2nd, 2017 and on December 22nd, 2017 VDOT sent the signed Title VI Assurance to FHWA.

The MPO should ensure there is a Title VI coordinator in place who is knowledgeable and familiar with the Title VI program and that VDOT conduct a review to ensure the Title VI coordinator is knowledgeable. The Federal team notes that the Title VI coordinator for TCAMPO received Title VI: Non-Discrimination in the Federal-Aid Program training on March 9, 2018.

Environmental Justice

Executive Order 12898, issued in 1994, further amplifies Title VI by providing that “each Federal agency shall make achieving environmental justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health and environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations.” To comply

with Executive Order 12898, FHWA issued updated Order 6640.23A - *FHWA Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations*.

In addition, the FHWA and FTA memorandum dated October 7, 1999, entitled "*Implementing Title VI Requirements in Metropolitan and Statewide Planning*" is still relevant. The memorandum provided clarification for field offices on how to ensure that environmental justice is considered during current and future planning certification reviews. While Title VI and environmental justice have often been raised during project development, the law applies equally to the processes and products of planning. The FTA and FHWA have concluded that an appropriate time to ensure compliance with Title VI in the planning process is during the planning certification reviews conducted for TMAs and through the statewide planning finding rendered at approval of the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).

Finding of Federal Review

TCAMPO did a suitable job in highlighting minority and low-income populations through local planning maps that were presented in the MTP using Geographic Information System (GIS). However, TCAMPO did not summarize/highlight specific transportation projects in their EJ analysis that would impact these EJ populations. TCAMPO, is planning to revise their EJ analysis in local plans for the next planning cycle.

An EJ, equity, and Title VI analysis should be part of the scope of the statewide and metropolitan planning processes. The TCAMPO should conduct an analysis of the impact of transportation plans, STIPs, and TIPs on EJ communities and Title VI in the interest of ensuring that investments are made in ways that help all communities prosper and achieve equitable investments.

Commendation

The Federal Team noted that TCAMPO presented the Petersburg Area Transit's (PAT) *reorganized bus service project* which will expand bus service throughout Petersburg. Petersburg Area Transit is conducting initial research through surveys and exploring with the public which bus routes need expanded times or additional runs. Changes in the PAT's bus operation schedule would address many of the affected EJ populations in Tri-Cities MPA.

Recommendation

The Federal team recommends that TCAMPO continue their EJ analysis with developing an expanded list of transit projects that could address the minority and low income communities. Additionally, the MPO should continue the EJ analysis updates to their regional plans and document the transit improvements and the public participation process associated with the transit changes. Below are brief steps TCAMPO could use to bolster their EJ analysis in their local plans. This information can be found in FTA internal guidance (Volpe MPO data base or the TMA Certification Review Process Handbook) that the Federal team and share with TCAMPO. FHWA also has the Environmental Justice Reference Guide to assist the MPO with their EJ analysis. FTA/FHWA can provided materials to TCAMPO to assist them with revising their EJ analysis for the following:

Long-Range Plans

- Be sure to review and compare long-range planning documents and transportation improvement program documents (LRTP/MTP/TIP/STIP).
- Identify and map communities of concern.
- Establish performance measures related to measuring impact of decisions on communities of concern.
- Use travel demand models and other tools such as EJSCREEN, American Factfinder, and GIS.
- Present evidence that results of the EJ analysis tools used are reflected in the transportation decision -making process (including prioritized project for both surface transportation and transit) and transportation needs in communities of concern that are identified.

Unified Planning Work Program

- Work tasks should include outlined EJ analysis and activities to be undertaken during the fiscal year.

Public Participation Plan

- Public involvement process should include more than one method to reach an incorporate Title VI, LEP, EJ populations, and is referenced in documents being reviewed.

Limited English Proficiency

Executive Order 13166, issued in 2000, requires that “each Federal agency to examine the services they provide, identify any need for services to those with Limited English Proficiency (LEP), and develop and implement a system to provide those services so LEP persons can have meaningful access to them.”

To assist federal agencies in carrying out these responsibilities, the Department of Justice (DOJ) issued a Policy Guidance Document, “Enforcement of the Title VI of the Civil Rights ACT OF 1964 – National Origin Discrimination Against Persons with Limited English Proficiency” (LEP Guidance). The guidance identifies compliance standards that recipients of federal funds (i.e. MPOs and DOTs)

must follow to ensure that their programs and activities do not discriminate on the basis of national origin.

