

**NEW RIVER VALLEY  
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION**

**FY 2024-25**

**Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)**

**DRAFT**

This Unified Planning Work Program was adopted by the New River Valley MPO Policy Board at its meeting of \_\_\_\_\_.

This Unified Planning Work Program was approved as a Final Report by the New River Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization on \_\_\_\_\_. It was prepared for the New River Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization by the Technical Advisory Committee of the New River Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization through a cooperative process involving the Towns of Blacksburg and Christiansburg, the City of Radford, the Counties of Montgomery and Pulaski, Blacksburg Transit, Radford Transit, Pulaski Area Transit, the Virginia Tech - Montgomery Executive Airport Authority, Virginia Tech, Radford University, New River Community College, the Virginia Department of Transportation, the Department of Rail and Public Transportation, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA).

The preparation of this report has been financed in part through grant[s] from the Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation, under the State Planning and Research Program, Section 505 [or Metropolitan Planning Program, Section 104(f)] of Title 23, U.S. Code. The contents of this report do not necessarily reflect the official views or policy of the U.S. Department of Transportation. The NRV MPO ensures nondiscrimination and equal employment in all programs and activities in accordance with Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. If you need more information or special assistance for persons with disabilities or limited English proficiency, contact Dan Brugh at 540-394-2145, TTY/TDD 711.

## **Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)**

### **Introduction and Summary of Planning Process**

#### **Structure/General Organization**

The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) defines the transportation planning processes and programs used by the Metropolitan Planning Organization and is normally developed and adopted on an annual basis. The overall authority for transportation planning in the Metropolitan Planning Area is in the hands of the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) which is made up of locally elected and administrative officials of the local government members (the Towns of Blacksburg and Christiansburg, the City of Radford, and the Counties of Montgomery and Pulaski) and representation from the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT). These members make up the Policy Board and are the voting entity for the MPO. There are eleven eligible votes on the Policy Board with two being from each local government member and one being from the Virginia Department of Transportation. The Towns, City, Counties, and VDOT have provided for alternate voting members from staff and administration. The MPO Policy Board also includes non-voting representation from key transportation organizations in the region including Blacksburg Transit, Radford Transit, Pulaski Area Transit, the NRV Regional Commission, the Virginia Tech - Montgomery County Executive Airport Authority, Virginia Tech, Radford University, New River Community College, the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (VDRPT), the Federal Highway Administration, and the Federal Transit Administration. The MPO also has a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), appointed by the MPO Policy Board, consisting of individuals who are primarily administrative and planning personnel from the area.

#### **Planning Sources and Processes**

With the establishment of the MPO, Blacksburg, Christiansburg, Radford, and Montgomery and Pulaski Counties have available to them an organization for transportation planning which can provide a forum to bring together comprehensive and cooperative planning approaches that may lead to new, worthwhile project alternatives. These project ideas may eventually find their way into the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) at some future point in time if funding can be identified for implementation. The planning efforts managed by the MPO include provisions for citizen participation in accordance with Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act and the Infrastructure and Investment Jobs Act (IIJA), also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL).

## **The UPWP in the Process**

The UPWP attempts to set out the planning efforts being undertaken by the various entities of which it has knowledge. To date, the primary efforts listed originate with citizens, the local governments, VDOT, the MPO Policy Board, and Blacksburg Transit with projects/tasks subject to approval by the Federal Highway Administration and/or Federal Transit Administration. Transit planning efforts in this fiscal year will be coordinated with Blacksburg Transit, Radford Transit, and Pulaski Area Transit. Project development and recommended planning project activity generally proceed through Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) consideration and then to the MPO Policy Board, which, after consultation and public comment, makes final changes and project/task selection and approves the Plan.

## **UPWP and the TIP**

As implied, the UPWP annually sets out the transportation planning activities for which authorization and funding support is to be sought. Activities included normally are presented on a one-year schedule. The MPO Policy Board is also responsible for developing the TIP. The projects considered in the TIP are different from those in the UPWP in that items for inclusion in the TIP: have reached the project development level, involve capital improvements, have been selected for implementation, funding sources have been determined, and cover an extended time period of at least four years. Further, the UPWP is a planning activities administration tool, whereas the TIP sets out a schedule of actual projects for implementation; projects on the TIP may also be end products of planning work carried out under the UPWP.

## **Meeting National Goals for Transportation Planning**

The UPWP, and the planning process it engenders, allows the MPO to participate in and meet requirements from the national perspective of conducting a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive transportation planning process that results in plans and programs that consider all modes of transportation and supports metropolitan community development and social goals. This is widely known as the "3-C Process." The policy in MAP-21/ FAST Act is to promote consistency between transportation improvements and the State and local planned growth and economic development patterns while involving the public and other interested/affected groups in the process. This is further supported in the IJA.

## **Metropolitan Planning Area**

The New River Valley Metropolitan Planning Area consists of the entirety of the Towns of Blacksburg and Christiansburg and the City of Radford, as well as the surrounding urbanized portions of Montgomery and Pulaski Counties (see attached map for illustration of the region). The MPO study area is intended to depict the areas that are expected to be urbanized within the next twenty years. Based on the 2020 Census, the New River Valley MPO study area population was 106,146 and encompasses a land area of approximately 170 square miles.

## **Air Quality**

In 1997, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) sponsored an amendment to the Clean Air Act's National Ambient Quality Standards (NAAQS). The amendment essentially replaced the 1-hour ozone standard with a more stringent 8-hour standard. The ozone levels for the New River Valley MPO do not exceed these limits and therefore is not considered a non-attainment area.

If at such time in the future ozone levels for the New River Valley MPO do exceed these new limits, the EPA will require that all areas that exceed the standards establish a non-attainment boundary to be submitted for EPA review. If the EPA should designate the New River Valley MPO as an air quality non-attainment area, the MPO will include activities to address the issue as it develops the Long Range Transportation Plan update and annual Transportation Improvement Program.

## **Primary Topics for MPO Consideration**

- ***The Existing Thoroughfare System***

### *Primary Arterials*

Interstate 81 (within Christiansburg and Montgomery County) with Exits 105, 109, 114 and 118 within the MPO is a heavily traveled north-south interstate with a high percentage of truck traffic. Roanoke lies to the north on I-81 and Dublin and Pulaski are to the south.

