

## **Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization Board Meeting Minutes of October 16, 2025**

The October 16, 2025 meeting of the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization (HRTPO) Board was called to order by Vice-Chair Rick West at 10:32 a.m. in the Regional Board Room at 723 Woodlake Drive in Chesapeake, Virginia.

### **HRTPO Voting Members in Attendance:**

Rick West (CH), Vice-Chair  
Paul Kaplan (FR)  
Phillip Bazzani (GL)\*  
Jimmy Gray (HA)  
Joel Acree (IW)  
Cleon Long (NN)  
Kenneth Alexander (NO)  
Shannon Glover (PO)  
David Hux (PQ)  
William Gillette (SH)  
Mike Duman (SU)

Bobby Dyer (VB)  
Doug Pons (WM)  
Thomas Shepperd (YK)\*  
William Harrell (HRT)\*  
Sonya Hallums Ponton (VDOT Alternate)  
Barb Nelson (VPA Alternate)  
Matthew Scalia (WATA)  
Senator Mamie Locke (GA)\*  
Delegate Bonita Anthony (GA)\*  
Delegate Jeion Ward (GA)

### **HRTPO Nonvoting Members in Attendance:**

Chris Price (CH)  
Lincoln Saunders (FR)\*  
Carol Steele (GL)\*  
Mary Bunting (HA)\*  
Don Robertson (IW)  
Alan Archer (NN)  
Patrick Roberts (NO)  
Randy Wheeler (PQ)

Brian Thrower (SH)  
Kevin Hughes (SU)  
Patrick Duhaney (VB)  
Andrew Trivette (WM)  
Mark Bellamy (YK)  
Bob Eveleigh (FTAC)  
Mark Perryman (NAA)\*

### **HRTPO Executive Director:**

Robert Crum, Secretary

### **HRTPO Other Participants:**

Ella Ward (CH Alternate)  
Brian DeProfio (HA)

Thelma Drake (VPRA)\*

### **HRTPO Voting Members Absent:**

Michael Hipple (JC), Chair  
Tiffany Robinson (DRPT)

Senator Angelia Williams-Graves (GA)

### **HRTPO Nonvoting Members Absent:**

Scott Stevens (JC)  
Steven Carter (PO)  
Lauren Roberts Carter (CAC)  
Greg Campbell (DOAV)

Jeffrey Breeden (FAA)  
Edward Ofori (FHWA)  
Terry Garcia Crews (FTA)  
Aleshia Alston (PAC)

**HRTPO Staff in Attendance:**

Pavithra Parthasarathi  
Theresa Brooks  
Rob Case  
John Mihaly

Keith Nichols  
Jeff Raliski  
Dale Stith

*\*Denotes late arrival or early departure*

**Others Recorded Attending:**

Carolyn Campbell (HA); Angela Rico, and Jerri Wilson (NN); Bryan Pennington, Megan Shearin, and John Stevenson (NO); Megan Gribble (PO); Michael Stallings (SM); Leroy Bennett (SU); Joash Schulman (VB); Gretchen Heal (Hampton Roads Chamber); Brenda Roberts (U.S. Representative Jen Kiggan's Office); Lieutenant Chase Rodriguez (USCG); Steve Jones, Captain Matt Schlarmann, and Captain Shane Tanner (USN); Elijah Ramsey (VDOT); Karen McPherson (VHB); Jeremy Latimer and Michael McLaughlin (VPRA); Mark Geduldig-Yatrofsky (Resident); and Kelli Arledge, Rob Cofield, Katie Cullipher, Simone Elmore, Greg Grootendorst, Tealen Hansen, Whitney Katchmark, Matt Klepeisz, Quan McLaurin, Adithi Moogoor, Cynthia Mulkey, Joseph Turner, and Eric Walberg (HRPDC Staff).

*\*Senator Mamie Locke and Delegate Bonita Anthony arrived*

Mr. Robert Crum, HRPDC Executive Director, announced two new representatives of VDOT, voting member Michael Davis, VDOT Hampton Roads District Engineer, and alternate voting member Sonya Hallums Poton, VDOT Acting Assistant District Administrator – Planning and Investment Management. He also announced two new nonvoting members, Franklin Interim City Manager Lincoln Saunders and Peninsula Airport Commission Business Development Manager Aleshia Alston.

*\*Supervisor Thomas Shepperd arrived*

**Approval of Agenda**

Vice-Chair West asked for a motion to approve the October 16, 2025 HRTPO Board meeting agenda as presented.

