



**TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**Minutes of September 23, 2008**  
**2:00 p.m., Greensboro, NC**  
**Orientation Room**  
**Greensboro Cultural Center**

**TAC MEMBERS PRESENT**

Robbie Perkins                      *TAC Chair*                      Yvonne Johnson    *Mayor, City of Greensboro*  
 Doug Galyon                        *NCDOT BOT*                      Kirk Perkins        *Guilford County Board of Commissioners*  
 T. Dianne Bellamy-Small        *Greensboro City Council*

**ATTENDANCE**

Tyler Meyer	<i>GDOT / TCC Chair</i>	Mike Mills	<i>NCDOT</i>
Patrick Wilson	<i>NCDOT</i>	Ken Taffer	<i>NCDOT</i>
Craig McKinney	<i>GDOT / MPO</i>	Michael Abuya	<i>NCDOT</i>
Peter Ohlms	<i>GDOT / MPO</i>	Bruce Adams	<i>GTA</i>
Peggy Holland	<i>GDOT / MPO</i>	George Linney	<i>GTA</i>
Lydia McIntyre	<i>GDOT / MPO</i>	Taft Wireback	<i>News &amp; Record</i>
Frederick Haith	<i>Winston-Salem MPO</i>	Frances Gallagher	<i>Capital Management &amp; Engineering</i>
Adam Fischer	<i>GDOT Acting Director</i>	Pat Wilson	<i>NCDOT</i>
Dan Boyle	<i>Dan Boyle &amp; Associates</i>	Marilyn Band	<i>King's Mill resident</i>
Ron Frazier	<i>Sedgefield Trails resident</i>	Stafford Henley	<i>Citizen</i>

Robbie Perkins called the meeting to order at 2:05 p.m.

**Action Items**

**I. Approve Minutes of August 27, 2008**

Robbie Perkins noted that the minutes reflected him as advising that Board of Transportation meetings were public, however it was Mike Mills who advised it. Perkins requested the minutes reflect the correction. (Note on page 6 of 8 under item 6)

Kirk Perkins moved for approval of the minutes. Doug Galyon seconded the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the August 27, 2008 meeting as amended.

**Planning for the transportation future**

## 2. MTIP

Peter Ohlms introduced transit related MTIP amendments relating to GTA. Last month the 2009 - 2015 Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Plan was approved, but with ongoing coordination with GTA there are needed changes to the adopted program. Changes include adding an item in FY 2009 for \$1.1 million in Federal operating assistance matched equally with local funds. GTA is seeking to now use these funds already included since the federal law has changed. Also added is an item to include \$125,000 in routine capital item purchases such as shelters, supervisor vehicles, and spare parts, along with preventive maintenance items. The last funded project change is \$711,000 remaining federal earmark under Section 5309, the Bus and Bus Facilities Program. This money was previously set aside to provide advanced technologies for vehicles but due to current contracts, these technologies would be included at no additional cost. On the topic of bus facilities, Ohlms noted that the administrative facility is still a largely unfunded project but will likely use funds from various sources.

Key changes in the unfunded projects include adjusting costs for all future full-size bus purchases to reflect hybrid buses and adjusting small-bus replacement dates to reflect delays in recent purchases. Other parts include removing programmed purchases of HEAT vehicles due to the recent purchase of vehicles that will not be replaced until after 2015. This comes with an additional priority for funding under the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Program which funded the first three years of the HEAT service, is a rare example of federal funds covering 80% of operating costs rather than 50%. The project added to the MTIP would cover operating costs for the first three years of a service expansion.

Mayor Johnson moved for approval of the resolution. Kirk Perkins seconded the motion. The committee votes unanimously to approve the amendment to the 2009-2015 MTIP.

