



Statewide Long-Range Multimodal Transportation Plan  
Policy Committee Meeting

Meeting Summary

May 20, 2004  
10:00

Virginia Department of Transportation

Ralph Davis, in the absence of Julia Connally, called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM. He noted that the purpose of the meeting was to complete the revenue discussion from the April meeting and to develop policy recommendations that will address issues on the level of investment in the transportation system and how the funds should be allocated. The committee has heard about the growing gap between the needs and resources. The facts are that the demands on the transportation system will continue to grow, but the resources to meet that demand are stagnant and will remain so if nothing is done to meet that demand. The question is how do we address the gap?

Secretary Clement commented that the VTRANS2025 final product will be very important, and must be taken very seriously. It is the committee's charge to deliver a product that will not only be visionary but one that can be sold. We need to be mindful of both and determine how to balance the two.

There was no public comment.

April minutes approved.

Ms. Mary Lynn Tischer presented a summary of needs and revenues as presented at the April meeting. At that meeting, each mode presented needs and revenues that were not comparable. The Technical Committee has attempted to make them somewhat comparable. However, take caution with the results and think of them as illustrative rather than exact, using them to illustrate what would happen if we do nothing to get more resources.

It is alarming to note that by 2017, state funding becomes insufficient to continue 4% annual growth in maintenance and by 2018, state funds will be insufficient to provide full match for federal money.

Ms. Tischer also provided information on funding options, such as increased motor fuel, vehicle sales, retail sales and income taxes, as well as tax on vehicle miles traveled, tolls, flex funding and more local involvement in funding.

Ms. Barbara Reese provided a presentation on statutory formulas guiding transportation capital investment, looking at how transportation funds are currently allocated. Ms. Reese pointed out a key point that no funding is a lump sum for unconstrained use. Appropriations and federal reauthorization laws govern the majority of how funds are used, which changes with every new reauthorization. Changes do not appear to be tremendous with the latest authorization bill except for the amount of funds. The 1986 Special Session used needs assessments to determine the funding formula and developed factors to direct funding to those needs. The questions today are “Are the modal needs shares still accurate, are the needs still distributed within each mode the same, and are the financing options available to address those needs the same?” It is questionable as to whether the factors still apply to the modal needs today.

It was noted that rail is not included in the formula. That is due to the fact that when the formula was developed, private railroad companies said they were not interested in being part of the split.

Ms. Reese commented that only a small amount of transportation funds actually go through the formula (14%). She recommended to the committee that rather than reworking the formula, there is a need to put more attention on exploring options for new revenue. The committee should think about whether it’s important enough to raise issue of formula.

Mr. John Milliken stated that looking at the formula is important but it is equally as important to add resources or off-load responsibility borne by the state. We have continued to talk about the fact that resources are not sufficient and we will be in trouble unless we do something about it. We need to have more localities responsible for local roads, however, they must come to the state and ask for that responsibility. We cannot make them do it. State resources should be focused on higher functioning roads.

The committee agreed that VTRANS2025 should be used as a tool to paint the picture of what our transportation system will be like if we do nothing. It would be helpful to use real scenarios like how long it will take you to get to work in 2025 if new resources are not identified to fix the system. In contrast, VTRANS2025 could show how it should look with additional funding or wiser, more coordinated use of existing funds.

Secretary Clement raised the question of how to communicate the needs to the legislators. Perhaps there is a need to educate the General Assembly to get them to understand the process and to understand how dire the situation could get. It is hopeful that VTRANS2025 could deliver the message.

Mr. Charles Macfarlane stated that the demand cannot be ignored. It is important to look at development patterns. If funds are allocated by Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT), and population grows slower than VMT, we are incentivizing growth in travel.

The principle obligation of this committee is to look at resources needed and if existing resources are not sufficient, what should be recommended to meet the need.

Secretary Clement suggested a reasonable way to make change. Freeze status quo, or the current way of doing business. The formulas work. The need is to add new resources with  $\frac{1}{4}$  going to status quo and  $\frac{3}{4}$  going to VTRANS2025. It is time to talk multimodally, and stress connectivity. It may not be necessary to change current ways of doing business, rather readjust what is done with new money. To that end, VTRANS2025 should focus on how to get and spend new revenues.

Mr. Ralph Davis reviewed the latest version of the vision statement. This vision statement is the culmination of three years of public outreach for what Virginia's want of their transportation system. This statement should speak about what we want to be known for, not what we do now. This vision comes from the stakeholders, crafted by Cambridge and reworded by VTRANS2025 staff.

Mr. Gerald McCarthy made the suggestion to delete the word 'smart' and substitute the word 'strategic'. Mr. Davis noted that the word 'smart' reflects the Governor's interest in the incorporation of technology. It was decided that the vision statement would read as follows:

*Virginians envision a multimodal transportation system that is safe, strategic and seamless....*

NEXT MEETING

June 17, 2004

VDOT – Auditorium

**Policy Committee members present:**

Karen Rae  
Ralph Davis  
Gerald McCarthy  
Kenny Klinge  
Jeff Florin (for Robert Bray)  
Philip Shucet  
Harry Lester  
James Keen  
Hunter Watson  
John Milliken  
Charles Macfarlane

**Others present:**

Whitt Clement  
Kimberly Spence  
Katherine Graham  
Jim Lambert  
Mary Lynn Tischer  
Marsha Fiol  
George Conner  
Sande Fulk  
Lennie Tierney  
Barbara Reese