

October 19, 2011

**TO: TRAFFIX Oversight Subcommittee (TOS) – (A Subcommittee of the Transportation Technical Advisory Committee)**

**BY: Sam Belfield, Senior Transportation Engineer**

**RE: TOS Meeting AGENDA – November 2, 2011**

A TOS Subcommittee meeting will be held following the TTAC meeting (~11:30a.m.) on Wednesday, November 2, 2011, at the HRTPO Room D, 723 Woodlake Dr, Chesapeake, Va 23320.

1. **Public Comment Period**
2. **Summary Minutes of May 4, 2011 Meeting**  
Minutes of the last TOS meeting are attached.  
Recommended Action: Approval
3. **Past TRAFFIX spending, TRAFFIX Business Growth and Plans for 2012 – CY 2011 to present (Ron Hodges)**
4. **Traffic Involvement in Light-Rail and Park & Ride Lots (Ron Hodges)**
5. **Traffic Management – Additional Traffic Employee (Introduction and Focus)**
6. **Old Business/New Business**
7. **Next Meeting Schedule and Agenda Items**  
Meeting dates for 2012 (February 1, 2012, June 6, 2012, & October 3, 2012)

# DRAFT MINUTES

## TRAFFIX Oversight Subcommittee Meeting

May 4, 2011

Regional Building, 723 Woodlake Dr., Chesapeake, Room D

Meeting commenced at 11:25.

Chairman Jeff Raliski (absent), Robert Case (HRTPO) called the meeting to order.

### **In Attendance**

Ron Hodges	HRT/TRAFFIX
Gary Walton	City of Chesapeake
Susan Wilson	City of Portsmouth
Chris Arabia	DRPT
Carl Jackson	City of Newport News
Travis Campbell	City of Virginia Beach
Stephanie Shealey	HRTPO
Rob Case	HRTPO
Sheran Johnson	TRAFFIX (Recorder)
Peter Stephenson	Isle of Wight County
Judy Swystun	Black & White Cabs
Delores Gee	Pulsar/ Telework!VA

**Request for Public Comment:** Rob Case (HRTPO) opened the floor for public comments. No comments were made.

**Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes:** A name change correction was made to the minutes from January 5, 2011 meeting; Carl Jackson (Newport News) motioned to accept minutes with change. Motion was seconded, minutes accepted. [Note: After the 5-4-11 meeting, it was discovered that the committee did not see and approve the latest version of the 1-5-11 minutes. Therefore, the latest version of the 1-5-11 minutes will be presented at the next meeting (planned for September) for approval.]

**TRAFFIX Business Growth:** Ron Hodges (TRAFFIX) presented the subcommittee with a handout depicting TRAFFIXs' progress and growth since 2005. In order to advance the TRAFFIX operation, when Ron came on board in 2006 he began by placing staff at Naval Station Norfolk. Ron stated that, after some consulting with the base commander who expressed interest in congestion mitigation, Ron was able to establish a TRAFFIX office on the base in 2007.

- **Military Commands:** Ron stated that commands are like businesses, having varying amounts of personnel. In 2007, 450 people participated in TRAFFIX programs. In 2011, there are 2,000 participants. The growth is the result of outreach as well as the commands

putting in place some of TRAFFIXs' programs. Little Creek base, under the consultation of Jeff Fykes, established a telework plan. Rob Case asked about the meaning of the military participation. Ron explained that the participation process begins when the commands invite TRAFFIX to do presentations explaining the programs. The current military outreach representative is Amber Rhodes. The numbers represent participation in one or more of the available programs.

- NuRide: NuRide was put in place as a pilot program with DRPT in 2006 with three participants; it has grown dramatically since.
- Commuter Computer: Ron went over the registration numbers shown on the handout, covering 2008 and following. Previous years' data are no longer available after switching over to the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOC) rideshare system. The totals by year are additional registrants that were added to the database, the total number of registrants is approximately 2,284.
- Vans: TRAFFIX currently has 61 vans, all of which are currently leased. Twenty new vans were added in 2008. Since no vans are available to lease, a waiting list of potential lessees has been established. Due to the increasing waiting list, TRAFFIX is exploring the possibility of partnering with VPSI, a private van leasing company, to provide vans to those on the waiting list. If TRAFFIX provides VPSI with the waiting list on a referral basis, VPSI will, in return, provide TRAFFIX with the vehicle miles traveled, emissions, and all relevant TDM reporting numbers. The effort would be an extension of the TRAFFIX vanpool program lasting until additional vans are secured. Although TRAFFIX would refer the customer to VPSI, the customer would make the decision whether or not to lease from VPSI.
- Telework!VA: Telework!VA is a program funded by DRPT with an inter-agency agreement between DRPT and HRT. TRAFFIX is given quotas to reach. TRAFFIX has met and exceeded these quotas. The VMT reduction of 600,000 as a result of teleworkers under the Telework!VA program exceeds the goal of 290,000 VMTs. Delores Gee (TRAFFIX) noted that nine companies are waiting for the opportunity to join the program when additional funding is available. Ron stated that current participation is at the maximum of twenty-five companies. Judy Swystun of Black and White Cabs asked what the companies use the money for. Ron explained that employers use the money to set up home offices with leased equipment such as computers, phones, and software that allows the employee to function fully from home. Delores noted that leasing of the equipment is required, and the equipment can be bought at the end of the contracted period for one dollar. Chris Arabia (DRPT) stated that leasing is a state requirement because the equipment cannot be purchased with state money. Travis Campbell inquired about the amount of money each company can qualify for. Chris Arabia explained that the program will cover up to ten new teleworkers per employer. Ron explained that the number of participants reflected on the handout also includes approximately 450 teleworkers from Little Creek Amphibious Base. Although the military cannot receive funds, they can receive professional assistance. The previous Telework!VA representative, Jeff Fykes, consulted with Little Creek to establish their telework program. Chris stated that a new telework bill has passed which offers tax incentives to businesses that offer teleworking. This may attract businesses which do not currently use Telework!VA. Companies cannot take advantage of both programs. Delores informed the