## 3. Approve National Highway System Intermodal Connector Changes

Tyler Meyer noted this is similar to the topic in the last meeting regarding Federal Functional Classification System changes. Congress created the National Highway System (NHS) in 1995 as an overlay of the functional classification system consisting of the primary routes through the nation including Interstates and principal arterials. In Greensboro these include US 220, US 29, US 421, NC 68 / US 220 Connector, and the Urban Loop. The NHS is used for planning purposes, but also as the basis for funding eligibility under what is now one of the core Federal-aid highway programs. Along with Interstates and principal arterials are Intermodal Connectors - roadway links between the National Highway routes and key economic facilities. In Greensboro there are three key economic facilities; the airport, tank farm, and Norfolk-Southern intermodal facility. The proposed change relates to the tank farm. In the past the intermodal connector went from I-40 by Chimney Rock Road to Market Street to connect with the tank farm, but with the construction of the Urban Loop the Chimney Rock road interchanged intersection was removed. Gallimore Dairy Road interchange now functions in the capacity as the Intermodal Connector. NCDOT has requested concurrence from the MPO regarding this action.

Yvonne Johnson moved for approval of the resolution. Kirk Perkins seconded the motion. The committee votes unanimously to approve the resolution designating Gallimore Dairy Road and Burnt Popular Road as the Intermodal Connector to the tank farm.

## 4. Reports, Concerns, and Discussion from MPO Area Towns

None

## 5. Citizen Comments

None

## **Business / Potential Action Items**

### **I. Follow-up on Urban Loop Concerns**

Meyer advised that one of NCDOT's responses to the concerns raised was to install additional landscaping along the Urban Loop. Areas developed before the date of public knowledge would have upgraded landscaping funded by NCDOT. For areas developed after the date of public knowledge, the MPO can choose to direct additional funds for these areas to receive the upgraded landscaping.

Mike Mills advised that Ken Taffer would be able to provide an update on the landscaping. Taffer advised that along the majority of the Western Urban Loop will be landscaped. Green Giant Arborvitae, which looks like Leland Cypress but without the potential for weather related damage will be planted along with a row of Nelly R. Stevens Hollies. Mills noted that the trees would be 6-8 feet tall at the time of planting, and Taffer advised that they would be spaced 10 feet on center and will eventually grow to 30 to 40 feet in height.

Robbie Perkins inquired how it was determined where to put a single row and a double row, and Taffer noted that most would be double rows.

Adam Fischer noted that the MPO could direct STP-DA funds to support the enhanced landscaping. He advised that the locations to be enhanced through the MPO's support are locations that were developed after the project's date of public knowledge.

Meyer advised that the total estimated cost for the landscaping plan was \$443,000, with the MPO's share estimated at \$170,000. He recommended that the TAC endorse the landscaping plan and recommend directing up to \$250,000 in STP-DA funds for the MPO share. Perkins inquired where the balance of the funds would come from. It was noted that NCDOT would provide the local 20 percent match along with the remaining balance.

T. Dianne Bellamy-Small inquired how the change to redesignate old I-40 as I-40 would change the traffic. Mills advised that it was unclear whether there would be a traffic reduction or what it would be, but regardless, the landscaping would proceed.

Doug Galyon explained the rationale and the decision that NCDOT made in moving I-40 back to its original location. Safety is the primary concern, and the amount of traffic going through Death Valley had to be reduced. After I-85, it was. With additional traffic studies, it was determined that the original I-40 could sustain the traffic. On that basis, it was determined to put I-40 back where it was originally. When the Eastern Loop is finished up to US 29, US 29 will be routed onto the Loop and not through the Valley, therefore they decided to route I-40 once again through the Valley. Truck traffic may not decrease due to drivers knowing the Loop is open.

Ron Frazier inquired about the landscaping being at a high level. Taffer advised that the proposal was a high level of landscaping; more than what NCDOT typically installs.

Stafford Henley asked what happens when you get further around to the Loop to the north and east of town, will there be enough money to pay for the enhanced landscaping there. Mills advised that the later segments will be separate projects with separate budgets.

Robbie Perkins asked for a motion to approve the landscaping plan and direct up to \$250,000 STP-DA funds.

Mayor Johnson moved for approval of the resolution. Bellamy-Small seconded the motion. The committee votes unanimously to approve the landscape plan and resolution to direct up to \$250,000 in STP-DA funds.