The DOT guidance is modeled after the guidance issued by the DOJ and requires recipients and sub-recipients to take steps to ensure meaningful access to their program and activities to LEP persons. It outlines four factors recipients should apply to the various kinds of contacts they have with the public to assess language needs and decide what reasonable steps they should take to ensure meaningful access for LEP persons:

1. The number and proportion of LEP persons eligible to be served or likely to be encountered by a program, activity, or service of the recipient or grantee.
2. The frequency with which the LEP individuals come in contact with the program
3. The nature and importance of the program, activity, or service provided by the recipient to people's lives.
4. The resources available to the recipient and costs.

The greater the number or proportion of eligible LEP persons; the greater the frequency with which they have contact with a program, activity, or service; and the greater the importance of that program, activity, or service, the more likely enhanced language services will be needed. Smaller recipients with more limited budgets are typically not expected to provide the same level of language service as larger recipients with larger budgets. The intent of DOT's guidance is to suggest a balance that ensures meaningful access by LEP persons to critical services while not imposing undue burdens on small organizations and local governments.

Section 3-17: Travel Forecasting Methods

Basic Requirement

A Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) requires credible forecasts of future demand for transportation services. These forecasts are frequently made using travel demand models, which use estimates of regional population, employment and land use to forecast person trips and vehicle trips by travel mode, route, and time period. The outputs of travel demand models are used both to evaluate the impacts of alternative transportation investments being considered in the MTP and to provide inputs for motor vehicle emissions models used for air quality conformity determinations that are needed in nonattainment and maintenance areas.

Finding of Federal Review

TCAMPO uses the Richmond Tri-Cities model (RTC) for its transportation planning process. The RTC model covers the areas of RRTPO and Tri-Cities MPO, both within the Richmond Urbanized Area and is based on Citilab's Cube Voyager software. The RTC model uses an advance practice four step model which includes trip generation, trip distribution, mode choice and trip assignment. The current version of the RTC model has a base year of 2012 and a forecast year of 2040.

The current version of the model was developed for VDOT by their consultants and submitted to TCAMPO around the end of 2015. This version of the model was developed by enhancing the previous RTC model which had a base year of 2008 and the forecast year of 2035. The new version of the RTC model was recalibrated using the 2012 data. Transit

network data is stored in a single lines file. Two headway periods are used for the transit network data, one for AM and PM peak periods, and the other for midday and night periods. Mode choice is performed for two time periods (peak and offpeak). Similarly, transit assignments are made for peak and off-peak periods. The model does not analyze non-motorized trips (walk and bike), except for walk access to transit.

The RTC model also has a truck model and “truck” which trips refer only to heavy trucks, Classes 6 through 13 in FHWA vehicle classification. Trip generation is based on employment and households – and is different for truck zones and non-truck zones. Truck Zones generate 2.5 times higher truck trips than non-truck zones. Current model outputs for truck component include: Internal to Internal and External to Internal truck trip matrices for peak and off-peak periods – base year and future as a percentage of total trips. For External to External Trips, the statewide model is suggested. Virginia has a statewide model (VSM). VDOT is currently working to update the 2040 VSM. It is suggested that VSM could be used to produce better estimates of truck volumes at the external stations of the RTC model region. RTC model’s Traffic Analysis Zones (TAZs) nest within the TAZ structure of the VSM and subarea extraction of the RTC region from the VSM could produce better results.

The model was originally calibrated in 2011 and uses 2009 National Household Travel Survey (NHTS) – Virginia Add-On and the fall 2009 GRTC On-Board transit survey for the base year 2008. The RTC model also uses model parameters from FTA “national experience”. The model was recalibrated in 2015 for the base year 2012 but use the same assumptions as for the base year 2008. The External-Internal/Internal- External and External/External trips were recalibrated based on AirSage Origin Destination (O-D) data for base year 2012. Value of Time parameters were updated for the base year 2012 based on Strategic Highway Research Program 2 (SHRP2) recommendations.

The TPO meets the Federal requirement with respect to regional modeling.

Section 3-18: Intelligent Transportation Systems

Basic Requirement

The FHWA Final Rule and FTA Policy on ITS Architecture and Standards, issued on January 8, 2001 and codified under 23 CFR Part 940 ITS Architecture and Standards, requires that all ITS projects funded by the Highway Trust Fund and the Mass Transit Account conform to the national ITS architecture, as well as to U.S. DOT adopted ITS standards. 23 CFR 940 states that:

- At the issuance date (January 8, 2001) of the Final Rule/Policy, regions and MPOs implementing ITS projects that have not advanced to final design by April 8, 2005, must have a regional ITS architecture in place. All other regions and MPOs not currently implementing ITS projects must develop a regional ITS architecture within four years from the date their first ITS project advances to final design.
- All ITS projects funded by the Highway Trust Fund (including the Mass Transit Account), whether they are stand-alone projects or combined with non-ITS projects, must be consistent with the provisions laid out in 23 CFR 940.
- Major ITS projects should move forward based on a project-level architecture that clearly reflects consistency with the national ITS architecture.
- All projects shall be developed using a systems engineering process.