U.S. Route 460 is the primary east west Route through the MPO. Route 460 connects the MPO with Giles County and West Virginia to the west and Salem and Roanoke to the east. The portion of Route 460 between I 81 and Blacksburg is the highest traveled primary in the MPO. Business Route 460 runs through both Blacksburg and Christiansburg.

State Route 114 connects Route 460 in Christiansburg in Montgomery County to Route 11 in Pulaski County. This primarily 2-lane primary ( 4 lane from the Radford Army Ammunition Plant (RAAP) to Route 11) is the main connector between Pulaski County and Radford to the west and Montgomery County, Blacksburg, and Christiansburg to the east and serves the RAAP. It also provides a link from Pulaski County to the commercial area in Christiansburg.

U.S. Route 11 (stretching through the MPO as Radford Road/Radford Street, East and West Main Street, and Roanoke Street in Christiansburg and Montgomery County, Main Street in the City of Radford, and Lee Highway in Pulaski County) connects the MPO to Dublin and the Town of Pulaski on the west and Shawsville/Elliston to the east.

U.S. Route 460 is comprised of Business Routes through the two Towns and the recently connected Bypasses. U.S. Route 460 Business is North and South Main Street in Blacksburg and Roanoke Street, East Main Street, and North Franklin Street in Christiansburg. Shawsville/Elliston lie to the east along U.S. Route 460 and Giles County and West Virginia lie to the west along U.S. Route 460.

U.S. Route 177 is a major connector between the City of Radford and I 81. This area is scheduled for significant development in both the City of Radford and Montgomery County. The MPO will continue to work with Montgomery County and the City of Radford regarding development in the area. Currently the County and City are developing an update to the Route 177 Corridor Plan. The MPO will participate in this project.

State Route 8 (originating as West Main Street in Christiansburg and becoming Riner Road in Montgomery County) connects the MPO with Riner and Floyd.

State Route 111 (Depot Street, NE and Cambria Street, NE in Christiansburg) serves to connect Roanoke Street (U.S. Route 11/460) to N. Franklin Street (U.S. Route 460).

State Route 114 (Peppers Ferry Road in Christiansburg and Montgomery County) originates at U.S. Route 460 and links the MPO to Radford and Pulaski (Fairlawn) on the west.

State Route 314 (Southgate Drive in Blacksburg) connects the Route 460 Bypass to Airport Road.

State Route 412 (Prices Fork Road in Blacksburg) become State Secondary 685 at the Town limits and continues to Route 114.

The “Smart Road” is a joint project of the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) and its Transportation Research Council with Virginia Tech’s Transportation Institute and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The Smart Road will be a 5.7-mile stretch of I-73 linking Blacksburg directly to I-81. The 2.0 mile first phase was completed in the fall of 1999, officially opened in March 2000, and cost \$32.7 million. The Smart Road will be opened to traffic as traffic demands.

- ***Blacksburg Transit (BT)***

Started in 1983, Blacksburg Transit, a department of the Town of Blacksburg, provides service in three of the MPO member jurisdictions, Blacksburg, Christiansburg and a small portion of Montgomery County. In FY2023 BT provided 3.5 million passenger trips.

Currently, all Blacksburg Transit routes lie within the MPO study area, and BT has been active in discussions regarding the potential expansion of service where feasible. The MPO will continue to work with Blacksburg Transit in identifying needs and preparing planning level studies.

In addition to serving Blacksburg with fixed route and paratransit service, Blacksburg Transit also operates in the Town of Christiansburg. The Christiansburg services include two deviated fixed-routes, and a demand-response service. The MPO continues to work with Blacksburg Transit and the Town of Christiansburg to evaluate the service and implement refinements, with input provided by the Christiansburg Transit Working Group.

Christiansburg services provide an affordable public transit option for travel both within Christiansburg, and to and from Blacksburg and Virginia Tech.

During 2023, progress was made on BT's Multi-Modal Transit Facility (MMTF). Construction began in March 2021 and is anticipated to be complete by Summer 2024. The MMTF will be a hub for local and regional transit, creating a centralized transportation center that will also serve alternate transportation needs. Planning for route adjustments has already begun in conjunction with the MPO and BT's regional partners to ensure improved regional coordination.

In an effort to reduce BT's carbon footprint BT has begun replacing traditional diesel powered vehicles that have reached the end of their useful with battery-electric buses. BT currently has funding for 17 additional electric buses and funding for additional charging stations to meet charging needs of the additional electric buses planned. Funding for an on-route rapid charger has been received with plan to install at the MMTF.

BT is currently working to develop a Transit Strategic Plan (TSP), required as a result of congressional legislation occurring in 2018. This new plan is anticipated to be completed in June 2024 will replace the previously adopted Transit Development Plan (TDP) completed in September 2018.

BT's major capital improvements are also included in the MPO Long Range Transportation Plan.

- ***Radford Transit (RT)***

Radford Transit is a partnership between The City of Radford, Radford University, and RTW Management (as operators). The system was launched August 8, 2011 and serves the entire City of Radford, Radford University campus and Fairlawn. Connecting routes exist to Blacksburg and Christiansburg, as well as to the SmartWay bus. Pre-Covid, annual ridership was approximately 285,000 passenger trips per year. In FY 2023, Radford Transit provided 127,016 trips. The system operates three (3) body-on-chassis (Cutaway) style buses, thirteen (13) medium duty body-on-chassis (Arboc low floor) style buses, and four (4) low floor heavy duty transit buses.

As of this date Radford Transit has replaced all of the original fleet of buses as they are well past their end of useful life. The system sought a more viable long-lasting solution to the light duty vehicles based on system utilization, load based needs, and procured the low floor, medium duty Arboc buses that are seven year expected useful life buses.

Radford Transit received a grant through DRPT's Transportation Ridership Incentive Program "TRIP" to expand the service of Route's 40 & 41 to provide service all day and year round.

In January 2023, Radford Transit, with the assistance from Kimley-Horn, began the development of a Transportation Strategic Plan "TSP", as required by DRPT that will be completed by June 30, 2024.