**Motion:** Mayor Bobby Dyer Moved to approve the agenda as presented; seconded by Mayor Shannon Glover. The Motion Carried.

**Public Comments**

Mr. Crum reported that no public comments had been submitted since the last HRTPO Board meeting. He also indicated that the full transcription of the public comment from the July 17, 2025 HRTPO Board meeting had been included in the agenda packet.

*\*Mr. Lincoln Saunders and Ms. Mary Bunting arrived*

Members of the public were invited to address the HRTPO Board. There was one in-person request to comment.

- Mr. Mark Geduldig-Yatrofsky, Portsmouth resident, recommended that the HRTPO Board ask the General Assembly to establish a study for a comprehensive review of transportation funding mechanisms in light of upcoming administration changes.

A full transcription will be included in the November 20, 2025 HRTPO Board agenda packet.

Vice-Chair West thanked Mr. Geduldig-Yatrofsky for his comment.

*\*Mr. William Harrell arrived*

### **Executive Director's Report**

Mr. Crum referenced his monthly report included in the agenda packet and offered to answer any questions. Hearing none, he reminded members that both the HRTPO Board and HRPDC meetings in November would be held on the Peninsula at Christopher Newport University (CNU). He stated that the university would provide an excellent meeting venue and expressed appreciation to President William Kelly for hosting these meetings on campus. Mr. Crum added that he looks forward to making Peninsula-based meetings a regular occurrence, noting that this has been a consistent request from Peninsula partners.

### **Approval of Consent Agenda**

Vice-Chair West asked Mr. Crum to briefly describe the items on the consent agenda, which included the following:

- A. Minutes from the July 17, 2025 and July 31, 2025 HRTPO Board Meetings
- B. HRTPO Financial Statement
- C. FY 2026 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Amendment
- D. HRTPO Annual Roadway Performance Report – 2025 Edition: Final
- E. 2024 CMAQ and RSTP Project Selection Process Report: Final
- F. Preliminary Siting Analysis for Proposed Suffolk Train Station: Final
- G. FY 2024-2027 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment – Exempt from Conformity Amendment

**Motion:** Mr. William Harrell Moved to approve the consent agenda as presented; seconded by Mayor Mike Duman. The Motion Carried.

### **Upcoming Long Bridge Construction Project and Proposed Service Changes**

Mr. Crum invited Mr. Michael McLaughlin, Virginia Passenger Rail Authority (VPRRA) Chief Operating Officer, to provide a briefing on the Long Bridge Project and its anticipated impacts on passenger rail service in the Hampton Roads region.

Mr. McLaughlin provided a detailed update on passenger rail investments and the Long Bridge project, emphasizing rail's importance as a cost-effective alternative to highway expansion and a critical component of statewide and national mobility. He described severe rail capacity

constraints in Northern Virginia, particularly at the Long Bridge, the only Potomac River rail crossing for more than 70 miles, which currently operates near full capacity.

He outlined the Long Bridge project's major construction elements, including a new two-track passenger rail bridge over the Potomac River and complex track and bridge work extending into Washington, D.C. While construction over the river can occur largely offline, work within the portion of the project extending from the river into D.C. presents significant challenges due to constrained right-of-way, the need to maintain continuous passenger and freight service, and daytime-only construction restrictions. To complete the project by 2030 and remain within the approved budget, VPRA has identified the need for a defined daytime work window of just under five hours.

*\*Supervisor Phillip Bazzani and Ms. Carol Steele arrived*

Mr. McLaughlin explained that VPRA is coordinating closely with Amtrak, VRE, and CSX to implement an operating plan that balances construction needs with systemwide rail service. The proposed work window, anticipated to begin in January, will require significant schedule adjustments affecting Amtrak services, VRE operations, and CSX freight traffic. He reviewed anticipated service changes, including reduced Hampton Roads rail service during construction, the introduction of express bus service to supplement capacity, and earlier departure times for certain trains to preserve connectivity.

He concluded by emphasizing the long-term benefits of the Long Bridge project, which will ultimately allow expanded passenger rail service statewide, restore and increase Hampton Roads rail service, and relieve crowding across the network. Mr. McLaughlin also highlighted VPRA's ongoing communications efforts to keep riders and stakeholders informed throughout construction.

Ms. Thelma Drake sought clarification regarding the proposed bus schedules, noting prior understanding that only one early-morning bus would depart Norfolk.

Mr. McLaughlin explained that current plans include two buses departing Virginia Beach, stopping in Norfolk and Newport News, and then operating express to Washington, D.C., with one departing Virginia Beach around 5:30 a.m.