## Citizen Comments Regarding the Loop

Ron Frazier, of Sedgefield Trails, inquired about the timeline for switching I-40 traffic back to Death Valley and the signs to be used. Mills advised that from Raleigh heading west is a fairly simple maneuver. From Winston-Salem and Charlotte, there are complications regarding signage and pavement markings. Frazier inquired how the routing of the traffic would be policed – trucks. Mills advised that the Loop by his neighborhood will still be an interstate route (I-73) and drivers can decide which route to use. Perkins noted that there had been significant support from businesses along the former path of I-40 for its re-designation.

Marilyn Baird of 2817 Kings Mill Road noted that they were told that Mike Mills would set up appointments with each homeowner regarding construction damage claims to homes. Baird stated that she would like to know what kind of timeline is expected. Mills advised that the letter went out to homeowners advising that NCDOT needed to find two licensed contractors to meet with the homeowners. The process of selecting the contractors is underway.

Baird noted that during the pre-construction inspections, 14 homes were inspected, but only 7 were in post-construction. Other homeowners want to know why they were not included. Mills responded damages to homes beyond 30 meters or 100 feet from the toe of the slope were not caused by the road construction project. As a result, only homes within the 30 meter distance were re-inspected.

Baird inquired how NCDOT decided which damages would be fixed. Mills stated that the damages that occurred between the pre-construction inspection and post-construction would be repaired. Baird stated that her inspections showed multiple problems although NCDOT picked only a few things to fix. Mills advised that the consultants had given NCDOT their recommendations based on their professional opinions. Baird stated that she and her neighbors were still very concerned and upset about damages and problems that must have been overlooked in the inspection process. Mills advised that he would check again. Baird stated that the damages were done after the road construction started.

Perkins inquired how much time was between the inspections. Mills advised that it was at least 3 years; the pre-construction inspections were done before any construction began and the post-construction inspections were done after construction was completed. Perkins inquired if Baird had private inspectors looking at her house, and she advised that she and the neighbors were in that process. Baird advised that she had shown inspectors damages that they refused to include. Mills stated that the consultant had told him the damages in question were not caused by the project.

Perkins inquired how old the homes were – Baird stated her home was built in 1992 or 1993. From a builder's standpoint, Perkins advised, there would not be settling after the first few years. He advised taking a hard look at the damages and work to get things straight. Mills stated he can wait to determine damages until private inspectors have finished and can compare their results with the NCDOT inspectors.

Bellamy-Small inquired if the traffic or the road construction had caused the harm. Baird stated that it was both, and that the second level of her house vibrates due to the traffic. One major item happened after the road was opened, but other items occurred during construction.

Frazier inquired why the road was built with concrete rather than asphalt. He stated that asphalt surfaces were quieter than concrete. Mills advised that it was primarily for durability and that NCDOT often specifies concrete for interstate routes. Mills advised that the cost to resurface was in the millions of dollars.

## 2. Public Transportation Planning Update

Tyler Meyer introduced Dan Boyle, a transit planning consultant working with GTA. Boyle described the purposes of the study along with findings and recommendations: to analyze current service and ridership, to assess performance, to analyze transfers, to survey riders, to develop bus stop/amenities program, to refine

performance monitoring system, to identify new technologies, and to propose recommendations. He noted that HEAT was not included as part of this particular study.

Boyle presented a summary of ridership by route, comparing 2003 data with 2008 data. On every route, ridership has gone up considerably. The Automated Passenger Counter (APC) technology is good but may be missing some stops on Route 6, which would imply even more ridership than shown. Overall ridership increase since 2003 was 65%, excluding the HEAT service.

Bellamy -Small inquired if ridership has gone up that much, have we gotten the buses to accommodate the increases? Boyle advised that there was still some crowding, although the recent introduction of Route 15 was intended to alleviate overcrowding. Bellamy-Small inquired if we were running the biggest buses we have for the route. Bruce Adams advised that they were, but GTA was looking at bigger buses. Route 13 was also rerouted to help with overcrowding on Route 12.