- ***Pulaski Area Transit (PAT)***

Pulaski Area Transit (PAT) was established in 2003 to provide the community with public transportation including a mixture of a deviated fixed route and a demand response service. On September 4, 2018, Pulaski Area Transit transitioned to a fixed route in the Town of Pulaski and on February 1, 2022, we added two expansion routes in addition to the current fixed route. PAT provides a deviated fixed route to parts of Pulaski County four times a day and to New River Community College Christiansburg site two times a day. These services are Monday – Friday. PAT also offers ADA trips scheduled 24-hours in advance. Pulaski Area Transit operates 11 body on chassis 12 passenger vans with wheelchair lifts. In fiscal year 2023, PAT provided 26,958 passenger trips and drove 229,849 miles.

### ***Regional Transit***

The NRV MPO continues to support and enhance service provided by the SmartWay bus connecting the New River Valley to the Airport in Roanoke and downtown Roanoke with routes also servicing the Amtrak passenger rail station in Roanoke. It also supports the Virginia Breeze and its regional service to Washington DC. The NRV MPO participates in the regional Transit Coordinating Council that was created as a result of an MPO study. The purpose of the Council is for regional stakeholders to meet regularly to discuss public transportation and serve as a coordinator for governmental entities, stakeholders, and service providers.

- ***Safety in Planning***

To incorporate concepts of Safety Conscious Planning (SCP) as a primary factor in the transportation planning process, a comprehensive, system-wide, and multi-modal approach must be used. This implies a proactive approach aimed at preventing crashes and unsafe conditions, as well as addressing existing transportation hazards. More specifically, this includes making safety an explicit priority within the transportation planning process; proactively assessing safety impacts of future transportation investments as well as reacting to current needs; and integrating safety into the Long Range Plan as well as short range plans such as the UPWP and TIP. VDOT has developed a statewide Strategic Highway Safety Plan, which is focused on prevention of accidents as well as reducing injuries and fatalities. The MPO will use information gathered by VDOT to review and recommend specific measures to enhance safety within the MPO. The MPO will also support and assist as needed with other specific Safety Programs such as the Safe Routes to School Program.

- ***Coordinated Public Transit/Human Services Transportation Plan***

Coordinated transportation options will be reviewed and supported in meeting the transportation demands of the region. This particularly affects segments of the population traditionally underserved by Transportation. These would include groups such as senior citizens, persons with disabilities, and low-income



individuals. An initial study conducted by the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute for the New River Valley and Roanoke Regional Commissions, entitled “New River Valley and Roanoke Public Mobility Study,” gathered information on needs in the region as well as a current inventory of providers. In 2013, the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (VDRPT) developed a statewide Coordinated Human Service Transportation. A portion of that plan has been approved as the Coordinated Public Transit/Human Services Transportation Plan for the MPO. It is updated as needed. Regular coordination meetings are held with VDRPT. The MPO supports the NRV Regional Commission in establishing a Mobility Manager for the region. The approved plan is included in the 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan in compliance with federal requirements.

- ***Alternative Transportation***

The MPO will work with VDOT, VDRPT, and local governments to assure that alternative transportation modes are considered in addressing transportation needs. Organizations that support bicycle/pedestrian transportation will be included in the planning process for future transportation improvements. The MPO currently serves on the regional Bikeway/Walkway Committee of the NRV Regional Commission that is supporting a regional link between Montgomery County and Pulaski County through the City of Radford. Extensions of the Huckleberry Trail in Christiansburg and Blacksburg have been funded and will be constructed this year. The Valley to Valley Trail study by VDOT is looking at a Trail connection from the Roanoke River Greenway in Salem through the NRV MPO to the New River Trail State Park in Pulaski. The NRV MPO, with support from the New River Valley Regional Commission, the Roanoke Alleghany Regional Commission, and the Roanoke Valley Transportation Planning Organization requested VDOT to fund a study to identify a corridor. This funding request was approved and the study should be complete during 2023-2024.

The NRV MPO will conduct a feasibility study for transit, bike and pedestrian infrastructure improvements along the South Main Street/US Route 460 Business corridor, from Industrial Park Road to Peppers Ferry Road. Route 460 Business is used by pedestrians and cyclists to travel between Blacksburg and Christiansburg and currently there are little to no accommodations along the roadway. A task order was assigned for the 460 Business Bike/Pedestrians Corridor Study, to be completed during 2024.

The NRV MPO will develop a commute cost calculator which would enhance the Rideshare program within the New River Valley.

### ***Bikeshare***

A Bikeshare program was launched in 2018 serving Blacksburg, Christiansburg, Montgomery County, and the Virginia Tech campus. An advisory committee was appointed by the MPO to coordinate the effort. The Bikeshare program was unexpectedly halted by the provider in mid-2022. The remaining 49 ebikes were surplus by the Town of Blacksburg in September 2023; the majority (88 from Virginia Tech) of the bike racks were auctioned off during March 2024. At this time a decision by the localities and Virginia Tech has not been made on whether to obtain another provider.

- ***Virginia Tech - Montgomery County Executive Airport Authority***

The Authority is comprised of representatives from the Towns of Blacksburg and Christiansburg as well as Montgomery County and Virginia Tech. The Airport, with its 5,500-foot long runway, serves primarily corporate and private clientele and is located at 1601 Research Center Drive in Blacksburg. An updated Long Range Plan has been developed by the Authority and is included in the MPO 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan. The MPO served on the advisory committee for the development of the Airport Master Plan which is anticipated to be updated starting in 2024.

- ***Virginia Tech and Radford University***

The Universities are special traffic generators within the MPO. Events such as graduation, sporting events, and parent weekends can play a major role in area transportation. The MPO will work with Virginia Tech and Radford University in addressing transportation issues that arise.

- ***Norfolk and Southern Railroad***

Norfolk and Southern provides freight rail service to the MPO area. The Virginia Passenger Rail Authority (VPRA) is actively working on extension of passenger rail to the New River Valley by 2026. The MPO strongly supports reestablishment of passenger rail service through the New River Valley.

- ***Freight Transportation in the Region***

Freight transportation plays a major role in the intermodal transportation system. The MPO, through a contract with the New River Valley Regional Commission, conducted a freight study to identify current freight movement, critical freight needs, and develop potential solutions and target funding sources. The MPO will provide feedback on critical freight issues and work with local stakeholders to enhance freight capabilities within the MPO as needed.

- ***Passenger Rail in the Region***

With the extension of passenger rail service to Roanoke in 2017, the MPO supports the extension to Christiansburg and eventually to Bristol. The MPO secured funding through the Intercity Passenger Rail Operating and Capital (IPROC) Fund to further study the feasibility and cost associated with an extension. The State of Virginia has purchased the track from Norfolk Southern, the old Virginian line, from Salem to Merrimac to facilitate passenger service. A study is underway to select a site for the station and should be completed in 2024.