Ms. Drake raised concerns about early-morning connectivity and emphasized that the early Norfolk train has been key to ridership success. She stressed the importance of clear public communication to ensure passengers understand that train service in Hampton Roads will continue and that bus service is a supplement, not a replacement. Ms. Drake also emphasized the importance of clearly delineating rail versus bus service.

Mr. McLaughlin confirmed that bus connections will be clearly identified in mobile and online platforms.

Mr. Jeremy Latimer clarified that under the revised service plan, Hampton Roads will have two round-trip trains and two round-trip buses during construction, a configuration that modeling indicates will maximize ridership.

Ms. Drake requested assurance that reduced rail service would not extend beyond construction.

Mr. McLaughlin confirmed that upon completion of the Long Bridge project in 2030, service will be restored and expanded to three round-trip trains each for Newport News and Norfolk.

Vice-Chair West invited Mr. Crum to comment.

Mr. Crum explained that the discussion was intended to inform the HRTPO Board of the anticipated rail service reductions during construction of the Long Bridge project. He noted that Hampton Roads will lose two trains for approximately five years, one Norfolk train and the planned third Newport News train, with both services replaced by bus connections.

He expressed concern about the timing of the reductions, citing increased travel demand associated with the Sail250® Virginia commemoration and additional delays expected from I-64 construction. Mr. Crum emphasized the region's strong rail ridership and stressed the importance of maintaining rail momentum.

Mr. Crum thanked VPRA for ongoing coordination and reported that he has requested that VPRA and Amtrak consider allowing trains to continue operating at least to Alexandria to preserve the reliability and rider experience of rail service. He noted that VPRA continues to evaluate this option with Amtrak.

Mr. McLaughlin confirmed that the issue has been raised in recent discussions.

Mr. Crum added that he sent a letter requesting Amtrak's support for VPRA's efforts to review and evaluate all alternatives to the plan, including the proposal to maintain rail service to Alexandria.

Mayor Doug Pons thanked Mr. McLaughlin for the presentation and noted that the information was somewhat confusing compared with his previous understanding. He asked why buses would need to operate from Norfolk if, as Mr. Crum suggested, trains could continue running as far as Alexandria. He questioned why passengers could not take the train from Norfolk and Newport News to Alexandria and then transfer to a bus service operating through D.C. He stated that he would support the Board conveying this position.

Vice-Chair West commented that replacing train service with bus service represents a step backward for the region. He asked whether there would be a cost difference to customers between traveling by bus versus traveling by train and invited further questions.

Supervisor Thomas Shepperd shared that although he does not frequently ride the train, he has traveled by rail with his family and found it to be an enjoyable experience, noting its value as a tourism asset. He expressed concern about how bus service could effectively replace a full train that makes multiple stops along the route. He asked how many buses would be provided and how a single bus could accommodate the number of passengers and stops typically served by a multi-car train. He questioned whether some stops would be eliminated and how the service pattern would function during the construction period.

Mr. McLaughlin explained that the proposed bus service would be dedicated to Hampton Roads and would not make intermediate stops currently served by trains, such as Petersburg, Richmond, or Fredericksburg. He noted that those locations have alternative travel options, including other

Amtrak services and intercity bus providers. The buses would operate nonstop after departing Newport News, unlike the existing train service.

Mr. McLaughlin stated that it remains to be determined whether bus capacity will fully accommodate current train ridership. He further explained that the Norfolk and Newport News trains being removed from service are part of longer Amtrak trainsets that operate throughout the Northeast Corridor. Those trainsets must continue operating north of D.C., where demand is highest, and will originate at Washington Union Station rather than Hampton Roads during the construction period.

Mr. McLaughlin emphasized that all remaining Northeast Corridor trains will continue to destinations including New York City and, in some cases, Boston. During the construction period, Hampton Roads will have two dedicated bus routes to D.C., where passengers may transfer to Amtrak trains for continued travel north. He added that the proposed bus service would not stop in Williamsburg, which will continue to be served by two round-trip trains.

Mr. Matthew Scalia asked whether bus service would be provided for Williamsburg.

Mr. McLaughlin responded that, at this time, no bus service is planned for Williamsburg.

Mr. Scalia noted that, although representatives from the Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) were not present, DRPT is planning to launch the Virginia Breeze Tidewater Current service, which would operate through Hampton Roads, including Williamsburg, and extend along the I-64 corridor to Harrisonburg with stops in Richmond. He suggested that this service could help mitigate some of the inconveniences associated with the proposed rail and bus service changes.

