

**Summary Minutes of the HRPDC/HRTPO
Community Advisory Committee (CAC) Meeting
February 13, 2025**

The February 13, 2025, meeting of the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission (HRPDC)/ Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization (HRTPO) Community Advisory Committee (CAC) was held at the HRBT Expansion Project Welcome Center at .9401 4th View Street Norfolk VA, 23503.

The meeting was called to order by the Chair at 12:05 PM with the following in attendance:

CAC Members in Attendance

Mark Geduldig-Yatrofsky, Chair (PO)	Garry Harris (PO)
Sharon D. Anderson (PO)	Maleah Amos (PO)
Brad Martin (VB)	Frank Cotrupi (NN)
Lauren Roberts Carter(NO)	Travis Davidson (NO)

CAC Members Absent

Anthony Piglowski (SU)

HRPDC/HRTPO Staff

Quan McLaurin	Matt Klepeisz
Robert A. Crum, Jr.	Joe Turner
Nikki Johnson	Greg Grootendorst
Robert Cofield	Eric Walberg

Partner Agencies

Drew Lumpkin (HRER)	Rick Dwyer (HRMFFA)
Keith Moore (VWU)	Todd Nichols (HRMFFA)
Steve Cook (HRWC)	Mitzi Crystal (VDOT)
Monty Mason (W&M)	

Additional Attendees

Destini Harrell	Jimmy Fay
Janetta Jatczak	Bradley Weidenhammer (VDOT)
Joshuah Torres	Zamari Love (VDOT/HRBT)
Daniel Ogunyemi	Cami Castleberry

Approval/Modification of Agenda

The Chair, Mr. Geduldig-Yatrofsky, asked the committee if there were any amendments or discussions surrounding the agenda's approval. There was no discussion or amendments brought forth.

Without objection, the Chair and committee allowed the agenda to move forth as presented.

Public Comments

- **Submitted Public Comments**

Mr. Quan McLaurin reported that no public comments had been submitted.

- **Public Comment Period**

Members of the public were invited to address the CAC, but no in-person requests for public comment were received.

Minutes

The Chair, Mr. Geduldig-Yatrofsky, asked the committee if there were any requested modifications or discussions surrounding the approval of the December CAC 2024 minutes. There was no additional discussion or requested modifications.

Lauren Carter Roberts motioned to approve the minutes. Sharon Anderson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

HRPDC/HRTPO Summary Report – Quan McLaurin, HRPDC, DEI & Title VI Civil Rights Liaison

Mr. McLaurin shared the HRPDC/HRTPO Summary report with the committee with specific emphasis on the most recent Executive Director's Report from the January 2025 Commission meeting, the recap from the December CAC meeting at the Norfolk International Airport (ORF) to discuss development of the adjacent parcels of land, current HRTPO public notices, and the regional Climate Action Plan being developed.

HRBT Expansion Project Update – Bradley Weidenhammer, VDOT Operations Manager

Mr. Bradley Weidenhammer, VDOT Operations Manager for the HRBT Expansion Project, provided a presentation to the CAC providing background on the HRBT Expansion, original infrastructure project, latest developments, and current timeline.

Mr. Weidenhammer described the full scope of the project, including the surface and bridge rehabilitation on either side of the tunnels. The project is funded by HRTAC and the regional

sales and use tax. The HRBT is the first bored tunnel for VDOT, has no impacts to navigable waterways, has minimal impact to the traveling public, and provides for continuous operation.

Mr. Weidenhammer described the operations included in the development of the expansion project including the slurry treatment plant, the tunnel fabrication, how “Mary” the tunnel boring machine processes the slurry and is processed. Full descriptions and specs related to the interior of the tunnel boring machine were shared. The new trestles are the first trestles to be added in over 50 years for the project. Mr. Weidenhammer provided members a closer look at the slurry treatment plant on the South Island.

Mr. Weidenhammer shared current photos related to the associated widening and rehabilitation of surface road projects and bridges connecting to the HRBT. The tunnel broke through on the north side in April 2024. Mary is the heaviest and largest shield on a boring tunnel machine, and the largest application of this technology in the United States. 80% of the contractors working on the project are Virginia based.

There have been some environmental challenges, including endangered bird species nesting there. Border collies help deter the birds, and an artificial barge has been created for the nesting birds to avoid disrupting their nesting cycle. Additionally, some historical artifacts have been discovered during this process, including timber from a ship delivering granite to Fort Monroe from circa 1823 and the bones from a mastodon that is approximately 50,000 years old.

The HRBT Expansion project continues to conduct outreach to keep the public informed about the latest developments. Mr. Weidenhammer used the model tunnel-boring machine to further display the tunnel-boring process.

Members had questions about evacuation and egress from the tunnel in the event of an emergency, and Mr. Weidenhammer explained that this had been integrated into the design and is ADA-compliant. Mr. Weidenhammer explained that the dredging material has to go to be handled a specific way to avoid environmental concerns. Mr. Weidenhammer also responded to a question about inflation and explained that costs have significantly increased due to rising costs since the start of the project.