- Projects must use U.S. DOT-adopted ITS standards as appropriate.
- Compliance with the regional ITS architecture will be in accordance with U.S. DOT's oversight and Federal-aid procedures, similar to non-ITS projects.

Finding of Federal Review

The goal of ITS is to use technologies to provide for more efficient and effective management of existing transportation systems. VDOT has the lead on ITS architecture and deployment in the region with the work coordinated through the Statewide Transportation Operation Centers. VDOT related ITS issues are shared with the TCAMPO through the Technical Committee. During the review meeting a representative from VDOT highlighted important implementation activities in the TCAMPO area. The construction of a new Traffic Operations cameras along interstate ROW will assist the MPO and the state in the effective and efficient management of the transportation system.

The TPO meets the Federal requirement for continued ITS in the metropolitan transportation planning process.

Section 3-19: Performance Based Planning and Programming

Basic Requirement

23 U.S.C. 134(h)(2)(A) states the metropolitan transportation planning process shall provide for the establishment and use of a performance-based approach to transportation decision making to support the national goals described in section 150(b) of this title and in section 5301(c) of 49 U.S.C. The regulations implementing the MAP-21 and FAST Act requirements for performance-based planning were published May 27, 2016 and became effective on June 27, 2016. The updated planning rule has a phase-in date of May 27, 2018 (or two years after the publication date).

Each MPO shall establish performance targets that address the performance measures to use in tracking progress towards attainment of critical outcomes for the region of the MPO. In addition, selection of performance targets by an MPO shall be coordinated with the relevant State to ensure consistency, to the maximum extent practicable. And selection of performance targets by an MPO shall be coordinated, to the maximum extent practicable, with providers of public transportation to ensure consistency with sections 5326(c) and 5329(d) of 49 U.S.C.

The MPO shall integrate in the metropolitan transportation planning process the goals, objectives, performance measures, and targets described in other State transportation plans and transportation processes, as well as any plans developed under 49 U.S.C Chapter 53 by providers of public transportation, required as part of a performance-based program.

Additionally, federal planning regulations requires that the MTP shall contain at a minimum a system performance report and subsequent updates evaluating the condition and performance of the transportation system with respect to the performance targets, including progress achieved in meeting the performance targets, an analysis of how the preferred scenario has improved the conditions and performance of the transportation system and how changes in local policies and investments have impacted the costs necessary to achieve the identified performance targets.

Finding of Federal Review

TCAMPO's progression in performance-based planning is demonstrated by the MPO developing performance measures on three levels—regional or system, corridor, and project. This tiered approach is used for the development of performance measures for regional congestion management strategies. This Performance Based Planning and Programming (PBPP) approach is demonstrated as a planning activity and is evident in the MPO's MTP and TIP. On a corridor level, TCAMPO has established their bicycle and pedestrian measures as well operational measures associated with bus service working closely with the Petersburg Area Transit. Once performance measures are chosen, projects are selected and a cost analysis is completed. Using a performance planning approach to select projects through prioritization and engaging participation from the public helps illuminate the need and benefit of the investment when introducing projects to the policy board. Examples TCAMPO presented using this approach are the Cities Gateway Project and the Pedestrian Walkway Bridge Project that connects Hopewell to the Capitol Trail.

Commendation

TCAMPO has already begun performance based planning with congestion management and safety measures working very closely with VDOT.

Recommendation

TCAMPO demonstrates in its local plans that preliminary performance planning and programming is occurring on a regional level that includes participation from PAT and VDOT. TCAMPO needs to address a more specific regional vision so that it can develop an expanded list of comprehensive targets and measures in the (metropolitan planning area) MPA by the October 2018 deadline. Throughout all the local plans presented by TCAMPO and reviewed by the Federal team—there was little evidence cohesive regional goals. Starting with a regional goal would allow for tangible transit priorities and surface transportation goals to be established local communities in the MPA. Creating a regional goal through a continuing, comprehensive, and cooperative (3C) multimodal transportation planning process and prioritizing investments based on performance targets, in coordination with the transit provider and the State DOT, is new required direction that MPOs must incorporate in their local planning.

Update: The MPO is currently working with VDOT and PAT on developing current targets and measures to meeting the first deadline of October 2018.