Vice-Chair West then asked if there were any additional comments. Hearing none, he stated that if the Board wished to authorize Mr. Crum to continue working on its behalf in support of maintaining Hampton Roads' rail service to Alexandria, a motion would be required.

**Motion:** Mayor Kenneth Alexander Moved to authorize the Executive Director to continue working on behalf of the Board in support of maintaining Hampton Roads' rail service to Alexandria; seconded by Mayor Jimmy Gray. The Motion Carried.

Mr. McLaughlin's presentation is available on the HRTPO website using the following link:  
[https://www.hrtpo.org/DocumentCenter/View/15046/101625-TPO-06 Presentation-Upcoming-Long-Bridge-Construction-Project-PDF?bidId=](https://www.hrtpo.org/DocumentCenter/View/15046/101625-TPO-06%20Presentation-Upcoming-Long-Bridge-Construction-Project-PDF?bidId=)

## **Fiscal Year 2025 Audited Financial Statements**

Mr. Michael Garber, Partner at PBMares, briefed the HRTPO Board on the annual review of the Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 financial statements of the HRPDC and HRTPO.

Mr. Garber reported that the auditors issued an unmodified opinion on the financial statements, indicating a clean audit with no findings. A separate report on internal control and compliance was also issued with no issues noted. Mr. Garber explained that the audit of federal awards and the related opinion could not yet be finalized because the Office of Management and Budget has not released its required annual compliance supplement. He noted that this delay is affecting

many local governments and is outside the auditors' control. He concluded by stating that the audit was completed on time, required no audit adjustments, and that all requested materials were provided promptly and completely by staff.

**Motion:** Mayor Pons Moved to approve the FY 2025 Audited Financial Statements; seconded by Supervisor Shepperd. The Motion Carried.

The audited financial statements, along with supplemental management letters and the auditor's opinion report, based on census data reported to the Virginia Retirement System (VRS), are available on the HRPDC and HRTPO websites using the following links.

HRTPO Website: <https://www.hrtpo.org/Archive.aspx?ADID=249>

HRPDC Website: <https://hrpdcva.gov/Archive.aspx?ADID=248>

*\*Ms. Thelma Drake departed*

### **HRTPO Bylaws – Proposed Amendment**

Due to anticipated time constraints, this item was deferred.

### **Regional Legislative Agenda**

Mr. Crum presented a proposed Regional Legislative Agenda for the upcoming General Assembly session for the HRTPO Board's consideration. The agenda was developed over several months through discussions beginning in July, review by the Regional Legislative Committee, and input from multiple HRPDC and HRTPO committees. The Board was being asked to consider and potentially endorse the transportation-related components of the agenda.

Mr. Crum explained the transportation funding legislative priority, particularly the recommendation to create a Primary and Secondary Road Fund. Hampton Roads has invested nearly \$6 billion in interstate improvements through regional taxes, but now faces more than \$3 billion in unfunded needs on non-interstate roads such as Route 17, Route 460, Route 58, Hampton Boulevard, and the James River Bridge. A similar bill passed both chambers of the General Assembly last year but was vetoed by the Governor. The current proposal would increase the regional sales and use tax from seven-tenths of a cent to one cent, which could in turn potentially generate approximately \$85 million annually to address these needs, including flood-prone roadways.

Mr. Crum noted that the Board had recently received correspondence from the City of Virginia Beach regarding the proposed Primary and Secondary Road Fund. He explained that the letter was shared with members in advance of the meeting so they could fully understand Virginia Beach's perspective.

Other legislative priorities include funding to build out a regional biking and walking trail network of up to 250 miles. These projects are already advancing locally, are aligned with local capital improvement plans, and support quality of life, tourism, workforce attraction, and economic development. Even modest state funding could help advance key segments.

The agenda also emphasizes protecting and enhancing funding for public transit systems, building on the success of higher-frequency bus service such as the Hampton Roads Transit's 757 Express Service. Continued investment is seen as critical to achieving a reliable, multimodal transportation network across the region.

Passenger Rail is another priority, with a focus on faster and more reliable passenger rail service between Hampton Roads, Richmond, and the Northeast Corridor. Rail ridership in Hampton Roads continues to grow, and preserving momentum is considered essential.

The agenda also calls for continued toll relief at the Elizabeth River Crossings, where tolls remain a significant burden for many residents. Finally, the agenda includes one transportation-related position statement encouraging the State to continue to gather data on roadway flooding occurrences, including making investments in flood sensor networks to assist in predicting roadway flooding events. Mr. Crum concluded by inviting Board discussion, noting that the primary and secondary road fund proposal was likely to generate the most feedback.

