MEETING MINUTES

Transit Service Delivery Advisory Committee (TSDAC)
May 12, 2026 – 9:30 AM – 2:30 PM
Location: DRPT Headquarters, 600 E. Main Street, Richmond, VA (21st Floor)
Meeting Duration: 5 hours

---

1. Call to Order and Welcome

Chair **John McGlennon** called the meeting to order at **9:30 AM**, welcoming members, DRPT leadership, staff, and participants joining both in person and virtually. He acknowledged the substantial workload and thanked members for their continued engagement in the MERIT operating program review and TRIP program considerations.

---

2. Roll Call & Introductions

Members and staff introduced themselves, including representatives from:

- DRPT leadership and staff: Director Maria Zimmerman, Deputy Director Allan Fye, Director of Statewide Programs Grant Sparks, Chief of Public Transit Zach Trogdon, Evan Tuten (Statewide Transit Planner)
- Virginia Municipal League (VML) Appointee: Vice Chair Cindy Mester
- DRPT Appointee: Dr. Ray Smoot
- DRPT Appointee: Paula Melester
- Virginia Transit Association (VTA) Appointee: Kate Mattice
- Virginia Transit Association (VTA) Appointee: Noelle Pinkard
- Community Transportation Association of Virginia (CTAV) Appointee: Brian Booth

Chair **John McGlennon** also indicated that **Jim Dyke** recently resigned from his TSDAC appointment.

---

3. Safety Briefing

Deputy Director **Allan Fye** provided the standard DRPT building safety briefing.

---

4. Approval of April 14, 2026 Meeting Minutes

Vice Chair **Cindy Mester** provided several amendments. A motion to approve the minutes with amendments passed unanimously.

---

5. Director's Report – DRPT Priorities and Updates

DRPT Director **Maria Zimmerman** emphasized the Administration's priorities for the MERIT operating formula review: predictability, tailored support, transparency and simplicity.

She acknowledged substantial stakeholder engagement, thanked staff for conducting four cohort workshops, and reiterated the need for ongoing feedback, especially as DRPT prepares recommendations for the CTB.

---

6. FY27 Six-Year Improvement Program (SYIP) Overview

Deputy Director **Allan Fye** summarized major components of the FY27 draft SYIP and highlighted: a one-time windfalls from grant closeouts for MERIT Capital, projections showing ebb-and-flow revenue patterns with FY28 potentially experiencing a slight decline, and the importance of maintaining flexible eligibility between MERIT Capital and TRIP Capital.

Questions and comments brought forward from TSDAC members included impacts of federal reauthorization, clarifying dual eligibility across programs, and the need for long-term funding predictability given that FY27 increases are temporary.

---

7. Review of April 14 TSDAC Decisions & Process Updates

Grant Sparks recapped key progress from the previous meeting: cohort definitions were affirmed (Large Urban, Small Urban, Rural), baseline revenue distribution affirmed (81% Large Urban, 12% Small Urban, and 7% Rural), sizing metric calculator tool widely used with positive feedback, and extensive stakeholder engagement via cohort workshops.

Key takeaway from feedback received at the cohort workshops was that the weighting for service metrics (revenue hours and revenue miles) should be increased. Additionally, there are emerging concerns around labor cost legislation (HB 547, SB 731), particularly affecting unionized agencies in large urban cohort.

Staff reported very active participation from agencies, though weighting feedback remains under review as stakeholders continue experimenting with the calculator.

---

8. Policy Decision #2 – Sizing Metrics and Weights

2A – Number of Years of Data

DRPT recommended shifting from single-year data to a 3-year average (e.g., FY24–26 for FY28 allocations) to increase predictability and reduce volatility and anomalies. The tradeoff is the there will be slower recognition in the formula of sudden surges in ridership and other metrics.

DRPT also recommended only accepting audited expenses to calculate operating costs in an effort to keep data submissions consistent.

Discussion among TSDAC members about the impacts (both positive and negative) of using a 3-year average dataset as opposed to a single year of data. Conversation included potentially using a 2-year average dataset and also how single-year boosts in ridership would be addressed in performance funding. Question about how fares factor into operating cost metric.

2B–2D – Sizing Metric Weights

Rural Sizing Metric DRPT Recommendations: 50% Operating Cost, 20% Ridership, 15% Revenue Hours, and 15% Revenue Miles.

DRPT staff indicated that the rationale for the recommendation was that rural systems travel long distances for essential trips, which limit ridership optimization potential, hence why ridership was de-emphasized in the proposed weighting.

Discussion among TSDAC and DRPT staff about tweaking sizing metric weights over/under 10% lead to significant swings in allocation outputs, hence why recommended weights only make minor adjustments for each metric.

Small Urban Sizing Metric DRPT Recommendations: 45% Operating Cost, 25% Ridership, 15% Revenue Hours, and 15% Revenue Miles.

DRPT staff indicated that the largest potential decrease would be for Blacksburg (-5.2%) and Harrisonburg (-1.8%) while several small systems would see increases. However, the agencies expected to see a decrease in their sizing metric are the most likely to see a boost in their performance funding due to high ridership.

Observation from TSDAC that very few agencies were hitting their 30% cap in the sizing metric. DRPT staff indicated that because the sizing metric now only includes 95% of the revenues, the 30% cap is more difficult to hit in this part of the formula. Conversation about potential anomalies in the sizing metric and how those anomalies would be addressed under Stability considerations.