## Current and Future UPWP Activities

As noted, the MPO will engage in short range planning activities. Historically, MPOs have undertaken short-range projects such as corridor studies, intersection studies, travel time studies, and transportation development plan updates. In the future it is anticipated that the MPO, through the UPWP specified activities, will continue to undertake short-range planning activities to manage congestion, address safety issues, address operational issues, update transit strategic plans, and monitor Long Range Transportation Plan update needs.

Primary issues facing the area include how best to redesign and improve the transportation system and at the same time insure that necessary funds will be available to use in undertaking the physical projects needed given the current financial situation and the funding status of VDOT. The MPO will also work with VDOT to program any future Stimulus funding that is designated for the MPO Area.

The MPO will assure that all MPO planning activities comply with the current federal legislation – Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act) and the IIJA (BIL).

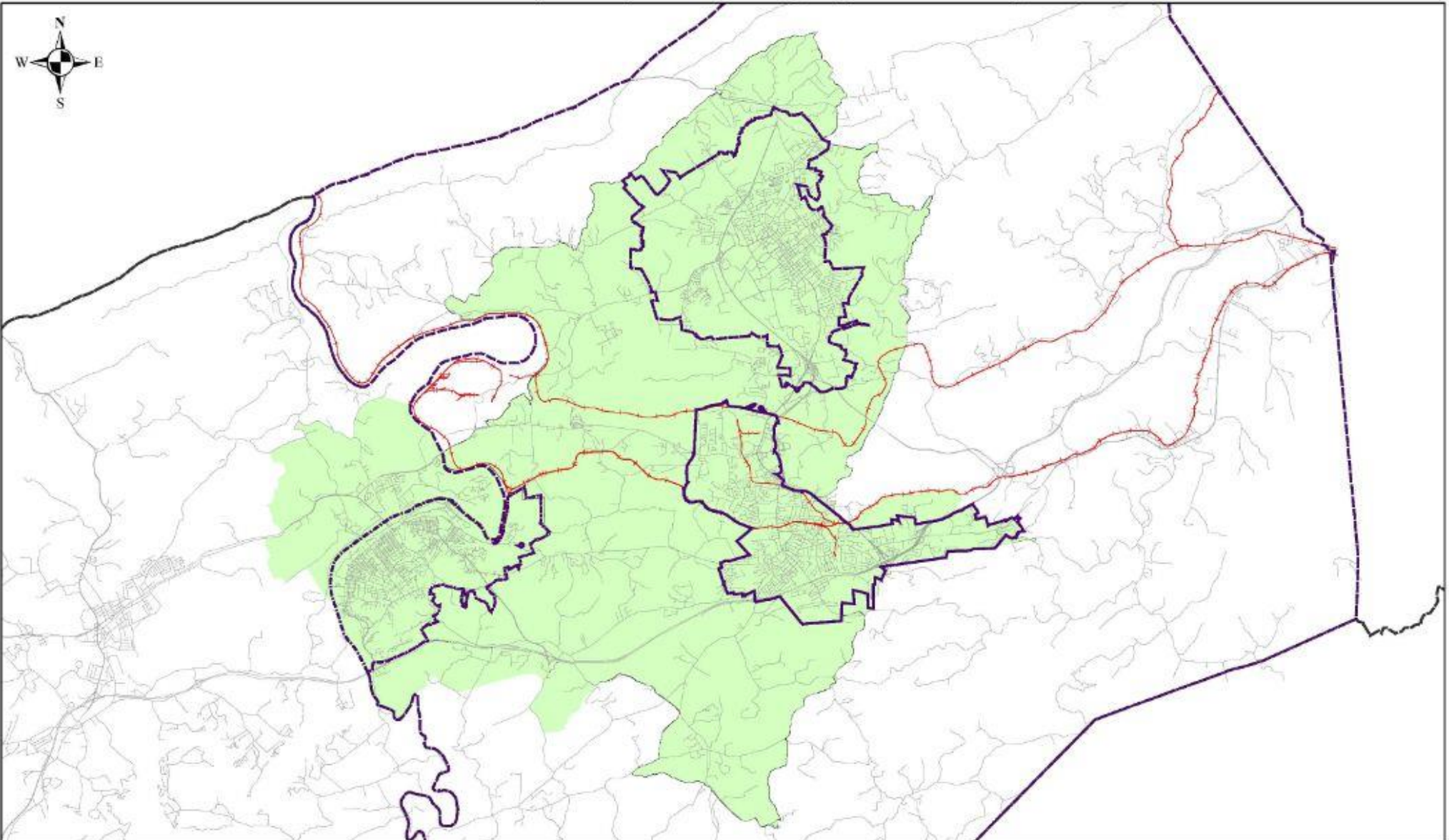
## Total Proposed Funding by Federal Source for FY 2024-25

The primary funding sources for transportation planning activities included in this work program are the FHWA - PL, FTA Section 5303, and FHWA State Planning and Research (SPR). The proposed funding amounts (including state and local matching funds) for the New River Valley MPO work program are shown in the following table.

**FY 2024-25 New River Valley MPO  
Proposed Funding by Federal, State, and Local Sources**



	<b>FHWA – SPR</b> 80% Fed. & 20% State	<b>FHWA – PL</b> 80% Fed. & 20% State/Local	<b>FTA – Section 5303</b> 80% Fed. & 20% State/Local	Sub-Total
FY 2024-25	\$25,000	\$273,799	\$131,855	\$430,654
Carryover FY 2023-24			\$126,290	\$126,290
Carryover FY 2022-23		\$66,338	18,227	\$84,565
<b>Total</b>	\$25,000	\$340,137	\$276,372	\$641,509

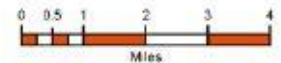
# New River Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization Study Area



Prepared By Montgomery County Va  
Planning & GIS Services  
(Approved September 6, 2012)

### Legend

 Corporate Line  2010 MPO Boundary



**New River Valley  
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION  
FY 2024-25 Unified Planning Work Program**

