



## **Commonwealth Transportation Board Environmental Subcommittee**

Residence Inn Downtown Charlottesville

315 West Main Street

Charlottesville, Virginia 22903

May 24, 2023

Draft Minutes

*The meeting was called to order at 10:30 a.m.*

Members of the Subcommittee in attendance: Angel Deem (Chair), Mary Hynes, Scott Kasprowicz, Mark Merrill, and Laura Sellers.

### **Welcome**

Angel Deem, VDOT Chief of Policy, welcomed everyone and introduced Chris Swanson, VDOT Environmental Division Director, as the meeting's facilitator.

### **Approval of February 2023 minutes**

Mr. Swanson briefly summarized the contents of the February meeting minutes. During the summary discussion, several subcommittee members requested additional follow-up or actions.

Mr. Kasprowicz requested that an action plan for land management/stewardship be developed and provided at or in advance of the next meeting along with an opportunity for subcommittee members to provide input.

Ms. Hynes requested that the VDOT Environmental Division participate in the regulatory review for 24VAC30-200, Vegetation Control Regulations on State Rights-of-Way, that was discussed during the CTB workshop meeting on May 23, 2023.

Mr. Merrill requested any available update on the Department's decarbonization efforts, specifically related to efforts to reduce single-occupancy vehicle (SOV) usage and vehicle miles traveled (VMT).

Minutes approved.

### **Resilience**

#### *Use of PROTECT Formula Money*

Mr. Swanson provided an overview of the PROTECT formula money and how VDOT is funding resilience projects in response to questions during the February Environmental Subcommittee meeting. As part of this overview it was explained that the federal PROTECT formula funding can only be used for the incremental cost increase to make an asset resilient. VDOT is currently evaluating the potential to apply this funding to bridges that are already designed using resilience design criteria. The intent is to back out the cost of making them resilience. Ms. Kim Pryor, Infrastructure Investment Division Director, clarified this funding extends beyond the 5-year

Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) funds.

#### *On-Going Studies on Adaptive Design Criteria*

Mr. Swanson provided an overview of the Department's current efforts to study what design criteria may need to change as a result of changing climatic conditions. He covered two ongoing studies: a hydraulic study to understand potential cost impacts to drainage systems, and a pavement and geotechnical study to better understand impacts to roadway pavements and their subgrades. Mr. Swanson noted that these studies were relying on different climate projections and planning horizons.

There was discussion from subcommittee members on how and who makes the decision on what Representative Concentration Pathway (RCP) will be selected. VDOT responded by stating this selection will be informed through input from VDOT subject matter experts and leadership. The subcommittee concluded this discussion by asking that the subcommittee be informed about the decisions that are made on the climate scenario and planning horizon.

Ms. Hynes asked to what extent VDOT was collaborating with external stakeholders, specifically at the local and regional level. VDOT responded by stating it has and continues to collaborate with localities, Planning District Commissions, Metropolitan Planning Organizations and state agencies, which is consistent with objective 2 (*Engage and Partner with Stakeholder*) of the VDOT Resilience Plan.

Mr. Kasprovicz asked if VDOT will have a projection of impassable roadways and inundation. VDOT clarified this will be a deliverable of the ongoing VIMS study. Ms. Sellers contributed that local governments are providing these roadway extents to DEQ for flood insurance purposes, and noted that properties won't qualify for private insurance but will access a program for insurance to be provided by the federal government.

Mr. Kasprovicz asked when VDOT may be able to provide the range of expected financial implications based on a RCPs and planning horizons selected. VDOT responded by stating that the Department should be in a position to provide this high-level overview of cost implications by early next year, which is in line with the VDOT Resilience Plan's overall schedule.

There was discussion among the subcommittees members as to whether SMART SCALE applications should be screened for possible hazard vulnerabilities with the intent of screening these projects out until the Department determines the impact of advancing these projects and the additional investment that may be needed. There was not clear agreement among the members. Ms. Pryor suggested guidelines as part of a future consensus scenario as a possible option.

#### **Land Management and Stewardship**

Mr. Swanson provided an overview of the recently published Virginia Wildlife Corridor Action Plan. The overview included a summary of the Plan's overall framework, and the recommended actions included in the Plan. Mr. Merrill asked whether the plan could incorporate the use of insurance data to inform Wildlife Vehicle Conflicts areas. In addition, there was discussion among subcommittee members as to how cost effective measures with dual benefit could be implemented through the use of this Plan.

#### **Next Meeting**

TBD

**Public Comment**

Public comments were received from Mr. Tripp Pollard, Southern Environmental Law Center.

*The meeting was adjourned at 11:35 a.m.*