Boyle noted that half-hour service on all routes resulted in increases. Productivity has actually gone up, from 22 riders per revenue hour to 27.8. Four routes did see lower productivity. Schedule adherence has decreased by 20%; it was 74% in 2003 but is at 60% now, which is at the lower end of what is expected from a system of our size. One main reason for this problem is the increased ridership.

Transfer activity was analyzed by collecting all transfer tickets, and made up 25% of all boardings. In 1999, Route 1 was truncated with a connector, and transfers between Route 1 and its connector account for 8% of all transfers. Boyle advised that no dominant transfer pattern was evident.

A survey showed that work or school trips accounted for 63% of all riders. Rider ratings were high, at 4.16 overall on a 5-point scale. Personal safety, operator courtesy, and value were rate highest. Crowding, reliability, and cleanliness were lowest; Boyle noted that this was during the drought, when buses were not being washed. Even the lowest ratings, however, were above the typical level. Operators were also generally pleased and were concerned about providing better service.

The study focused on the fixed route services but did look at SCAT customer relations and service strategies briefly. Bus stop amenity program – some stops were proposed for immediate action – consolidation of some stops would help speed the service. Performance monitoring program showed 10 passengers per revenue hour for connectors. All connectors are meeting expectations except Irving Park and Starmount.

Boyle advised that the Irving Park and Starmount Shuttle runs for five hours per day and provides only about 10 rides per day. A taxi voucher program is to be proposed as a demonstration to save costs for any stop on that route. The fee would likely be lower than the \$30 per passenger subsidy required currently.

Boyle recommended that PART should operate the Career Express shuttles in the airport area, since it operates the main shuttle and the shuttles produce no revenue. Sunday service ridership has increased so much that its combined routes should be replaced with regular weekday routes. Eventually, the same changes could be made for evening service, which could be done piecemeal based on the most productive routes.

New connector routes need to be considered closely. The South Town Connector took some time to build up ridership. Boyle advised that improved Sunday service would be more important than new connector routes.

Bellamy-Small inquired about areas needing connector service. Boyle advised that the performance monitoring program was partially intended to help develop strategies for connectors.

Boyle advised that GTA interlining busy routes with routes that have more built-in time that can avoid the situation of a long route running later and later throughout the day – also helps to keep more experienced drivers on the routes. Customers expressed support after the interlining changes were made.

Boyle noted that while it is bad to run late, it's worse to run early. To avoid this, many systems schedule early route segments very tightly to avoid running early. APC data can help adjust schedules with more confidence and realism. Some routes could also be streamlined, and bus stop consolidation can improve speeds and schedule adherence. Boyle noted that the report is still in progress.

Meyer noted that the Seamless Mobility Study did not necessarily address performance issues comparing the transit agencies in the Triad. He noted that the transit fact sheet echoes the dramatic growth in ridership. PART almost doubled its system as well, but GTA's doubling was a much greater larger increase in absolute terms. Perkins noted that Forsyth County has a combined city-county system for paratransit, while Greensboro has separate systems. The per-ride cost was \$11 in Forsyth and \$16 in Guilford, which could indicate a way to improve cost efficiency in Greensboro. Fischer advised that the report has a lot of smaller things that make a lot of sense, but the larger changes will take more time and be more complicated. Perkins asked those issues to be identified and circulated them among the City and County boards. Yvonne Johnson advised that transportation received the highest number of votes from both the City Council and County Commissioners as being a mutual priority.

Bellamy-Small stated that at a recent PART meeting there was some discussion about how municipalities may help to support PART. Perkins advised that we have to start thinking about regional transportation and working together. Doug Galyon noted that PART is unique in North Carolina, and Perkins advised that it would end up being known as a visionary entity.

Bellamy-Small inquired about transit facility improvements at Bragg and Eugene Street, where she had seen a passenger sitting on the ground waiting. Boyle advised that it was one of the 10 stops recommended for immediate action.

