



112 MacTanly Place
Staunton, VA 24401

Phone: (540) 885-5174
Fax: (540) 885-2687

**BRITE Transit Advisory Committee Meeting Summary
September 8, 2021, 2:30 p.m.**

Video Conference Meeting via Zoom and In-person
Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission
112 MacTanly Place, Staunton, VA 24401

Present (21):

	Name	Organization
	Steve Rosenberg	City of Staunton
✓	Jennifer Whetzel	County of Augusta
	Luke Juday	City of Waynesboro
✓	Karen Clark*	Augusta Health
	Mike Kelley	Wilson Workforce & Rehabilitation Center
	Greg Beam	Staunton Downtown Development
✓	Terry Rodgers, Chair	Town of Bridgewater
✓	Cynthia Page*	Blue Ridge Community College
✓	Becky Messer*	Transit Service Rider
✓	Paul Terry	Transit Service Rider
✓	Steve Wilson*	Virginia Regional Transit
✓	Steven Hennessee*	Department of Rail and Public Transportation

	Name	Organization
✓	Ann Cundy	CSPDC
✓	Devon Thompson	CSPDC
✓	Kimberly Miller	CSPDC
✓	Bonnie Riedesel*	CSPDC
✓	Lib Rood, KFH Group	
✓	Zach Beard, CSPDC	
✓	Olivia Raines, CSPDC	
✓	Alisande Tombarge, City of Waynesboro	
✓	Rodney Rhodes, City of Staunton*	
✓	Caroline Stoerker, County of Augusta*	
✓	Jeff VanFossen, County of Augusta*	
✓	Alex Wilmer, Town of Bridgewater	
✓	Angela Lawrence, Town of Dayton*	

*Attended by Zoom

Call to Order

The meeting of the BRITE Transit Advisory Committee (BTAC) was called to order at 2:30 PM by Ms. Terry Rodgers, Chairperson.

Public Comment

Chairperson Rodgers opened the floor for public comment. There were no public comments. Mr. Alex Wilmer, Town of Bridgewater, took the opportunity to thank the CSPDC for grant assistance for bus shelters.



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Approve Minutes

Chairperson Rodgers stated that there was not a quorum and did not request a vote to approve the minutes from the May BTAC meeting.

Introductions

Chairperson Rodgers requested that everyone introduce themselves since there were some first-time attendees.

Business

Afton Express: Ms. Devon Thompson announced that the Afton Express Transit Service began last Wednesday, September 1; all rides were free for the month of September. On the first day of service, Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission (CSPDC) and Virginia Regional Transit (VRT) staff greeted the first passengers with branded gift items. The first four days of service saw 54 total passenger trips. Ridership and operations would be tracked closely the first few months to know if any adjustments would need to be made to the stop locations and timings. The three buses, outfitted with Wifi, comfortable seating, and bike racks, had been operating their four morning and four evening runs smoothly thanks to the training and preparation of VRT staff. The start of service was preceded by a ribbon-cutting ceremony held at the BRITE Transit Facility on August 16. Project partners were recognized, and over 50 local government representatives, stakeholders, CSPDC Commissioners, and partners were in attendance.

Transit Development Plan (TDP) Kick-Off: Chairperson Rodgers presented the TDP Kick-Off, and introduced Ms. Lib Rood of KFH Group. Ms. Rood stated that the TDP was a multi-year planning tool that informed the actions and decisions of the the transit program (see attached handout, "*What is a Transit Development Plan?*"). She stated that the TDP was a 10-year plan, but was updated every six years. Ms. Rood explained the 10-year horizon; years 1-3 were where concrete objectives were outlined; years 4-7 were for objectives that hadn't had a defined funding source yet, but that were in the plan; and years 8-10 were for objectives that were desired, but other objectives needed to be completed first.

Ms. Rood stated that there were eight tasks outlined in the TDP Scope of Work (see attached handout, "*BRITE Transit Development Plan Scope of Work Overview*"):

- Task 1 = Project Administration and Overview
- Task 2 = Chapter 1: Overview of BRITE system
- Task 3 = Chapter 2: Description of the goals, objectives and service standards (focus of today's meeting)
- Task 4 = Chapter 3: Description of system details and evaluation, and input from the public in regards to the services and system, and future projections
- Task 5 = Chapter 4: Service recommendations and capital needs, and their prioritization
- Task 6 = Chapter 5: Outline of the implementation plan
- Task 7 = Chapter 6: 10-year financial plan and funding of the system



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- Task 8 = The Transit Development Plan deliverable which would include a draft TDP document for the BTAC to review and final document for approval by the CSPDC Board of Commissioners

Work today focused on the mission, goals, and objectives for Chapter 2. Ms. Cundy used Mentimeter to gather feedback on several questions (Mentimeter – an interactive presentation tool to gain input from every meeting participant; see attached handout, “*TDP Presentation*”). There was discussion about the transit system mission, transit goals, unmet mobility needs in the service area, and what community mobility initiatives should be moved forward in the next six years. Ms. Rood stated that the next steps would be to document the ideas and discussion from today and draft a public input survey for BTAC review prior to release. She encouraged everyone to email any additional thoughts or questions to Ms. Thompson. She would have a draft document or an update by the next BTAC meeting.