Large Urban Sizing Metric DRPT Recommendations: 40% Operating Cost, 30% Ridership, 15% Revenue Hours, and 15% Revenue Miles.

Least variation among cohorts; largest decreases modest (PRTC -1%, Fairfax -1.5%), while Roanoke and Loudoun see small increases.

Committee Consensus

Members agreed to tentatively proceed with DRPT's recommended sizing metrics for modeling and stakeholder review, recognizing adjustments may follow VTA conference input. A formal vote was not required—straw support was sufficient for proceeding.

---

9. Policy Decision #3 – Performance & Stability Fund Framework

3A – Cohorting of Performance/Stability Funds

DRPT recommended cohorting the fund using the same 81/12/7 revenue split to ensure equitable access across system types.

Question about how much funding was generated by the 30% cap within each cohort. DRPT staff indicated that very little funding was generated by the 30% cap due to only 95% of revenues being included in the Sizing Metric. TSDAC members indicated strong support for this recommendation.

3B – Allowing Agencies at the 30% Cap to Earn Performance Funding

DRPT recommended that agencies who hit their 30% cap in the Sizing Metric are eligible to receive performance funding. The rationale presented was that DRPT should incentivize all agencies to strive for good performance, not just those who do not hit their 30% cap in the sizing metric.

Questions about whether the 30% cap is in policy or state code – DRPT staff confirmed that the cap is only in CTB policy.

Performance Framework

DRPT staff presented the potential measures that could be used in determining performance funding: cost efficiency measures (cost per revenue hour/mile), cost effectiveness measures (cost per passenger), productivity measures passengers per revenue hour/mile, and service utilization measures (passenger-miles traveled per mile and hour). Brief discussion about the nuances of each measure.

TSDAC members were asked to rank each measure within each cohort. A summary of the live rankings are below:

- Rural: strongest support for cost-effectiveness and cost efficiency
- Small Urban: strongest support for productivity
- Large Urban: productivity + service utilization favored

DRPT staff indicated that performance thresholds and number-of-measures-permitted will be finalized in June.

Conversation about the measures and the underlying data behind them. Questions about the conceptual framework of the STIC model.

---

10. Stability Considerations

DRPT staff outlined stability principles:

- Stability funds backstop anomalies, not guarantee prior-year funding
- Anomaly triggers (example threshold: >5% decline following formula run)
- Review considers:
    - Comparison to statewide MERIT revenue changes
    - Comparison to agency service outputs (ridership, hours, miles)
    - Evidence of external shocks (contract cost spikes, natural disasters, staff vacancies)

If anomalies are identified, DRPT will adjust allocations before recalculating performance awards. Funds for stability come from the combined performance/stability pot.

Extensive discussion focused on keeping the use of stabilization narrow, ensuring it does not erode statewide performance incentives.

Cindy Mester asked if DRPT had historical data that would allow the committee to better understand the magnitude and value of what DRPT is considering "significant anomalies."

TSDAC members discussed the value of taking a straw vote on DRPT's Policy Decision #2 recommendations. Motion passed to support DRPT in moving forward with Policy Decision #2 recommendations with the understanding that DRPT and TSDAC members will continue to collect input from transit operators and will share that input at the next meeting.

---

11. Policy Decision #3: Performance and Stability Fund Recommendations

DRPT staff indicated that there were two key decisions under the Performance and Stability Fund (Policy Decision #3) that are needed prior to running full formula scenarios.

- 3a: Whether to cohort the Performance and Stability Fund Revenues
- 3b: Allowing agencies to exceed the 30% cap in the Performance and Stability Fund allocation.

Discussion about the verbiage presented for 3b. Should have been clearer to indicate that agencies who hit their 30% cap in the Sizing Metric should be eligible for Performance Funding. Motion passed to support 3a as written and 3b to be modified – agencies who hit their 30% cap in the sizing metric should be allowed to receive performance funding.

---

12. TRIP Policy Recommendations

Evan Tuten provided an overview of the current TRIP framework (state code, CTB policy, and Blue Book Guidance) and offered a refresher on the updates to the TRIP program under HB200. Mr. Tuten then reviewed draft policy recommendations that address these changes to the program:

- DRPT Recommendation #1: Definition of regionally significant services, breaking out capital and operating projects.
- DRPT Recommendation #2: Creating a framework under the new Enhanced Mobility Innovation project type
- DRPT Recommendation #3: Proposing to make no changes to the zero and reduced fare section, but for future consideration a discussion about continued funding for such projects.

Questions and discussion about how DRPT current addresses dual eligibility between MERIT Capital and TRIP. Additional discussion about the step down model of TRIP and the context behind potential continued funding.

---

13. Public Feedback Process

DRPT continues:

- Operating a public comment portal on the DRPT website
- Maintaining a comprehensive feedback database (to be shared later)
- Facilitating ongoing outreach, including additional cohort workshops and conference engagement

Committee emphasized transparency and the importance of retaining original materials when summarizing discussions.

---

14. Next Steps

- DRPT will incorporate TSDAC guidance and stakeholder feedback into revised formula modeling
- Performance and stability funding details will be finalized at the June 2 meeting
- A final recommendation will be presented to TSDAC in July
- Continued engagement planned through the VTA Conference and upcoming SYIP hearings

---

15. Adjournment

The Chair adjourned the meeting at approximately **2:00 PM** following closing discussion and confirmation of next meeting logistics.