Mr. Crum asked Former Senator Monty Mason to share about the development of the regional gas sales and use tax to help fund projects like the HRBT Expansion. Members asked about the co-benefits of this project, and Mr. Weidenhammer explained that it would increase more reliable travel times. Former Senator Mason asked members to be aware of a current bill being discussed by state legislators related to creating an additional fund to support a primary and secondary roadway fund.

Mr. Crum asked Mr. Cook of the Workforce Council to share about the development of the offshore wind project, and how Hampton Roads can be centered in developing that industry for the Mid-Atlantic region. Mr. McLaurin encouraged members to revisit the Regional Connectors Study to see what other potential crossing projects could be coming to the region.

2025 Hampton Roads Economic Outlook – Nikki Johnson, HRPDC, Regional Economist

Ms. Nikki Johnson, HRPDC Regional Economist, provided the CAC with an updated 2025 economic outlook for Hampton Roads. The data included a review of U.S. Real Gross Domestic Product. Ms. Johnson noted that concerns related to a recession have receded. U.S. Monthly core inflation is hovering around 3% and the US Federal Reserve aims for 2% inflation rate. U.S. Monthly change in civilian jobs have improved over the last 3 month period. Hampton Roads is at 1.7% in job growth compared to a national rate of 1.3%.

The private education and health services sector have added the most jobs. Ms. Johnson noted that the hospitality industry has dipped in the region. Residential Home sales have slowed down due to the increase in mortgage rates compared to previous years like 2020 and 2021, so a lot of existing homeowners locked into favorable rates are less likely to sell at the moment. Zillow's Home Value Index has shown an increase of 48% for Hampton Roads, and rental prices have steadily increased as well.

In review, Ms. Johnson recapped that steady growth is included on the horizon with defense spending, if unchanged, continuing to provide a boost to the regional economy. Additionally, with inflation above target and labor markets stabilizing, the Fed signals a higher-for-longer interest rate environment. Low inventories, high prices, and high interest rates continue to exacerbate the affordability crisis. High uncertainty around U.S. policy direction casts a shadow over the 2025 outlook.

CAC members asked about federal job cuts and how that may impact Hampton Roads. Ms. Johnson shared that it is difficult to predict, but that Hampton Roads is looking to be more resilient compared to other areas. Mr. Rick Dwyer, confirmed that further.

Mr. McLaurin asked if the information/tech sector is expected to grow due to the fiber ring construction. Ms. Johnson was hopeful for the outlook. Mr. McLaurin asked how Hampton Roads compares to other economic districts in Virginia, Ms. Johnson shared that a subsequent report dedicated to that question is forthcoming.

CAC members discussed the importance of population replacement and growth, as well as the important role that immigration plays in maintaining a steady rate of population growth.

Mr. Lumpkin shared that they are working to collaborate with the Hampton Roads legislative delegation to see how Hampton Roads can collaborate and work federal partners. Mr. Crum asked members to consider what agenda items, including quality of life indicators, they may like to have discussed in future meetings.

Nomination of Officers – Quan McLaurin, HRPDC, DEI & Title VI/Civil Rights Liaison//Robert A. Crum, Jr. Executive Director HRPDC/HRTPO

Mr. McLaurin thanked the current and outgoing chair, Mr. Mark Geduldig-Yatrofsky for his years of dedication to the CAC and work that he has done. Mr. McLaurin then shared that

there are some members who have expressed interest.

Mr. Crum opened the floor for nominations for the chair role. Maleah Amos nominated Lauren Roberts Carter for the chair. No further nominations were received. Ms. Roberts Carter was unanimously approved.

Ms. Roberts Carter, opened the floor for nominations for the vice chair role. Mr. Brad Martin nominated Ms. Sharon Anderson as vice chair. No further nominations were received. The motion was closed. Ms. Anderson was unanimously approved.

Membership Selection Subcommittee – Quan McLaurin, HRPDC, DEI & Title VI/Civil Rights Liaison

Mr. McLaurin asked CAC members if anyone interested in joining the CAC membership selection subcommittee. Mr. Harris, Mr. Geduldig-Yatrofsky, Ms. Amos, Ms. Roberts Carter, and Ms. Anderson volunteered to join the subcommittee.

Mr. Crum encouraged attendees to join and recommend other prospective members to submit applications.

Next Meeting

Mr. McLaurin shared that the next CAC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 10, 2025 at Nauticus in Norfolk.

Report Out from Members – Quan McLaurin, HRPDC, DEI & Title VI Civil Rights Liaison

- Garry Harris (Portsmouth) - Cool Down P-Town on Saturday, February 22, 2025
- Sharon D. Anderson (Portsmouth) - Civic League meeting on March 17th at 7 PM at New Community Temple Church
- Lauren Roberts Carter (Norfolk) - HR Chamber's Leadership Exchange will be taking place in Austin, TX this year
- Drew Lumpkin (Hampton Roads Executive Roundtable) - The Hampton Roads Executive Roundtable has been working to communicate with the Hampton Roads Congressional Delegation on how to best collaborate
- Steve Cook - Please consider the Hampton Roads Workforce as a resource.

Old/New Business

There was no new old/new business to address.

Adjournment

With no further business, Chair Roberts Carter adjourned the meeting at 2:10 pm.