Mayor Dyer thanked Mr. Crum for bringing forward the correspondence from Virginia Beach and emphasized that the city has consistently been a willing regional partner. He noted that all localities face similar challenges related to budgets, congestion, and roadway conditions, and he stated that the purpose of the letter signed by himself and Council Member Schulman was to encourage a broader regional discussion.

Mayor Dyer expressed concern that while addressing unfunded needs on primary and secondary roads is essential, the proposed approach may be insufficient to address the scale of the problem. He questioned whether the proposal would provide only a temporary solution rather than a comprehensive fix. He highlighted the growing impact of stormwater and flooding on roadways, noting that recent minimal rainfall resulted in significant flooding, particularly in Virginia Beach and Norfolk. He stressed that road passability is critical not only for economic development but also for military readiness and national security, given the significant military presence in the region.

Mayor Dyer provided examples of roadway challenges in Virginia Beach, including Indian River Road near Stumpy Lake and Nimmo Parkway, which is critical for hurricane evacuation from Sandbridge. He noted that current conditions pose safety risks and evacuation challenges. He also emphasized the sensitivity of raising taxes, citing public pushback to a recent half-cent increase in the meals tax, despite the minimal individual cost and the important public safety and infrastructure projects it supports.

He explained that Virginia Beach has significantly increased its capital improvement investments following Hurricane Matthew, reflecting the changing conditions and increased flooding risks. Mayor Dyer noted the challenging political climate at both the state and federal levels, stating that limited federal funding for infrastructure places greater responsibility on local governments to address these issues.

Mayor Dyer suggested that, given the magnitude and complexity of the challenges, the Board consider a strategic pause to allow for further study, potentially through the formation of a task force, to fully assess long-term needs and solutions. He acknowledged the region's commitment to consensus-building but cautioned that the scale of flooding and stormwater impacts continues to grow.



He concluded by emphasizing that Virginia Beach and Norfolk are facing stormwater mitigation needs measured in billions of dollars, not millions, with significant implications for roadway infrastructure. Mayor Dyer underscored that military readiness remains a central concern, noting that regional transportation infrastructure is critical to national defense and potential future military operations. He stated that his comments were intended to explain the rationale behind Virginia Beach's position and to encourage a comprehensive and forward-looking regional approach.

Vice-Chair West emphasized the need to consider the broader context of primary and secondary road funding regardless of how the immediate proposal moves forward. He noted that the issues raised, particularly related to long-term infrastructure needs, are real and require continued strategic thinking beyond the current vote. He framed the discussion around identifying an overall strategy for addressing primary and secondary road challenges and invited additional comments from the Board.

Mayor Pons stated that the region's strategy began with the creation of a dedicated transportation fund through HRTAC, which he described as a successful example of regional revenue generation. He noted the significant accomplishments made possible by that fund and viewed the proposed Primary and Secondary Road Fund as the next logical step in that strategy. Mayor Pons commended Delegate Glass for including stormwater mitigation as part of the previous proposal, acknowledging that while the funding would not solve all issues, it represents an important starting point. He suggested that additional funding mechanisms could be pursued in the future if needs continue to grow. Mayor Pons stressed the importance of maintaining momentum, thanked General Assembly members for their leadership in advancing the bill previously, and warned that delaying action could stall progress. He concluded by expressing his support for moving forward with the legislative agenda as proposed.

Supervisor Shepperd expressed concern that the Board not lose focus on the urgent and longstanding need to address primary and secondary road funding. He noted that weather-related impacts, population growth, and increased development continue to strain local road systems, while no additional state funding is currently available for these needs. Supervisor Shepperd referenced challenges with existing programs, such as SMART SCALE, and emphasized that flooding is only one of several factors affecting road conditions. Supervisor Shepperd stressed that a key achievement to date has been building consensus within the General Assembly around the need for a dedicated funding mechanism, which would provide a place to direct state resources to Hampton Roads. While acknowledging the broader challenges posed by flooding and coastal resilience, he emphasized the importance of staying focused on proven strategies, building on past successes, and continuing to advance solutions for primary and secondary roads rather than allowing momentum to stall.

Mayor Duman expressed support for the comments of other Board members and emphasized the importance of addressing secondary road needs, particularly in Suffolk, where major corridors such as Routes 58 and 460 are critical for commerce, evacuation, and military mobility. He noted severe congestion on Route 58 and raised concerns about safety and emergency access. He stressed that the region has strong momentum from last year's legislative effort and warned against losing it, expressing confidence that support remains in place. Mayor Duman supported moving forward with the proposed priorities and suggested clarifying the legislative language to

present the proposed 0.3-cent regional sales and use tax increase as an option rather than a requirement, allowing flexibility for alternative funding solutions.