### **3. 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan Update**

Lydia McIntyre advised that the 2035 LRTP was a multimodal plan on a four-year cycle and had been underway for a year. Issues with meeting air quality regulations have been resolved, and the area is now meeting the standards, so the plan is ready for public review. Regional coordination is ongoing, with the regional air quality conformity document expected to be complete in October. Public review is scheduled to begin in October 13<sup>th</sup> and the public workshop is scheduled for October 30<sup>th</sup>. The plan and air quality conformity document with comments will be presented to the TAC in December for approvals. Meyer noted that the Conformity Analysis will cover the MTIP and the LRTP, but the MTIP has already been adopted, so the only remaining approvals will be the LRTP and conformity analysis.

### **4. Priority Needs for 2011-2017 Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program**

Meyer described the schedule for developing the 2011-2017 MTIP. The first step in the process is for the MPO to review and articulate its priorities for the Draft State 2011-2017 TIP in the coming months. The rest of the process involves consultation with NCDOT in the spring or summer 2009, a draft STIP document in fall 2009, public involvement and air quality analysis, and the final documents approved in summer 2010.

Meyer advised that the priority needs should reflect major priorities in the MPO area and are a key input into NCDOT's TIP development. Various multimodal planning documents provide a basis for the priority needs. The list should include highways, lower-level roadways, public transportation, and bicycle/pedestrian projects. These modes often have different processes for prioritization and funding. The status of the existing priorities and keeping them on track, considering fiscal constraints, is a key challenge. Consideration of new needs is important in the context of resource constraints, and partnership opportunities can impact prioritization and funding. Meyer advised that it is crucial to focus on potentially achievable goals in terms of both cost and project development.

Meyer described the status of various priorities from the 2007 Priority Needs List. Three sections of the Urban Loop were prioritized. The eastern section was funded but was delayed by a year, and other sections

remain unfunded. Doug Galyon advised that the western portion was designed and ready to go, but the eastern portion needs to be prioritized for design to begin.

Meyer noted that there are stresses in the state's budget for Loop funding, with more segments ready for construction and no growth in funding. Meyer advised that what the Legislature does over the next year will be important. Previously, the Legislature had pledged to phase out the transfers from Highway Trust Fund to General Fund. However, last year due to pressing need to move the Triangle Expressway project forward money was diverted to address its funding shortfall. This action prompted the Legislature to approve diversion from the Highway Trust Fund to the Turnpike Authority for project funding gaps for this and the other projects. Meyer noted Legislature will need to address this issue because puts additional strain on the Highway Trust Fund. Galyon advised that legislation makes long-term commitments, so money would continue being diverted to those projects as they become ready. This underscored the need for the legislature to address the loop budget shortfall.

The US 220/NC 68 Connector was the main intrastate priority that has successfully maintained its schedule and is scheduled for construction in 2013. Galyon noted that there was a break in this route reaching the Urban Loop. The segment from NC 68 to Bryan Boulevard needs to be designed and a better cost estimate developed. Galyon suggested that it may be the number one project, with a current cost estimate at \$130 million. Perkins stated that the proposed connection over to Kernersville will far into the future and Mills stated that it is slated for Turnpike Authority evaluation (once the Winston-Salem Eastern Beltline is completed since that is one of the project termini).

Meyer described other roadway priorities. West Market Street was kept on schedule by a funding partnership with the MPO. High Point Road, a major long-term project, has been delayed slightly but is scheduled for construction in 2013. US 220 widening is scheduled for construction in 2010. The Hornaday Road Bridge project is about to be let, and the Signal System project is in progress. For the US 29 interchange at Reedy Fork Parkway, further documentation is required. US 70 environmental document will begin in Fall 2008.

For bicycle and pedestrian projects, cost increases on the Battleground Rail-Trail were covered, and the project is planned for construction soon. Phase 2 of this trail has been funded but will depend on Chandler Concrete's plans for relocation. Other area pedestrian and bicycle projects were funded, with many ready for construction soon.