**PROPOSED FY 2024-25 WORK PROGRAM AND BUDGET**

MPO staff will perform all tasks identified unless otherwise noted. During this fiscal year, the following activities will be pursued by the MPO:

**1. Program Support and Administration**

**General Administration and Operations**

- Management of day-to-day operations of MPO activities including budgeting, purchasing, and overall administrative functions.
- Prepare meeting agenda, minutes, and resolutions, arrange for and/or attend meetings, conferences, and training.
- Preparation for and attendance at the MPO Policy Board meetings.
- Preparation for and attendance at Technical Advisory Committee meetings, including any work for special committees.
- Process PL funding requests and/or review of PL and PL Pass-Through funding agreements and addenda.
- Manage local and regional transportation planning activities and conduct/attend public hearings by the MPO, as needed.
- Ensure that mechanisms are in place to coordinate MPO transportation planning activities with guidelines for Environmental Justice and Title VI. Include segments of the population traditionally underserved by transportation in the Transportation Planning Process.
- Complete and submit the Annual Self Certification to FHWA approved by the Policy Board.
- Prepare and execute funding agreements and contracts, including contract extensions or supplements, as needed and approved by the Policy Board.
- Prepare and review progress, financial, and other supportive reports including processing quarterly billing invoices and progress reports.
- Prepare and submit an annual audit. The audit will be performed by the consultant hired by Montgomery County for its annual audit.

- Ensure that all federal and state transportation regulations, requirements, and deadlines are met, particularly with federal transit funds.
- Respond to requests for intergovernmental reviews / coordination.
- Work on Geographic Information System (GIS) and Census Transportation Planning Program (CTPP) data for utilization in transportation planning projects, studies, and coordinate as appropriate.
- Review, as necessary, consultant contracts or supplements and monitor consultant contracts, negotiations, and work progress on MPO-conducted studies and plans employing consultants.
- Review road plans when requested for conformance with current transportation plans. Work with VDOT on the potential for employing Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) and higher levels of technology in area-wide planning for project development. Assure that proactive strategies for safety are employed during the plan development process.
- Assist in coordinating multi-modal activities and maintain necessary transportation inventories.
- Work jointly with the New River Valley Regional Commission on transportation issues that extend into both areas.
- Work with VDOT and affected localities to assure that pedestrian and bicycle accommodations are considered during project development.
- Continue support of the Rideshare and Bikeshare programs, the Virginia Breeze, and the SmartWay bus.
- Continue to support the extension of passenger rail to the New River Valley and further west.
- Submit applications to be considered under Smart Scale for appropriate projects.
- Serve as staff to the MPO Bikeshare Advisory Committee and work to extend the program into the region.
- Amend as necessary the Constrained Long Range Transportation Plan (CLRTP) that was approved in November of 2020. An update to the CLRTP to extend to 2050 is underway.
- Update the NRV Passenger Rail Station Ownership and Maintenance Strategy based on selected location of the new station
- Participate with the NRV Regional Commission to develop the NRV Commuter Assistance Program Strategic Plan (CAP)

- Complete a study of bicycle/pedestrian/transit needs for Route 460 Business between Route 114 (Pepper's Ferry Road) in Christiansburg and Industrial Park Drive in Blacksburg.

### **MAP21/Fast Act/IIJA Responsibilities**

- MPO staff to work cooperatively with the Virginia Department of Transportation and the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation, as necessary, to assure that all activities of the MPO meet or exceed MAP-21/Fast Act/IIJA requirements.
- Review, comment, and endorse municipal Alternative Transportation grant applications, as requested.

### **Transportation System Management (TSM)**

- Continuous review of current transportation plan(s) for consideration of additional TSM improvements such as traffic engineering, fringe parking lots, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, goods movement, and vehicle occupancy. Continue to support efforts that reduce vehicles on the highways such as the SmartWay Bus, Ride Solutions, the Two Town Trolley, and the Virginia Breeze.
- Pursue the development of individual corridor studies included in the adopted 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan as funding allows.
- Provide input for environmental assessments, transit planning, and other transportation planning, when requested.
- Evaluate and review special situations such as: major traffic generators, site plans, special transportation needs, private sector participation, and alternative transportation projects, as needed or requested. Assure that safety is an explicit priority in the planning process.

### **Special Studies**

- MPO staff will work with member jurisdictions to identify transportation issues that warrant further planning study. The MPO will coordinate specific planning projects with VDOT, VDRPT, FTA, and FHWA for review and approval. Selected studies will be incorporated into the UPWP by amendment. All planning studies will be performed by the MPO On Call consultant, an approved agency, or under contract with the NRV Regional Commission. If funds are not utilized, they will be carried forward for future use.

## **2. Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)**

- Process amendments/adjustments to the FY 2024-25 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), if needed, and prepare the FY 2025-26 UPWP.

### **3. Public Participation**

- Use the approved Public Participation Plan (PPP) for public outreach by the MPO in developing and amending the region's Long Range Transportation Plan, UPWP, TIP and other major plans or studies.
- Continually work to identify additional organizations and individuals not normally included in the transportation planning process and add to our contact list. This plan supports the concept of Environmental Justice to ensure an equitable and inclusive decision-making process for all individuals.
- Review the current Public Participation Plan and revise as necessary.
- Continually update the MPO website. Send out information related to Transportation Planning to the MPO email list.
- Meet with/talk to citizens regarding Transportation Planning within the MPO.

### **4. Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**

- Process any amendments/adjustments to the FY 2024-27 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Assure that any identified current safety needs are considered for inclusion in the TIP.

### **5. Long Range Transportation Plan**

- An update, the 2050 MPO Long Range Transportation Plan is underway.

### **6. FTA/VDRPT-Assisted Section 5303 Transportation Planning:**

#### **FTA Section 5303 Pass-Through Funds**

- Provide transit planning assistance to Blacksburg Transit (BT), Radford Transit (RT), and Pulaski Area Transit (PAT) to: support application of FTA Section 5303 transportation funding; meet FTA Section 5307 requirements for preparing and submitting grant applications; support data collection as required by FTA and the National Transportation Database (NTD); support planning activities for a multi-modal transit facility; conduct short and long range transit planning activities when needed; support the development of the MPO's UPWP, TIP, and Long Range Transportation Plan to ensure transit planning elements.
- These requirements include maintaining Civil Rights (Title VI), DBE and EEO requirements, performance monitoring, ADA planning and preparing all necessary reports. BT will coordinate with the MPO on transit planning activities. Funds are expected to be used to complete identified short and long-term transit planning by contracting consultants for relevant surveys and studies.
- Additional detail is provided on FTA/VDRPT-Assisted Section 5303 Transportation Planning in the attached Task Narrative A.
- Monitor and process Pass Through reimbursement requests.



