

**POTOMAC AND RAPPAHANNOCK
TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

RESOLUTION

MOTION: _____

RESOLUTION NO. 07-09-___

SECOND: _____

**OFFICIAL COMMISSION MEETING
SEPTEMBER 6, 2007**

RE: ADOPTION OF BUS SHELTER SITING PLAN

WHEREAS, the Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission (PRTC) has declared as a policy matter that it wants to see a greater number of bus shelters installed in its service area, using a broadened warrant that accounts for both daily boarding volumes and land uses bordering stops; and

WHEREAS, PRTC management has produced a bus shelter siting plan identifying stops where bus shelters are warranted using this broadened warrant; and

WHEREAS, the resultant plan and its priority-setting rationale has been reviewed by the Commission's Operations Committee and amended to account for constructively critical suggestions made by Committee members; and

WHEREAS, the amended plan has been presented to the Commission and is intended as a guide for how shelter installations will be pursued; and

WHEREAS, annual progress in implementing the plan will be budget-dependent, with the Commission providing policy direction on the degree of progress desired via the annual budget process; and

WHEREAS, PRTC management will also be conferring with the Commission on shelter installations that are expected to be costly undertakings, so the Commission can decide as a policy matter whether the expenditure is merited.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission does hereby adopt the bus shelter siting plan as presented.

September 6, 2007

TO: Chairman Gibbons and Commissioners

FROM: Alfred H. Harf
Executive Director

RE: Adoption of Bus Shelter Siting Plan

Recommendation:

Adopt the bus shelter siting plan as proposed.

Background:

In accordance with the Commission's stated aim of seeing a larger number of bus shelters installed in the service area, management began work on a bus shelter siting plan ("the plan") this past year to identify stops where bus shelters are warranted. A broadened warrant has been used for this purpose, featuring a "minimum daily boarding volume" criterion (no less than 15 boardings per day) and a "neighboring uses" criterion in combination as a "shelter" warrant. The "neighboring uses" criterion consists of specified land uses which, if they are near a bus stop, warrant the placement of a shelter at that stop irrespective of the daily boarding volume.

At the outset of the planning work, PRTC management developed an initial definition of what land uses should qualify as a "neighboring use". Thereafter, assisted by Greenhorne & O'Mara, stops warranting shelters were identified and field investigations were undertaken to assess the level of difficulty the prospective shelter installations would pose based on topographical and other conditions. The level of difficulty was viewed as a necessary consideration for priority setting and budgeting for installations over time.

At a meeting of the Commission's Operations Committee in June 2007, a first draft of the resultant plan was presented, prompting several constructively critical suggestions. Those suggestions were:

1. Include middle schools, high schools, and community colleges as land uses qualifying as a "neighboring use";

2. Incorporate explicit provisions for the plan to be updated as conditions change, including new development activity, increases in daily boarding volumes, etc.; and
3. Reexamine the proposed priority-setting scheme to better balance the “level of difficulty” and the importance of the shelter placement as factors governing priority-setting, such that “level of difficulty” matters less.

Management has since amended the draft plan to account for these constructively critical suggestions, and is now seeking the Commission’s adoption. The attached PowerPoint presentation details the plan as now proposed, which now envisions 57 shelters or five more than the June 2007 draft on account of the fact that the schools have been added as suggested. Average daily boarding volumes at all the warranted locations are also now shown, including those that are part of the plan only because of the “neighboring use” criterion.

To account for the second of the suggestions – explicitly providing for plan updates to account for changing conditions – the plan now envisions:

1. Annual updating during which newly arising “neighboring uses” and changes in boarding volumes would be taken into account, with newly warranted shelters added and annual priority-setting adjusted as necessary; and
2. Stepped-up communications with staff employed by PRTC’s bus sponsoring jurisdictions that are involved in site plan permitting activity so PRTC has early-on awareness of looming developments that may bear on shelter siting and may be candidates for proffers.

With respect to the “priority-setting” suggestion, the priority-setting rationale has been amended such that stops where shelters are warranted for both “boarding volume” and “neighboring use” reasons are all placed in the “highest priority” grouping (“category one”) irrespective of the level of difficulty.

As noted during the discussion in June 2007, the annual progress in implementing the plan will be budget-dependent, and the Commission will decide as a policy matter how much progress it wants to make in the context of each year’s budget deliberations. A recently received grant from the Virginia National Defense Industrial Authority (“VNDIA”) for shelter placements in the Route One corridor increases available FY 2008 funding for shelter installations from \$125,000 to \$224,000, and management is now in the early stages of readying a recommendation for “shelters” budgeting in FY 2009.

Chairman Gibbons and Commissioners

September 6, 2007

Page 3

Finally, I should add that while the plan once adopted will serve as a “guide” for how shelter installations will be pursued, management intends to confer directly with the Commission on those that are recognizably going to be costly undertakings, so the Commission can decide on an individualized basis whether implementation is advisable. Site-specific cost estimates will be provided to aid the Commission in making such determinations.

Fiscal Impact:

Not applicable.

Attachment: As stated