Meyer advised that the main public transportation priority was to establish funding for the new GTA operations, maintenance, and administrative facility. There was some success in this, with GTA receiving \$2 million in discretionary funding from NCDOT for land and design costs. GTA has shifted additional funds to fully cover the design phase of this project.

Meyer noted that discussion on these needs would continue at the next meeting. Future steps include development of the needs list for consideration at the next meeting, looking at opportunities to address needs through STP-DA and CMAQ funding at future meetings, and then tracking the projects through the draft and final TIP's. Perkins asked that information be put on the web site. Meyer stated that more information will be made available at the October meeting.

## **5. NCDOT Policy on CMAQ Funds**

Meyer advised that the North Carolina Association of MPO's had been discussing this issue. The Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Program allow funding for certain types of projects, including transit, bicycle and pedestrian, and other projects. NCDOT has proposed changes to the process. Some aspects of their proposal are logical, including using up unprogrammed balances. Other items not proposed would be logical, including working with MPO's to spend future funds.

Based on a review with the North Carolina Association of MPO's, more discussion is needed to develop an effective CMAQ process for the future. Details of regional funding distribution need to be worked out if this option is to be pursued.

Fischer inquired if the policy requires additional work. Meyer described the recommendations. He noted that NCDOT planned to bring the policy to its next Board meeting, and the MPO's were requesting that the Board act on some of the policy changes but defer others for additional consultation with the MPO's. NCAMPO will send additional information to NCDOT. Meyer advised that staff at the NCDOT Transportation Planning Branch were comfortable with considering the proposed changes.

Kirk Perkins moved to approve the item. Bellamy-Small seconded the motion. The committee votes unanimously in approval of resolution regarding NCDOT's CMAQ Program.

## **6. Triad Commute Challenge and Triad Air Awareness Update**

Lydia McIntyre advised that the Triad Commute Challenge was intended to get people out of their vehicles. The event is important from an air quality standpoint, with the area being non-complainant with certain federal air quality pollutant standards.

Bellamy-Small advised that there were 21,400 people employed in downtown Greensboro and suggested encouraging those people to participate in this and to try to attract nontraditional bus riders. Robbie Perkins noted that there are not many places to park a bike in downtown. Adam Fischer advised that there was also a "try transit week" planned to improve marketing.

## **7. Project Updates – None.**

## **8. MPO Strategic Reports**

Meyer noted that September was Bicycle Safety Month, and that Peggy Holland had spearheaded various promotions. Holland described the Bicycle-for-a-Day event and recent coverage on WFMY's Good Morning Show and area radio stations. Holland noted that the Share the Road billboard was in four locations and would remain up for another year. She advised that bicycle crash numbers were down to date, with March being the highest month so far. Holland noted that the City installed 50 bike racks last year and plan to install that many again this year.

Bellamy-Small inquired about scooters, which are not motorcycles but are supposed to obey the same rules of the road but do not require licenses if under 50 cc's. Holland advised that they do not fall into the same category as bicycles, because they are heavier and move faster than bicycles. She advised that a pilot scooter parking program was being investigated for the downtown area.

Tyler Meyer advised that a draft 2009 meeting schedule had been prepared and requested feedback on the schedule or proposed changes.

Meyer noted that staff continues to track state and federal legislative issues.

Meyer announced Peter Ohlms scheduled departure from the Greensboro staff and thanked him, along with TAC members, for his service.

## **Other Items**

### **I. Board Member Report**

Doug Galyon deferred to Mike Mills, who noted that at the last meeting, Michael Brandt had inquired about a public hearing or workshop on the R-2413 project in the Summerfield area and that plans are being made for an information workshop.

Bellamy-Small inquired about Loop noise mitigation for developers. Perkins stated it is hard to figure out until the final grade of the road is set. Fischer advised that the Greensboro Planning Department was working on language for ordinance changes. Perkins noted that the Scenic Corridor Overlay Districts could help, particularly in wooded sections, and Fischer noted that development ordinance language would likely mirror some of this.

### **2. Regional Transportation News - None**

### **3. Other Items - None**

### **4. Wrap-Up**

The TAC was adjourned at 3:50 p.m.