## **FY 2024-25 UPWP**

### **End Products Summary\*\***

1. Maintain all administrative requirements.
2. Carry out items in FY 2023-24 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP).
3. Review and assure that all MPO functions and work products remain in compliance with MAP-21/FAST Act/IJA.
4. Monitor the FY 2024-27 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and amend/adjust as needed
5. Provide assistance to Transit providers for transit planning activities.
6. Conduct transit studies as needed and identified by the MPO.
7. Support the regional Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan that includes the MPO. Collaborate with the New River Valley Regional Commission (NRVRC) and area transportation providers to explore routing solutions and expansion for the area.
8. Provide quarterly reports on the Rideshare program, the SmartWay bus, and transit planning activities.
9. Review and amend, as needed, the current Public Participation Plan.
10. Amend, as needed, the 2045 MPO Long Range Transportation Plan and continue to develop the 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan update.
11. Support Transit Agencies in updates to their TDPs/TSPs.
12. Coordinate activities for extension of passenger rail to Christiansburg.
13. Update the NRV Passenger Rail Station Ownership and Maintenance Strategy and work on station plans
14. Partner with the NRVRC and complete the NRV Commuter Assistance Program (CAP) Strategic Plan
15. Conduct a feasibility study for transit, bike and pedestrian infrastructure improvements along the Route 460 Business corridor from Industrial Park Drive in Blacksburg to Peppers Ferry Road in Christiansburg.
16. Develop a Commute Cost Calculator for the New River Valley.

\*\* - Details are provided in the Narrative Section

**FY 2024-25 New River Valley MPO  
Proposed Revenues and Expenditures by Federal, State, and Local Sources**

Proposed Revenues	FHWA – SPR1	State – SPR <sup>1</sup>	FHWA - PL	State Match	Local Match	FTA Sec. 5303	State Match	Local Match	Total
<b>FY 2024-25</b>	\$20,000*	\$5,000*	\$219,039	\$27,380	\$27,380	\$105,484	\$13,186	\$13,186	\$430,654
<b>FY 2023-24 Carryover</b>						\$101,032	\$12,629	\$12,629	\$126,290
<b>FY 2022-23 Carryover</b>			\$53,071	\$6,634	\$6,634	\$14,581	\$1,823	\$1,823	\$84,565
<b>Federal &amp; VDOT – SPR Subtotal</b>	\$20,000*	\$5,000*							\$25,000*
<b>FHWA/Match - PL Subtotal</b>			\$272,110	\$34,014	\$34,014				\$340,137
<b>FTA Sec. 5303/Match Subtotal</b>						\$221,097	\$27,638	\$27,638	\$276,372
<b>Total Proposed Revenues</b>	\$20,000*	\$5,000*	\$272,110	\$34,014	\$34,014	\$221,097	\$27,638	\$27,638	\$641,509
Proposed Expenditures			FHWA - PL	State Match	Local Match	FTA Sec. 5303	State Match	Local Match	Total
<b>1. Program Support and Administration</b>	\$12,000	\$3,000	\$154,509	\$19,314	\$19,314				\$208,137
1.01 General Administration and Operations	\$8,000	\$2,000	\$64,111	\$8,013	\$8,013				\$90,137
1.02 MAP-21/Fast Act/IIJA Responsibilities & MPO Compliance			\$8,000	\$1,000	\$1,000				\$10,000
1.03 Transportation System Management			\$800	\$100	\$100				\$1,000
1.04 Special Studies	\$4,000	\$1,000	\$81,598	\$10,201	\$10,201				\$107,000
<b>2. Unified Planning Work Program</b>			\$12,000	\$1,500	\$1,500				\$15,000
<b>3. Public Participation</b>			\$40,000	\$5,000	\$5,000				\$50,000
<b>4. Transportation Improvement Program(TIP)</b>	\$4,000	\$1,000	\$9,600	\$1,200	\$1,200				\$17,000
<b>5. 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan</b>	\$4,000	\$1,000	\$56,000	\$7,000	\$7,000				\$75,000
<b>6. FTA/VDRPT-Assisted Section 5303 Transportation Planning</b>						\$221,097	\$27,638	\$27,638	\$276,372
6.01 Program Support and Administration						\$11,055	\$1,382	\$1,382	\$13,819
6.02 General Development/Comprehensiv e Planning						\$88,439	\$11,055	\$11,055	\$110,549
6.03 Long Range Planning/System Level						\$11,055	\$1,382	\$1,382	\$13,819
6.04 Short Range Planning						\$88,439	\$11,055	\$11,055	\$110,549
6.05 Transportation Improvement/NTD						\$11,055	\$1,382	\$1,382	\$13,819
6.07 Special Studies						\$11,055	\$1,382	\$1,382	\$13,819
<b>Total Proposed Expenditures</b>	\$20,000*	\$5,000*	\$272,110	\$34,014	\$34,014	\$221,097	\$27,638	\$27,638	\$641,509

Note: Figures are rounded to the nearest dollar. All subtotals are estimates included for planning purposes only and are not intended to be restrictive. \*=funds budgeted for MPO support by VDOT.