group that President Obama signed a telework bill into law mandating that each government agency put in place a telework policy by June, 2011.

- **Transit:** Ron reiterated the goal of TDM—to get commuters out of their cars—noting that TDM therefore includes transit. The MAX buses carry a large amount of riders to a few major employers. As a result of the work of the outreach team, these numbers remain steady.
- **Guaranteed Ride:** This program averages over 600 rides a year, mainly for a group of repeat customers. The maximum allowable number of rides per participant has changed from four per month to two per month, not to exceed twelve per year.

**TRAFFIX Involvement in Light Rail:** A group has been formed to fill the seats of the light rail including the Downtown Norfolk Council (DNC) and the City of Norfolk. The group is trying to reach as many businesses as possible to offer information, educate, and address concerns about the light rail. The outreach will expand from downtown to Newtown Road and eventually to Chesapeake and Portsmouth. Brochures are being distributed explaining the benefits of using light rail including possible tax benefits.

Ron discussed available park and ride parking spaces for the light rail. There are approximately 800 spaces available along the corridor at the stations, 196 of which are located at Harbor Park. Ron is negotiating for additional spaces at Military Circle and an adjacent church that has 350 spaces available. In addition, there are eighteen bus feeder routes along which spaces could be obtained. Carl Jackson (Newport News) suggested that Virginia Beach be contacted about additional park and ride lots along its feeder routes. Gary Walton (Chesapeake) commented that private park and ride lot owners may get disenchanted if trash and vandalism result from their lots being used for park and ride.

To draw more awareness to the rail along Colley Avenue and Hampton Boulevard, Ron suggested to HRT the idea of wrapping a few buses to look like a Tide rail car.

**TRAFFIX Management:** Ron informed the group that his title has changed from Director of TRAFFIX to Director of Business Development. HRT asked Ron to enhance revenue streams. Instead of hiring a TRAFFIX manager, Ron told the subcommittee that he will continue to manage TRAFFIX because Business Development and TRAFFIX are working well as one. Ron described one way that this change will enhance TDM: the ability to promote public transit use through route sales to the private sector. The idea of selling routes, which is still in the discovery stage, would mimic Rochester Transit methodology. Rochester, since implementing route sales, moved from running a deficit to running a surplus, and has lowered bus fares. Because legal ramifications exist, a lawyer will be retained to assure that FTA guidelines are upheld.

Concerning Ron's' new responsibilities, Rob Case (HRTPO) invited the subcommittee to comment on his request that TRAFFIX's expenditure of its million dollar grant from HRTPO be clearly reported and that it be spent only on TRAFFIX programs. Judy Swystan asked if Business Development has its own money and Ron answered "no". Ron stated that his salary is paid from the TRAFFIX budget. Rob stated that Business Development should be considered a branch of TRAFFIX, and not vice versa, for reporting purposes. Ron stated that, even if he were

not Director of Business Development, he would still pursue increasing bus ridership to get more people out of their cars.

**Procurement Issue Affecting NuRide/Rideshare:** NuRide is an incentive-driven online ridesharing community. TRAFFIX partners with NuRide, a private company based in Connecticut, to offer rewards points for using alternative commute modes. The rewards points may be redeemed for discounts and coupons sponsored by local and national vendors. However, NuRides' contract with TRAFFIX has expired. As a result, a request for proposal (RFP) for an online rideshare incentive program was published. Due to complication in the procurement process, the RFP had to be reposted. If NuRide should go away, so will its incentive program on which a lot of commuters depend. NuRide has agreed to continue offering rewards without a contract until the end of June, 2011. If NuRide losses the bid, it will take the information on 3,000 plus commuters with it and the new company will have to start from scratch. Canada-based Rideshark and NuRide are the only two companies that responded to the RFP.

**Other Business:** Rob Case (HRTPO) asked Ron to provide reports showing how funds are spent and to summarize the performance of TRAFFIX. He commended Ron for presenting the sheet showing progress that TRAFFIX has made, and requested regular reporting for the HRTPO task of summarizing TRAFFIX performance included in the FY12 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). TRAFFIX is funded with CMAQ funds. This started a conversation concerning how TRAFFIX, for the second year, has had trouble obtaining the allocated funds at the beginning of its fiscal year. Because funds were not available until February, advertising and marketing were affected. Chris (DRPT) suggested that HRT request funds well before October to assure on-time availability. He said that if monies are not available when needed, then HRT can apply to DRPT for a small contingency grant to fill the gap.

**Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 1:00 p.m. Next meeting will be held on September 7, 2011.