

MEMORANDUM

TO MTC, Blue Ribbon Transit Recovery Task Force

FROM Tamim Raad (Access Planning), Kate Howe (VIA)

DATE July 22, 2021

SUBJECT Regional Network Management Option Evaluation

Purpose

This cover memo provides context for the materials to be presented to the Blue Ribbon Transit Recovery Task Force on the 26th July meeting. At the meeting, the Consultant Team will present a description and preliminary assessment of Regional Network Management (RNM) structure options, and seek the Task Force's input as the team prepares its final report, to be delivered on August 9th.

Task Force members are encouraged to fully review all materials in advance of the meeting. The objective of the July 26th Meeting is to maximize dialogue on key issues and trade-offs related to RNM structures. We will move quickly from addressing points of clarification to key discussion points. Included in this packet is a Draft Network Management Options Evaluation Summary (Appendix A) and a slide presentation (Appendix B – to follow on July 23).

Context

As outlined in our [memo to the Task Force on the 24th of May](#), the Consultant team method followed a four step process to its scope of work, developing options by understanding the potential decision accountabilities for regional network management, developing regional network management structural approaches and creating an assessment framework for evaluating them. Working within the available timeframe, this work product focuses on the key interests and values, trade-offs, and questions to resolve through a future detailed business case. The final report will contain recommendations for next steps and provide more information on how the future business case can further evaluate and explore costs, risks and structural options.

To develop and inform this assessment, the Consultant Team has relied upon:

- Extensive interviews with agency staff, stakeholders and members of the BTRTF;
- Extensive document review of past studies, plans and submittals and official correspondence with the BTRTF;
- The Consultant Team's collective experience working in regional transportation reform in jurisdictions across North America.

Study Parameters and Limitations

The following are important qualifications to the scope of our study and attached Appendix A.

- 1) **Option evaluation in this assessment, not option selection.** The purpose of our assignment is to provide a structured framework to ‘set the table’ for further, more detailed business case analysis. Our team explored the extent to which these options can meet identified criteria, and does not recommend a single preferred option.
- 2) **All options are capable of materially addressing regional network management.** This evaluation puts forward three distinct, credible and workable options capable of delivering on Network Management outcomes, each with varying degrees of impact on outcomes, costs and risk. Each option is capable of meaningfully addressing the roles and responsibilities as set out by the Task force and realizing outcomes. The different capabilities in realizing the extent of roles, and ease of implementation are documented in the option assessment.
- 3) **Evaluation is indicative, not definitive.** The options have been developed to a resolution of detail, with information readily available to support Task Force dialogue on the salient differences, trade-offs and choices. The evaluation also identifies unresolved issues for further exploration.
- 4) **Options are consultant generated.** We have reviewed proposals for regional transport governance realignment from past reports, as well as the more current proposals prepared by individual Task Force members/organizations. No option presented is intended to entirely reflect a structure presented by any member of the BTRTF members or their respective organizations. Instead, our team has taken many of the design features included in those proposals and organized the option presented herein to illustrate the key option design choices, or a “choice framework” for RNM, under which many further design refinements may exist. They have also been developed to ensure the structure designs reflect principles for good governance which have been laid out for reference in Appendix A.

Key Choices

The Team believes the two most salient and relevant decisions to make about RNM are:

- a) the extent of regional network management scope,
- b) location of regional network management policy accountability.

Next Steps

- The Team will collate findings and outputs into a Final Summary Report. This report will include a set of recommendations for next steps, including an outline of the business case process.
- The business case effort will quantify and monetize benefits and impacts on a focused subset of realistic options. The business case will analyze the marginal case for each selected structure relative to a defined base case (status quo). Areas of assessment may also include the marginal capability for each selected structure to deliver on a specific role or responsibility (e.g. wayfinding, bus priority or rail network).
- As regional values become better reflected through further network management scope definition, refinements to options and design permutations within the overall choice framework may be necessary.