Contractor Update: Mr. Steve Wilson discussed various items with the committee:

- Afton Express service was going well. Two drivers and an operations supervisor were hired internally. VRT would seek to hire drivers to replace those who moved to Afton Express.
- Ridership continued to increase; the largest increase was the 250 Connector.
- Summer Trolley hours continued; the date of change had not been determined.
- Masks were still required to ride public transit (extended until January 18, 2022); free masks were provided to riders who needed them.
- Bus capacity remained at 50 percent.
- VRT continued its campaign to hire transit drivers – the market for bus drivers had become competitive. Driver retention posed challenges.

Adjournment

Chair Rodgers indicated that the next BTAC meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, November 10, 2021, tentatively scheduled as a lunch meeting at the BRITE Transit Facility. If lunch were provided, the meeting would begin at 1:30PM.

There being no further business to come before the BTAC, the meeting concluded at 3:53 PM.



What is a Transit Development Plan?

A transit development plan (TDP) is a multi-year planning document that is intended to provide direction for a transit system and its community partners. The planning process identifies transit needs, develops potential improvements to meet those needs, prioritizes the potential improvements, and identifies the resources needed to implement the projects chosen for the planning period.

The planning process for a TDP is typically guided by transit program staff, with input from an advisory committee made up transit program stakeholders and community partners. Public and rider input is also sought during the process to ensure the plan reflects the needs of the community.

In Virginia, the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) requires that each local transit program complete a TDP once every six years. DRPT uses the information compiled within the TDPs for programming, planning, and budget activities. DRPT provides financial resources so that local transit programs can access consultant assistance to complete the plans. Once completed, the BRITE TDP will provide a basis for inclusion of BRITE's operating and capital program in the commonwealth's Six Year Improvement Plan (SYIP) and Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The TDP planning process follows a set of requirements and a report format outlined by DRPT. KFH Group, Inc. will be completing the technical work for the TDP under the direction of CSPDC staff and the TDP Advisory Committee. KFH Group is familiar with the program, having completed the prior TDP for CSPDC.

The main product of the TDP for BRITE will be a set of recommended improvements planned for a ten-year period including specific projects with ridership, revenue, and cost projections. The plan will outline the routing, detailed service characteristics, and capital requirements for each recommended service improvement. The TDP will also provide implementation details, including the capital replacement plan and financial plan for the ten-year planning horizon. The previous TDP for the CSPDC was completed in 2015.

It is anticipated that the TDP process will use the regularly scheduled BTAC meetings during the process to review project deliverables and provide input to ensure that the plan accurately reflects existing transportation conditions and needs and outlines constructive recommendations to improve public transportation in Augusta County and the cities of Staunton and Waynesboro, Virginia. The CSPDC Board of Commissioners will review and approve the final TDP.

BRITE Transit Development Plan Scope of Work Overview



Task 1 – Project Administration and Overview

- Project oversight
- Ongoing communication with CSPDC
- Periodic meetings with BTAC throughout the development of the TDP
- Development of Executive Summary

Task 2 - Overview of BRITE

- History of BRITE
- Governance structure
- Organizational structure
- Transit services provided and areas served
- Fare structure, payment methods, and pass/ticket purchasing
- Description of revenue and non-revenue vehicle fleet
- Existing facilities
- Transit security program
- ITS program
- Data collection and ridership and revenue reporting methodology
- Coordination with other transportation service providers
- Public outreach/surveys
- Chapter 1 is deliverable

Task 3 - Describe Goals, Objectives, and Standards

- Describe current goals, objectives and standards, and the process for establishing, reviewing, and updating them.
- Discuss new or revised goals and related objectives and standards and identify changes from the previous TDP.
- Chapter 2 is deliverable.

Task 4 - Service and System Evaluation

- Describe the evaluation process and evaluate route-level and system-wide performance against current performance standards for each mode and type of service (i.e., demand response, fixed route).
- Evaluate the most recent year for which complete data are available.
- Perform trend analysis for measures required for the Performance Based Operating Assistance Allocation, as adopted by the Commonwealth Transportation Board in October 2013. These measures include net cost per passenger; passengers per revenue hour; and passengers per revenue mile.
- Conduct appropriate onboard ridership surveys to assist in the existing service evaluation process.
- Incorporate stakeholder input.
- Identify deviations from currently adopted service standards and describe proposed remedies, including service expansion and/or contraction.
- Provide an overview of demographics with available information from the 2010/2020 US Census, the American Community Survey (most recently available data) and/or Virginia Employment Commission Communities Profile on projected population growth, employment levels, and senior citizen population for the BRITE service area.
- Chapter 3 is deliverable.