Appendix A



**U.S. Department
of Transportation**

Federal Transit Administration
Region III
1760 Market Street, Suite 500
Philadelphia, PA 19103
215-656-7100
215-656-7260 (fax)

Federal Highway Administration
VA Division
400 North 8th Street, Room 750
Richmond, VA 23219-4825
804-775-3320
804-775-3356 (fax)

July 26, 2017

Mr. William Chavis
Chair
Tri-Cities Metropolitan Planning Organization
1964 Wakefield Street
Petersburg, VA 23805

Re: Tri-Cities MPO 2017 Federal Planning Certification

Dear Mr. Chavis:

The Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act continues the requirement for the certification of the transportation planning process in urbanized areas with over 200,000 in population once every four years. The certification review is intended to determine if the region's transportation planning process is addressing the major issues facing the area in accordance with the applicable Federal regulations, and will look at the cooperative planning process as conducted by the State, transit operators, and local governments in the area.

This is to notify you that the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) will be conducting the quadrennial Federal Planning Certification Review of the transportation planning process for the Tri-Cities Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) metropolitan area on September 19-20, 2017. These dates were selected in consultation with your staff. The review will begin on the morning of Tuesday September 18, and will look at the cooperative planning process as conducted by the State, public transportation operator, and local governments in the area. You and all participants in the planning process are welcome to attend the review.

The formal review is tentatively scheduled to begin at 9:00 AM and end at 4:00 PM on September 19. The discussion will continue from 9:00 AM to 2:30 PM on September 20. Since policy and technical issues are likely to be discussed, please coordinate to have the appropriate representatives present at the on-site review (e.g. MPO staff, VDOT, VDRPT, GRTC, Ridefinders and MPO advisory committee members). An agenda will be provided to the MPO staff prior to our meeting. The specific focal points we are proposing for the Certification Review meeting include the following:

- Status of Recommendations from the previous Certification
- Status of Implementing the Congestion Management Process
- The Transportation Plan Update/Amendment Process

- Transit Plan/Transit agency involvement/Job Access
- Consideration of Title VI/Environmental Justice/ Public Involvement

In addition, there will be an opportunity for the public to express thoughts and comments directly with FHWA and FTA on the transportation planning process, and specifically, how the process is meeting the needs of the metropolitan area. This public meeting is tentatively scheduled for the evening of September 19, 2017, from 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM. Please ensure that this opportunity for public participation is advertised in accordance with your Public Involvement Procedures. We will also offer the opportunity for any committee members or other local elected officials to meet with us separately

If you have any questions regarding the 2017 Tri-Cities MPO Planning Certification Review, please contact Mr. Mack Frost, Planning and Environmental Specialist, at (Mack.Frost@dot.gov) (804) 775-3352 or Mrs. Melissa McGill, Senior Community Planner (Melissa.McGill@dot.gov) (202) 366-7255.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Zubrzycki
Director, Planning and Program Development
Federal Transit Administration

Mack Frost
Planning and Environmental Specialist
Federal Highway Administration, Virginia

Cc: Mr. Charlie Kilpatrick, Commissioner, Virginia Department of Transportation
Ms. Jennifer Mitchell, Director, Department of Rail and Public Transportation
Ms. Marsha Fiol, Virginia Department of Transportation (Central Office)
Ms. Sandra Norman, Virginia Department of Transportation (Central Office)
Mr. Bart Thrasher, Virginia Department of Transportation (Richmond District)
Mr. Mark Riblett, Virginia Department of Transportation (Richmond District)
Mr. Ferrell Solomon, Virginia Department of Transportation (Richmond District)
Mr. David Green, Greater Richmond Transit Company
Ms. Sandra Jackson, FHWA D.C. Division
Ms. Jill Stark, FHWA HQ
Mr. Brian Betlyon, FHWA Resource Center

Appendix B

U.S. DOT (FHWA/FTA) Joint Certification Review of the
Tri-Cities Metropolitan Area
Transportation Planning and Programming Process
September 19-20, 2017
Tri-Cities Area Metropolitan Planning Organization, Petersburg, VA

Location: Petersburg Area Transit (PAT)
100 West Washington Street
Petersburg, VA 23803
(804) 733-2450

September 19 - 20, 2017: Certification Review

Each topic is introduced by the Federal team discussion leader, followed by a 15-minute presentation overview by MPO staff (and other state and/or local agencies identified by the Federal team). The Federal team will then lead a discussion involving all participating agencies:

Participants:

Crater Planning District Commission (PDC) staff
Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)
Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (VDRPT)
Petersburg Area Transit (PAT)
Greater Richmond Transit Company (GRTC)
RideFinders
Friends of the Lower Appomattox River (FOLAR)
Cities and Counties (Advisory members)

Federal Review Team:

Federal Highway Administration
Federal Transit Administration

DAY 1 – Tuesday September 19, 2017

8:30 AM ***Certification Meeting*** (Federal Review team only)

9:00 AM **Overview of the Certification Process of the Transportation Planning and Programming Process**

This opening session will provide a brief overview of the Certification Process including summaries from the 2013 Certification Review. MPO staff will then provide an update and summary of major regional issues and priority planning activities, with discussion among all participating agencies.