**NEW RIVER VALLEY  
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION  
Narratives, Budgeted Amounts for FTA funded portion of FY 2016-2017 UPWP  
SECTION 5303 PLANNING AND TECHNICAL STUDIES**

**TASK NARRATIVE A.**

**NOTE: NEW FORMAT WITH ADDITIONAL DETAILS REGARDING OBJECTIVE AND DESCRIPTION AND PRODUCTS FOR EACH FTA TASK, STARTING WITH 2011-2012.**

**FTA#: 44.21.00 Program Support and Administration**

Objective and Description: The Program Support and Administration task covers the activities necessary to administer and maintain transportation planning activities. The primary objectives of this task are:

- To update regional planners and BT management of planning activities relevant to transit
- To assist town staff as needed with communicating with stakeholders regarding transit issues
- To prepare monthly and quarterly status reports as needed
- To assist with technical updates regarding transit on current and future development projects

Products:

- Prepare executive summaries and reports for MPO, RC, and other stakeholders as requested.
- Develop BT Transportation Planner Master Plan of activities/projects in prioritization order (annual update)
- Write monthly and quarterly status reports as needed re. regional activities related to transit operations
- Maintain/update an inventory of bus stops
- Supervise BT Transportation Planning Internship Program
- Document and maintain a filing system of requests for new services, routes, bus stops, amenities

6.01 Program Support and Administrative	FTA Sec. 5303	State Match	Local Match	Total
Transit FY 23-24	\$5,274	\$659	\$659	\$6,593
Transit FY 22-23	\$5,052	\$631	\$631	\$6,314
Transit FY 21-22	\$729	\$91	\$91	\$911
Total	\$11,055	\$1,382	\$1,382	\$13,819

**FTA#: 44.22.00 General Development/Comprehensive Planning**

Objective and Description: The General Development and Comprehensive Planning task supports gathering data to identify issues for further study, define requirements for future plans and designs, and develop transit priorities. The primary objectives of this task are:

- To identify origins and destinations for future routes
- To characterize potential customers (e.g., with Marketing) through surveys and other means
- To identify potential economic development and employment centers that are likely needed destinations
- To identify and summarize other relevant data that supports short-range and long-range planning tasks
- To participate in meetings and other input sessions for updating regional comprehensive plans
- To serve as liaison with transportation consultants for planning efforts (e.g., Transit Development Plan, Transit Strategic Plan, Comprehensive Operations Analysis, Regional Cost Model, NRV MPO Multimodal Systems Plan, and others)
- To serve as liaison with area developers (land owners, town staff, etc.) to ensure that transportation issues are addressed during preliminary stages of development
- Supervise BT Transportation Planning Internship Program

Products:

- Provide weekly input with documentation as needed for regional planners on new developments affecting current or future transit services
- Analyze ridership needs and develop a work plan (operational plan) for the New River Community College

- Investigate planning and operational needs for regional neighborhoods (e.g., Mid-County region of Montgomery County, towns)
- Communicate with area developers, land owners via town and county staff to document future transit needs/plans
- Provide an outline for future expansion into Montgomery County (e.g., near the Hospital/Warm Hearth)
- Provide status updates to the MPO TAC and other stakeholders on the planning of a joint Blacksburg-Virginia Tech proposed multimodal facility via presentations or verbal updates
- Provide summaries of relevant planning documents to staff and stakeholders as requested
- Facilitate, summarize, and disseminate annual updates to the BT Transit Development Plan (TDP) and/or Transit Strategic Plan (TSP)
- Support efforts to acquire and collaborate with consultant(s) to upgrade the transit Regional Cost Model to more accurately estimate the costs of transit services.
- Facilitate receiving approval of the TSP/TDP from the NRV RC, Montgomery County, and Virginia Tech
- Stay abreast regarding developments and planning of the Virginia Tech-Blacksburg Multimodal Transit Facility (MMTF) via communication with BT staff.
- Facilitate efforts to acquire a consultant and conduct a route analysis in conjunction with the proposed MMTF.
- Assist in coordination of regional efforts with BT, PAT, Valley Metro, and RT to improve inter-agency coordination and transfers between agencies.

6.02 General Development Comprehensive Planning	FTA Sec. 5303	State Match	Local Match	Total
Transit FY 23-24	\$42,194	\$5,274	\$5,274	\$52,742
Transit FY 22-23	\$40,413	\$5,052	\$5,052	\$50,516
Transit FY 21-22	\$5,833	\$729	\$729	\$7,291
Total	\$88,439	\$11,055	\$11,055	\$110,549

**FTA#: 44.23.01 Long Range Transportation Planning – System Level**

Objective and Description: Long range planning at the system level forms the basis for future transportation planning activities and projects. Long range is generally considered to be 13 months or longer. The primary objectives of this task are:

- To study the transportation system within the region to identify issues and challenges involving multiple jurisdictions
- To align our efforts with regional comprehensive plans
- To use comprehensive plans to make policy recommendations to community leaders and planners

Products:

- Implement recommendations for commuter service within the MPO region
- Consider and outline future connections to planned train and multimodal facilities (e.g., Lynchburg)
- Summarize relevant transit developments in nearby areas (e.g., Pulaski, Dublin, Radford, Floyd) to increase coordination
- Provide content and feedback to the NRV Regional Commission (RC) and updates to their Mobility Manager Resource Manual
- Participate in the joint RC-MPO NRV Regional FTA Transit Organizational Analysis process
- Facilitated delivery and dissemination of the Bus Stop Safety and Accessibility Study for the Town of Blacksburg, completed July 2015 (which was, in the UPWP dated May 2013).
- Align alternative transportation planning efforts (e.g., bike, pedestrian) to coordinate with pathways and transit amenities such as with a BT-supported RFP and/or the Bikeway/Walkway Committee of the NRV Regional Commission, including updates to the MPO Multimodal Systems Plan, MPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan, or others.

6.03 Long Range Planning System	FTA Sec. 5303	State Match	Local Match	Total
Transit FY 23-24	\$5,274	\$659	\$659	\$6,593
Transit FY 22-23	\$5,052	\$631	\$631	\$6,314
Transit FY 21-22	\$729	\$91	\$91	\$911

	Total	\$11,055	\$1,382	\$1,382	\$13,819
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**FTA#: 44.24.00 Short Range Transportation Planning**

Objective and Description: Short-range transportation planning deals with specific programs and projects that implement long-range policies. Short range is generally considered to be within 12 months. The primary objectives of this task are:

- To review and evaluate proposed transportation projects for their potential impacts on the regional transportation network in alignment with comprehensive plan goals as requested
- To prioritize proposed transportation projects
- To identify current and immediate transportation needs in the region
- To revisit what is needed and reprioritize needs on a regular basis as funding and other resources become available
- To review and prioritize requests for bus stop changes, improvements, additions, and replacements (e.g., bus stop amenities)

Products:

