

REGIONAL CONNECTORS STUDY

Meeting Minutes

Date: February 14, 2019
Location: Webinar/Conference Call
Subject: Scenario Planning Updates
Attendees:

- HRTPO/HRPDC – Mike Kimbrel, Dale Stith, Leonardo Pineda, Greg Grootendorst, Keith Nichols, Kendall Miller, Theresa Brooks
- RCS Project Coordinator - Camelia Ravanbakht
- Army Corps of Engineers – George Janek
- City of Chesapeake – Earl Sorey
- City of Hampton – Angela Rico
- City of Newport News – Bryan Stilley
- City of Norfolk – Janice Hurley, Brian Fowler
- City of Portsmouth – Carl Jackson
- City of Virginia Beach – Tara Reel
- FHWA – Ivan Rucker
- US Navy – Michael King
- VDOT – Scott Smizik, Robin Grier
- Virginia Port Authority – Barbara Nelson
- Consultant Team – Craig Eddy, Lorna Parkins, Bill Thomas, Nick Britton, Vlad Gavrilovic, Jason Espie, Naomi Stein, Scott Middleton



Land Use Model

Vlad Gavrilovic and Jason Espie provided an overview of the land use model that is under development for scenario planning. Discussion items were as follows:

George Janek: Does the “resource conservation” place type include wetlands?

Jason: It generally does where designated as protected lands, for example the Great Dismal Swamp.

Michael King: How are random points accurately oriented/synced up with census block groups?

Jason: When we choose a high intensity location, we clip block group to circle and take the proportion of the people and the jobs within the circle (to the ones outside the circle). It's not 1:1, but it's considered statistically accurate on this scale of planning.

Vlad: LEHD has tool for clipping data that is also a proportional method.

Michael King: What quality control factors are in place for the development of place type average densities?

Vlad: If we see an outlier, we'll look at the TAZ but we won't modify the average unless we see something totally askew. We cannot change the TAZ data because that would change the travel demand model, so we would have to reexamine the typical sampling if there are a lot of outliers.

Camelia R.: Is this variation from place types averages (as reflected in the density factor) typical in other regions?

Jason: Sometimes there are more than 22 place types. Grid geography can also change and you can attribute all sorts of data to it which varies by place type.

Lorna: The fewer place types you have, the more TAZs are going to vary from the average because each place type is representing a broader set of conditions. In scenario planning, the development factor becomes a lever you can use to intensify development later in the process in later scenario development.

Economic Analysis

Naomi Stein and Scott Middleton provided an overview of the Economics start-up tasks. Discussion items were as follows:

Tara Reel: How is elasticity of military employment going to play a role in the scenario planning? The same applies to the ports.

Naomi: We are definitely using that to build the alternatives. Military and ports are both drivers.

Brian Fowler: Other industries to consider—cyber-cable from Spain to Hampton Roads. Medical should also be considered heavily. Universities, warehouse/distributors. The study should identify the industries that are hampered by the transportation network.

Naomi: That's definitely something we evaluate in the 2045 baseline and it is in the scenarios and the economic implications of relieving those constraints via the connector projects.

Scenario Development

Lorna Parkins and Naomi Stein provided an overview and led a discussion of the scenario framework and potential scenario drivers. The discussion items were as follows:

- Greg G.: Background on baseline. Two parts: There is the initial forecast from University of Michigan which is put into REMI model, and then the long-term data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics. When we look at alternative scenarios, baseline shows continuing decline in military employment, so if we look at consolidation of facilities, it might look more like investment in technology, not necessary in people. Also, port traffic does not necessarily correlate with jobs at the port, so you have to be careful when defining port-related employment. Should we consider one scenario where we see lower employment levels?
- Lorna: Baseline forecast is pretty modest already, so we would expect to do better than that. But one of the more compelling reasons is to be better prepared for transportation needs and the needs of the transportation system in 2045 by examining higher growth scenarios.
- Greg: Another consideration might be a significant baseline increase in employment without picking specific industries.
- Carl Jackson: With residential growth, there's a tendency for people to move to cities. Scenario in future would be more urban population and less suburban population.
- Lorna: Yes, place type development helps us turn these levers on and off. Each scenario will include assumptions about where people choose to live, and a more urban scenario is likely to be one choice.
- Earl Sorey: How will you handle the regional mega-sites (Williams Tract)?
- Naomi: We need feedback to figure out how to set the levers.
- Brian: (Agreed with Carl).
- Tara: (Agreed with Carl and Brian). We are expecting a "high retiree" scenario. We need to consider how we're going to handle both that and the millennial growth at the same time.

The webinar slides are attached and the webinar recording can be accessed [here](#).