Mr. Crum indicated that language was included in last year's Regional Legislative Agenda and could be added back into this year's agenda.

Vice-Chair West suggested adding that to the current recommended action.

Mayor Duman requested that the legislative priority be amended to clarify that the proposed 0.3-cent regional sales and use tax increase be presented as an option rather than a required approach, allowing the General Assembly flexibility to consider alternative funding solutions. He emphasized that the intent is to communicate the need for funding while offering one viable option for consideration.

Mayor Duman also raised concerns regarding the current toll relief program, noting that Suffolk was excluded while other localities received relief. He stated that many Suffolk residents must use toll facilities to commute to work in neighboring cities and argued that this exclusion is inequitable. He suggested that future toll relief efforts explicitly consider Suffolk and potentially other localities such as Chesapeake and Virginia Beach, particularly for lower-income residents. He proposed that adjusting eligibility thresholds or distribution formulas could allow toll relief to be more equitably applied across the region.

Delegate Bonita Anthony thanked the Board for the discussion and stated that she appreciated the various perspectives shared. She noted that another iteration of House Bill 2466 is anticipated and acknowledged receipt of the correspondence from Virginia Beach. Delegate Anthony emphasized the importance of maintaining credibility and trust with the General Assembly, particularly as the region advances multiple funding requests related to primary and secondary roads, regional trails, and broader resilience initiatives.

Delegate Anthony questioned whether the Board should consider submitting a complementary regional infrastructure and fiscal readiness framework alongside the next iteration of HB 2466. Delegate Anthony suggested that such a framework could help provide supporting data, promote transparency and equity across the region, and demonstrate to the General Assembly that the region is proactively laying the groundwork for responsible and coordinated investment. She indicated that this approach could strengthen the region's position as it enters the upcoming legislative session.

Vice-Chair West thanked Delegate Anthony for her comments and stated that the Board would welcome guidance from the General Assembly regarding what additional information or frameworks would be most helpful. He expressed some concern about potentially complicating or diluting previous requests by introducing new elements that could shift the focus or create confusion. However, he noted that if the Board determines there is consensus to pursue a broader approach, including additional discussion or documentation, the Board could certainly move in that direction.

Mayor Pons acknowledged that the proposed increase represents an added expense for residents but emphasized that the cost of inaction would be greater. He cited prolonged congestion, such as extended delays on Mercury Boulevard, which result in increased fuel costs, vehicle wear and tear,

and diminished quality of life. He stated that, in his view, paying the estimated annual cost would be preferable if it results in improved mobility and reduced congestion.

Mr. Crum clarified that a three-tenths of a cent increase would equate to approximately \$48 per person per year, or about \$4 per month.

Councilman Cleon Long requested clarification regarding the Board's prior consensus. He stated that his understanding was that, in the previous year, the Board agreed to move forward without specifying the 0.3-cent increase. He asked if the current proposal is intended to address the identified \$3 billion funding gap shown on the screen or whether additional funding sources would be required in the future to fully address construction needs beyond that amount.

Mr. Crum responded that while the region has approximately \$3 billion in identified needs for primary and secondary roads, a three-tenths of a cent increase would not fully address the entire funding gap. He explained that the increase would generate approximately \$85 million annually, which could be bonded and leveraged through HRTAC to advance a substantial number of projects. However, he emphasized that prioritization would still be required, and future decisions would need to be made by the Board regarding which projects to fund. Mr. Crum noted that, although the funding would not resolve all needs, it would represent a meaningful step forward in addressing critical roadway deficiencies across the region.

Supervisor Joel Acree stated his support for continuing to advance the proposed three-tenths of a cent funding initiative. He referenced the late Supervisor William McCarty's strong advocacy for this approach and emphasized the urgency of addressing secondary road funding. Representing a locality with a relatively small population but significant daily traffic volumes crossing the James River Bridge, he underscored the immediate need for action and stated that this proposal represents the most viable path forward.