- Explore the possibility of Downtown Blacksburg Trolley program(s)
- Development of a Bus Stop Improvement Plan to standardize our current bus stops
- Assist in evaluating, refining, and dissemination of Christiansburg Bus Service to regional transportation leaders and key staff (e.g., via announcements/presentations to the MPO TAC and NRV RC)
- Stay up-to-date with new bus services in Radford and Pulaski
- Outline a draft plan to evaluate the potential for Neighborhood Service in Blacksburg
- Refine process for Route/Schedule Changes and Stop Requests within BT
- To participate in meetings, input sessions, and/or attending conferences and training relevant to regional planning
- Maintain and update the bus stop inventory
- Participate in the GIS Working group to identify and coordinate and evaluate GIS needs
- Maintain and update Web GIS data for use by planners, developers, and citizens
- Update the BT TDP/TSP with annual VDRPT updates as required

6.04 Short Range Transportation Planning	FTA Sec. 5303	State Match	Local Match	Total
Transit FY 23-24	\$42,194	\$5,274	\$5,274	\$52,742
Transit FY 22-23	\$40,413	\$5,052	\$5,052	\$50,516
Transit FY 21-22	\$5,833	\$729	\$729	\$7,291
Total	\$88,439	\$11,055	\$11,055	\$110,549

**FTA#: 44.25.00 Transportation Improvement Plan**

Objective and Description: The objective of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) task is to support development efforts of improvement program documents. The primary objectives of this task are:

- To provide transit-relevant information for the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), a four-year document, and for other planning documents

Products:

- Provide relevant information via written reports and/or edits for updates to the Town of Blacksburg 2046 Comprehensive Plan
- Provide relevant information for updates to the Montgomery County 2035 plan
- Provide relevant information and textual write-ups for the Town of Blacksburg Capital Improvement Program
- Review and provide relevant input to the New River Valley Rural Long Range Plan (in coordination with the RC)
- Review, edit, and provide input regarding transit for the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) for the MPO
- Provide a set of updated GIS data files showing bus stops and routes for use by stakeholders upon request
- Provide ridership and other relevant data regarding bus stop routes, based on the bus stop inventory database, and as needed, based on queries of data available from BT's IT department

6.05 Transportation Improvement/NTD	FTA Sec. 5303	State Match	Local Match	Total
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Transit FY 23-24	\$5,274	\$659	\$659	\$6,593
Transit FY 22-23	\$5,052	\$631	\$631	\$6,314
Transit FY 21-22	\$729	\$91	\$91	\$911
Total	\$11,055	\$1,382	\$1,382	\$13,819

**FTA#: 44.27.00 Other Activities/Special Studies**

Objective and Description:

The objective of the other activities/special studies task is to provide for a task that covers unanticipated or otherwise needed activities related to regional transit planning. The primary objectives of this task are:

- To provide input and leadership as a member of the New River Valley MPO and the New River Valley RC
- To work with members from the MPO and the RC to coordinate and enhance regional transportation planning efforts through collaboration and joint activities

Products:

- Attend Monthly MPO TAC meetings and provide summary reports to transit and other stakeholders as needed.
- Attend NRV RC Transportation TAC meetings and provide summary reports as needed
- Communicate both relevant MPO and RC regarding transit to staff so BT can coordinate efforts with Virginia Tech staff on a regular basis and with others stakeholders as needed
- Facilitate, support, and/or conduct feasibility studies for potential and new transit services in the MPO region
- Coordinate with Town of Blacksburg and other staff as needed regarding transit-related issues within the MPO region

6.07 Other Special Studies	FTA Sec. 5303	State Match	Local Match	Total
Transit FY 23-24	\$5,274	\$659	\$659	\$6,593
Transit FY 22-23	\$5,052	\$631	\$631	\$6,314
Transit FY 21-22	\$729	\$91	\$91	\$911
Total	\$11,055	\$1,382	\$1,382	\$13,819

**Previous Work Toward Objective:**

The Blacksburg Transit Development Plan (TDP) as well as TDPs for Pulaski Area Transit and Radford Transit were completed and accepted on September 30, 2018. On January 14, 2022, Blacksburg Transit provided an annual update TDP letter to DRPT. During late 2022 and early 2023, BT launched, via a consultant, its Transit Strategic Plan (TSP), to be completed by June 30, 2024. The final report from the Route Analysis effort was placed on the Town of Blacksburg's FTP site February 8, 2016. The service previously supported by the DRPT senior transportation program ended in 2020 for demand-response service between Warm Hearth Village and the Lewis Gale Hospital Montgomery within the MPO service area. BT also hosted part-time, for-credit Transportation Planning Interns, supervised by the Regional Transportation Planner.

Four additional projects recently had updates:

The work on the Regional Cost Model (RCM) upgrade for Blacksburg Transit, which started in 2015 with Michael Baker International and Foursquare Integrated Transportation Planning, Inc., was completed in 2016 with a May 2016 workshop at BT to review the User Guide and June 2016 training, completing the project. The RCM is used annually by BT for estimating new service costs, and in preparing projected operation and maintenance cost estimates for its annual TDP update letter.

The Regional Transit Study 2015 task order led by the New River Valley Regional Commission (NRVRC) was a study aimed to complete analyzing overlapping bus stops and transit services including eight locations. The study was completed in 2016 and was approved by the MPO in September 2016.

With plans first starting in late 2013, the Passenger Rail Study was formally launched in early 2015 by the NRVRC. Numerous actions took place including establishing a working committee and a passenger rail committee. Amongst

several accomplishments on January 7, 2016, the MPO Policy Board recommended a location in Christiansburg be explored through an Operational Analysis. The final report with appendices was distributed to the MPO February 17, 2016, also available at <http://nrvc.org/nrvpassengerrailstudy/>. A Station Ownership and Maintenance Responsibility Study was conducted by the MPO and a final report was approved on March 7, 2019. Another step is a DRPT Rail Traffic Control Modeling Study which has been funded but Norfolk Southern has not agreed to conduct the study yet. In June 2022, the [New River Valley Passenger Rail Station Feasibility Study](#) was completed. As of January 2024, three station site alternatives are under consideration, to be constructed during 2028-2030.

The MPO Bus Stop Safety and Accessibility Study for the Town of Blacksburg was completed July 2015. Similar studies for both Radford and Pulaski were conducted and approved in May 2018.

**Relationship to Other Activities:**

Provide support for overall improvements to operation of Blacksburg Transit; maintaining public transit service compliance with FTA guidance and regulations under MAP-21 and the FAST Act.

**Agency Responsible for Work:**

- a) Blacksburg Transit by pass-through contract with the New River Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization and
- b) The New River Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization, as funds recipient.