Federal Discussion Leader: Melissa McGil, FTA

9:45 AM Overview of the Transportation Planning Organization (including Organizational Structure, Policy Board Involvement, Agreements, Boundaries, Self-Certifications, Unified Planning Work Program)

Presentation and discussion will include an overview of the MPO and the required elements of the Transportation Planning and Programming Process through these documents and activities.

Federal Discussion Leader: Kevin Jones, FHWA

10:45 AM BREAK

11:15 AM Prioritization Process

Presentation and discussion will include the prioritization process developed and adopted by the MPO for Long Range Plan project selection.

Federal Discussion Leader: Mack Frost, FHWA

12:00 PM LUNCH

12:45 AM Planning Factors, Long Range Plan, Transportation Improvement Program, and Transit Planning (PAT, DRPT, Ridefinders)

Discussion will include overall planning process and the required elements of the Transportation Planning and Program Development Process through these documents and activities.

Federal Discussion Leader: Tonya Holland, FTA

2:30 PM BREAK

2:45 PM Congestion Management Process, Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS), Performance Planning and Travel Demand Management (TDM) (RideFinders presentation)

Discussion will include requirements for Congestion Management Process, Travel Demand Management (RideFinders, PAT, GRTC, DRPT), and travel modeling.

Federal Discussion Leader: Mack Frost, FHWA

4:00 PM Adjourn

DAY 2 – Wednesday September 20, 2017

9:00 AM Assemble

9:30 AM Financial Planning/Financial Constraint, Annual Listing Projects

This session will focus on the funding in the Long Range Plan, TIP and planning process activities leading to identification of funding sources and costs.

Federal Discussion Leader:

10:30 AM Performance Planning and Environmental Mitigation

This session will focus on the MPO's status on developing a performance based planning process that addresses the goals of the metropolitan area. The session will also include a discussion on the types of potential environmental mitigation activities that may have the greatest potential to restore and maintain the environmental functions affected by the Long Range Transportation Plan.

Federal Discussion Leader:

11:15 AM Safety and Security including /Emergency/ Evacuation in Transportation Planning

Discussion will include a broad view of safety and security including evacuation plans /emergency response plans and planning for future infrastructure changes.

Federal Discussion Leader:

11:45 AM Freight Planning and Goods Movement / Transportation Management and Operations

Discussion will include overall Freight Planning and Transportation Management and Operations/ITS

Federal Discussion Leader:

12:15 PM LUNCH

1:15 PM Public Involvement Process/Planning, Title VI, Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE), Environmental Justice (EJ), Americans with Disabilities Act

Discussion will include overall public involvement processes by MPO and partners and the required elements of Title VI, EJ, LEP, Americans with Disabilities Act and DBE.

Federal Discussion Leader: Mohamed Dumbuya, FHWA

2:30 PM Concluding Remarks/Adjourn

2:45PM Federal Team Assemble/Preliminary Discussion of Findings

Appendix C

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

**Tri-Cities TMA Planning Certification
Review**

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



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

Tri-Cities TMA Planning Certification
Review

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.



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

Tri-Cities TMA Planning Certification
Review

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)]



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

Tri-Cities TMA Planning Certification
Review

Planning Certification Review

❑ **Date: September 19th and 20th, 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)**



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

**Tri-Cities TMA Planning Certification
Review**

Planning Certification Review

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)]



Planning Certification Review

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



Planning Certification Review

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.



Planning Certification Review

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.



Planning Certification Review

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.



Planning Certification Review

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.



Planning Certification Review

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.



Planning Certification Review

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.



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

**Tri-Cities TMA Planning Certification
Review**

Planning Certification Review

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.



Planning Certification Review

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.¹
- ❖ Clear and concise language should be included for public notices.
- ❖ Public Participation Feedback

¹ As referenced in the FY 2018 Federal Planning Finding.



Planning Certification Review

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.



Planning Certification Review

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).



Planning Certification Review

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.



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

**Tri-Cities TMA Planning Certification
Review**

Planning Certification Review

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**Tri-Cities TMA Planning Certification
Review**