Mayor Alexander offered several observations regarding the proposed funding approach for secondary roads. He questioned whether the General Assembly, through JLARC or another body, has conducted a comprehensive review of secondary road needs statewide. He noted that, across the Commonwealth, many counties rely on state funding for the maintenance, repair, and improvement of their road systems. Mayor Alexander expressed concern that a three-tenths of a cent increase would be insufficient to meaningfully address regional needs, particularly given that specific projects have not yet been fully identified. He also cautioned that current economic conditions and state fiscal constraints may limit the General Assembly's ability to identify new revenue sources. While he agreed that creating a dedicated fund is an important step, he characterized the proposed tax increase as both insufficient and challenging given the financial headwinds facing the Commonwealth. He concluded by aligning his comments with Delegate Anthony's suggestion to take a step back and consider a more comprehensive analysis before proceeding.

Mayor Dyer stated that Virginia Beach does not intend to be an impediment to moving the proposal forward. He explained that the purpose of the City's comments was to encourage deeper discussion and long-term thinking, acknowledging that the proposed funding would not fully address future needs. He indicated support for advancing the current initiative as a necessary step, while also urging the Board to take a strategic, forward-looking approach. Mayor Dyer suggested that, following the transition to a new administration in Richmond, the region consider forming a working group or task force in coordination with the legislative delegation to better

understand the magnitude of the challenges and develop more comprehensive solutions in the future.

Mr. Crum requested direction from the Board regarding how it wished to proceed.

Mayor Alexander stated that he had a substitute motion.

Vice-Chair West noted that no motion was currently on the floor.

**Motion:** Mayor Pons Moved to approve the 2026 Regional Legislative Agenda as presented; seconded by Supervisor Shepperd.

Mayor Alexander asked whether the motion before the Board included language referencing a three-tenths-of-a-percent tax increase. Upon confirmation, he stated that he wished to offer an amendment to strike that language while still moving forward with the creation of the fund as outlined in the proposal.

Vice-Chair West asked for clarification regarding the amendment.

Mayor Alexander explained his proposed amendment to the motion, stating that while he supports establishing a dedicated fund for primary and secondary roads, he believes specifying a sales and use tax increase may be premature. He noted that the General Assembly holds taxing authority and has multiple mechanisms available to fund transportation needs, including SMART SCALE, revenue sharing, and state-of-good-repair programs. He suggested that identifying a funding source should involve further discussion and direction from the General Assembly, while proceeding with the creation of the fund itself.

Mayor Pons sought clarification as to whether Mayor Alexander was proposing an amendment or a substitute motion.

Vice-Chair West advised that the determination rested with the maker of the motion.

Mayor Alexander responded that he intended it as a substitute motion if it was not viewed as a friendly amendment.

Mayor Pons responded that he did not support an amendment. He recalled that the Board had previously agreed to include a specific funding request and noted that doing so resulted in strong success in the General Assembly. For that reason, he stated he would not support an amendment removing the tax language from the proposed legislative priority.

Mayor Duman stated that the three-tenths of a cent figure was presented as an option rather than a mandatory request. He emphasized that the Board's intent was to seek funding to address primary and secondary road needs, regardless of the source, and to offer the proposed tax increase as one possible mechanism. He expressed concern about deviating from the approach previously agreed upon by the Board and supported continuing with the same framework that had been advanced successfully in the prior year.

Vice-Chair West asked Mayor Alexander whether he would consider language that retained the three-tenths of a cent reference as a suggested option rather than a fixed funding source.

Mayor Alexander responded that he remained concerned about identifying a specific revenue source, questioning why that option should be prioritized over other tools available to the General Assembly, such as SMART SCALE, revenue sharing, or state-of-good-repair programs. He reiterated his view that the General Assembly should determine the most appropriate funding mechanism.

Supervisor Shepperd requested clarification regarding the legislation that had previously passed the General Assembly to better understand how the current proposal aligned with prior action.

Senator Mamie Locke clarified that the legislation, which ultimately passed the General Assembly, did so only after the proposed tax increase was removed. The enacted legislation established the fund but did not include a specific funding mechanism. She noted that the approach being suggested by Mayor Alexander aligns with what was ultimately approved by the General Assembly and stated that this distinction should be clearly understood by the Board.

Vice-Chair West thanked Senator Locke for the clarification.

Supervisor Shepperd reflected on the Board's earlier discussions, noting that the initial focus was on incrementally working toward a solution, informed in part by Mayor Alexander's legislative experience. He stated that he does not interpret the current language as mandating a three-tenths-of-a-cent increase, but rather as presenting it as an option. Supervisor Shepperd emphasized that the primary need is the establishment of a dedicated fund into which resources can be placed. He expressed skepticism that existing tools, such as SMART SCALE or other funding programs, would be sufficient to meet the region's needs and stated that meaningful progress would require action by the General Assembly. He cited past experience with initiatives such as the HRBT project as evidence that dedicated, real funding leads to real projects. He reiterated his strong support for creating a fund and stated that his support hinges on having a clear mechanism in place to direct funding once it becomes available.