Task 5 - Service and Capital Improvements

Service Improvements and Needs Identification

The first section of Chapter 4 will include the following:

- A description of services that BRITE intends to provide, based on the evaluation of services with respect to the adopted goals, objectives, standards; short term needs; and legal/regulatory requirements.
- Development of potential new transit services to address the unmet needs that were identified in Chapters 1-3.

- Identify short- (1-3 years), mid- (3 to 10 years), and long –term (beyond 10 years) transit needs and providing a separate description summarizing each proposed service expansion project supporting an identified need. These proposals will not be constrained by affordability at this stage of the planning process. Including a longer planning horizon than previous TDP efforts will allow BRITE to be prepared for SMART SCALE and other discretionary grant programs.
- Develop ridership estimates for any fixed route, deviated fixed route, or demand response services using ridership models recently used for similar type and size systems in Virginia or through the application of one or more generally employed ridership proxies, such as number of riders per bus-hour that is based on actual transit agency ridership characteristics.

Service and Needs Prioritization

- Estimate each project’s capital and operations cost and assign a desired timeframe for implementation. The time frames will be categorized as short- (1-3 years), mid- (3-10 years), and long-term (beyond 10 years). Mid- and long-term projects will be considered part of the BRITE vision, the inclusion of which will provide an understanding of unmet or unfunded needs.
- Prepare cost estimates that reflect standard operating cost information for BRITE.
- Fully describe planned facility or capital projects. For this TDP, a task will be added to develop a conceptual plan for improvements to the Lewis Street Hub.
- Discuss whether the proposed service expansion project(s) is/are currently contained in the STIP, SYIP, and/or CLRP and if not, when the project is expected to be submitted for inclusion in these documents.
- Prioritize the short-, mid-, and long-term transit capital and service needs for BRITE.

Service Development

- Describe the levels of service planned for BRITE using a table to show service hours and service miles, identified by mode and type of service. The table will clearly identify service expansion and/or reduction by the year of planned deployment and/or elimination.

- Where reductions in service levels are required to achieve a balanced operating budget or to reflect patronage, the reductions will be described, and the community impact assessed.
- Describe planned service changes in response to the most recent DRPT compliance reviews.
- Discuss additional, current, or anticipated policy, planning, funding, or operating issues that may affect the operations of BRITE.
- Provide the current schedule for projects, showing key completed and anticipated milestone dates.
- Describe new programs to coordinate with transportation network companies (TNCs) (if applicable). These project descriptions will include policy changes, funding, or capital needed for implementation.
- Chapter 4 is deliverable.

Task 6 - Implementation Plan

The Implementation Plan will address the following:

- Discussion of rolling stock – contractor supplied currently
- Major system maintenance and operations facilities
- Passenger amenities; and technology systems or upgrades
- New technology systems or upgrades
- Chapter 5 is deliverable

Task 7 - Financial Plan

- Develop a financial plan for the current “baseline” level of service. Committed service changes will be defined, with their expenses and revenue separately identified in the operating and capital plan tables.
- The capital and operating budget forecasts will show federal, state, regional, and local revenue projections, fare policies, labor or service agreements, competitive demands on funding, and regional priorities and policies.
- Chapter 6 is deliverable

Task 8 - Transit Development Program Deliverable

The products of the previous tasks will be summarized and compiled in the form of a draft Transit Development Plan document. An electronic copy of the draft TDP will be submitted to BRITE for review and comment. The financial plan for capital and operating will be submitted separately in electronic Microsoft Excel format and incorporated into tables in the final report.

Following receipt of written comments, the draft TDP document will be revised as necessary to produce the final version of the document. KFH Group staff will be available to present the plan to the CSPDC Board if needed.

The following deliverables will be submitted to BRITE:

- An electronic editable copy of the plan, in Microsoft Word, including all appendices and related documents.
- An electronic copy of the plan that can be sent via email (which may be broken into chapters).
- Two printed and bound color copies of the final TDP document including the executive summary.
- One printed and unbound color copy of the final TDP document including the executive summary.
- Proof of adoption by the CSPDC Board of Directors.
- All GIS data created or obtained for the plan in a geodatabase and a system wide General Transit Feed Specification (GTFS) feed, if applicable. The GIS data will include route alignments, stop locations and routes serving, and route-specific schedule and span of service.