Vice-Chair West summarized the discussion by noting that, as clarified by Senator Locke, the General Assembly previously approved legislation establishing a fund without specifying a funding source, thereby creating a place to receive future revenues. He stated that the Board, therefore, needed to act on the substitute motion before returning to the primary motion.

Mayor Alexander stated that his substitute motion, supported by Senator Locke and seconded by Mayor Dyer, was to establish the fund in order to provide a mechanism for future funding.

Vice-Chair West confirmed that this was the motion currently on the floor and asked whether all members understood the motion. He then called for a vote.

**Motion:** Mayor Alexander Moved to modify the Legislative Priority of Creating a Primary and Secondary Road Fund for Hampton Roads, as presented by removing reference to increasing the regional sales and use tax; seconded by Mayor Dyer. The Motion Carried.

*\*Mr. Mark Perryman departed*

Mr. Crum asked for a vote to approve the other transportation-related items for inclusion in the 2026 Regional Legislative Agenda as presented.

**Motion:** Supervisor Shepperd Moved to approve the other transportation-related items for inclusion in the 2026 Regional Legislative Agenda as presented; seconded by Mr. Harrell. The Motion Carried.

Mayor Kaplan commented after the vote, noting that he had attempted to speak earlier. He shared his perspective based on 21 years of service as a deputy sheriff in Southampton County, during which he responded to numerous fatal accidents on Routes 460 and 58. He emphasized that the lack of median barriers on those corridors has contributed to serious safety issues and underscored the urgency of securing funding to address them. Mayor Kaplan stated that increased development, higher traffic volumes, and the potential need for military mobilization would further exacerbate existing conditions if improvements are not made. He expressed hope that his comments reflected the concerns of Isle of Wight County, Southampton County, Suffolk, and other communities along those routes, and stressed that the human toll of unsafe roadways makes the issue particularly real and pressing.

Delegate Anthony acknowledged the need to move the meeting forward and reiterated her understanding that the primary objective was to establish the fund, followed by a request for a budget appropriation to begin capitalizing it. She further suggested developing a regional infrastructure and fiscal readiness framework to provide supporting data and analysis. Delegate Anthony indicated that she may later request formal action or a statement of intent from the Board to advance such a study or framework, noting that this effort could help build trust with the General Assembly as the legislation is reintroduced.

Mr. Crum stated that there appeared to be support among Board members for developing a broader framework to address long-term funding challenges. He suggested that the HRTPO and HRPDC jointly undertake this effort. Mr. Crum proposed that staff develop guiding principles for such a framework and present them to both Boards at a future meeting, with the goal of considering endorsement. He noted that this approach would allow the region to address the broader funding needs and challenges raised during the discussion.

The Regional Legislative Agenda presentation is available on the HRTPO website using the following link:

<https://www.hrtpo.org/DocumentCenter/View/15047/101625-TPO-09 Presentation-Regional-Legislative-Agenda-PDF?bidId=>

### **Comments and Updates from State and Federal Agencies and Military Liaisons**

Due to time constraints, these items were deferred.

### **HRTPO Board Three-Month Tentative Schedule**

Per the Regional Meetings Schedule, the next HRTPO Board meeting is scheduled for November 20, 2025, and will be held in Newport News at CNU. There is no meeting scheduled in December. The HRTPO Annual Meeting will be held on January 15, 2026.

## Minutes of HRTPO Advisory Committee Meetings

Links to the HRTPO Advisory Committee meeting minutes approved since the last HRTPO Board meeting were included in the agenda for information purposes.

### For Your Information

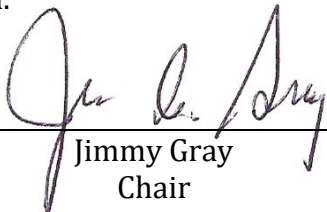
Various correspondences of interest were included in the agenda packet for HRTPO Board member information.

### Old/New Business

There was no old or new business.

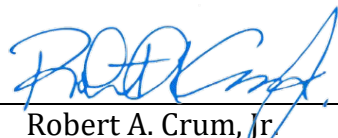
### Adjournment

With no further business to come before the HRTPO Board, the meeting was adjourned at 12:20 p.m.



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Jimmy Gray  
Chair



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Robert A. Crum, Jr.  
Executive Director/ Secretary