



GREENSBORO URBAN AREA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

April 27, 2005

1:45 p.m. Greensboro, NC

Blue Room

(County Commissioner's Briefing Room)

Old Guilford County Courthouse

TAC MEMBERS PRESENT

Sandy Carmany	TAC Chair
Jim Westmoreland	TCC Chair
Doug Galyon	North Carolina Board of Transportation
Paul Gibson	Guilford County Board of Commissioners
Kirk Perkins	Guilford County Board of Commissioners
Robbie Perkins	Greensboro City Council
Don Vaughan	Greensboro City Council

ATTENDANCE

Tyler Meyer	GDOT/MPO	Allen Purser	Greensboro Chamber of Commerce
Jeff Sovich	GDOT/MPO	Don Bryson	MAB
Lydia McIntyre	GDOT/MPO	Bill Bruce	Town of Summerfield
Craig McKinney	GDOT/MPO	Robert Gordon	Town of Summerfield
Wayne Davis	NCDOT/TPB		

Sandy Carmany called the meeting to order at 1:51 pm.

Action Items

1. Recognition of New TAC Members, Paul Gibson and Kirk Perkins

Sandy Carmany recognized new TAC Members, Paul Gibson and Kirk Perkins, both from the Guilford County Board of Commissioners.

2. Approve Minutes of January 26, 2005

The January minutes were presented for the TAC's review and consideration. Because a quorum of the TAC was not present during the scheduled meeting on March 16th, the minutes of January 26 were not approved at that time. Don Vaughan moved for approval of the minutes as presented. Robbie Perkins seconded the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the minutes as presented.

3. Approve Minutes of March 16, 2005

Don Vaughan moved for approval of the minutes as presented. Robbie Perkins seconded the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the minutes as presented.

4. Amend 04-10 MTIP

Jeff Sovich advised that this amendment arises out of action taken by the North Carolina Board of Transportation in February 2005. The Board made 2 amendments without prior action by the Greensboro TAC. This amendment is a formality which will bring the MTIP into consistency with the STIP. Upon action by the TAC, no further action is needed by NCDOT or the Board of Transportation. The amendments include a change to project B-3849, Prong of Reedy Fork Creek, Replace Bridge No. 188, by delaying construction by one fiscal year, and the addition of project U-4745, Battleground Avenue Assessment, and I-40 Interchange Improvements. Project U-4745 has been created by NCDOT in response to the FY 2005 STP-DA investment package that the TAC approved in February 2004. The recommended action is to adopt the amendment as presented.

Robbie Perkins moved to approve the amendment as presented. Don Vaughan seconded the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the amendment as presented.

5. MPO Self-Certification

Jeff Sovich explained that every year, prior to adoption of the Unified Planning Work Program, the MPO is required to certify its planning process and its compliance with various federal regulations including the Clean Air Act, the Civil Rights Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the federal transportation authorizing legislation. The certification states that the MPO is in compliance with all federal requirements and is carrying out its planning process in the appropriate manner. The NCDOT Transportation Planning Branch provides a self-certification checklist that has been reviewed by MPO staff, and determined that all of the conditions on the checklist have been satisfied. The resolution is a necessary prerequisite for adoption of the UPWP. The self-certification is distinct from the triennial federal certification review. The requested action is to approve the self-certification resolution as presented.

Don Vaughan moved to approve the self-certification resolution as presented. Robbie Perkins seconded the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the resolution as presented.

6. Adopt FY '06 UPWP

Tyler Meyer explained that the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) accounts for federal funds that come to MPO planning agencies from FHWA and FTA, accounts for NCDOT federally funded activities, and provides advance information regarding transportation projects. The UPWP provides an overview of grant allocations for the upcoming year. The FY '06 UPWP projects include: ongoing

feasibility studies such as the Battleground Avenue corridor assessment, preparation of a pedestrian and bicycle plan for the MPO area, completion of the Collector Street Plan, and other ongoing projects. The requested action is to approve the FY '06 UPWP as presented.

Don Vaughan moved to approve the FY '06 UPWP as presented. Robbie Perkins seconded the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the FY '06 UPWP as presented.

7. Endorse Collector Street Plan

Lydia McIntyre explained that the purpose of a Collector Street Plan is to address accessibility and mobility at the middle level in the hierarchy of roadways. A draft of the Collector Street Plan was developed in conjunction with the 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan, to serve as a basis for refinement through coordination with local jurisdictions within the MPO. The plan was subsequently revised and made available for public review. Four public workshops were held: at Bur-Mil Park, Pleasant Garden Elementary School, Northeast Middle School, and Greensboro Central Library. The Pleasant Garden workshop had the highest attendance due to concerns about the potential US 421 Interchange at Neelley Road associated with project R-2612. A public official's meeting to address questions about the interchange was scheduled to be held the day after the workshop. No comments were recorded at the Northeast Middle School workshop, but there was discussion with several local property owners in attendance. Comments from all workshops were focused on alignment issues, while comments at the Bur-Mil workshop also addressed the US 220 widening project. Implementation of the Collector Street Plan will take place primarily through the development process as property owners seek to develop or sub-divide their property.

Completion of the Collector Street Plan will have a significant impact on the pedestrian network, especially to the extent that sidewalks are required to be installed on most collector streets. Robbie Perkins noted that many collector streets that are currently outside the City of Greensboro will eventually be within City limits. For collector streets that aren't currently inside the City it will be important to plan in coordination with Guilford County to make sure that sidewalks are installed prior to becoming part of the City's street system. Collector streets will need sidewalks, and because most of the new collector streets will be built by developers, it will be wise to ensure that developers also construct the needed sidewalks at the same time, instead of that cost being paid by citizens after the fact. Jim Westmoreland noted that the sidewalk ordinance extends beyond the City of Greensboro, to the portion of the County that is served by the City's water and sewer systems. For areas outside the City's water and sewer service boundary it will be important to ensure that the County development ordinance requires the same level of sidewalk installation.

Next steps in the process will involve providing copies of the Collector Street Plan to the seven local jurisdictions, Guilford County, the City of Greensboro, and the towns of Oak Ridge, Pleasant Garden, Sedalia, Stokesdale, and Summerfield for their review and adoption. The recommended action is to approve the resolution endorsing the Collector Street Plan.

Robbie Perkins moved to approve the resolution endorsing the Collector Street Plan as presented. Don Vaughan seconded the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the resolution as presented.

Business / Potential Action Items

1. 06-12 TIP Development Update

Tyler Meyer advised the Committee on the progress in development of the 2006-2012 TIP. The TIP cycle was delayed, first due to issues with reauthorization, including Surface Transportation legislation and funding, and secondly due to state funding issues. An air quality conformity determination may be required, which could affect the schedule of the TIP development. NCDOT released the draft 06-12 TIP for public review and comment on April 6, 2005. An interagency consultation meeting was held on May 2nd, during which the federal and state agencies reviewed the draft with representatives of the MPOs, in order to resolve any discrepancies in the project information and to ensure that the TIP conforms with each MPO's Long Range Transportation Plan.

As a result of the changing state and federal financial picture, the draft 06-12 TIP includes changes to numerous projects, in comparison with the current 04-10 TIP. A summary of the status of major projects was provided, including projects that remain on schedule, projects scheduled to begin in post-years, delayed projects, newly added projects, and projects which have been partly accelerated and/or partly delayed.

Doug Galyon stated that he was very disappointed that funding for the segment of the Urban Loop from US 70 to US 29 was delayed in the draft 06-12 TIP, with construction in post years. However, the NCDOT's environmental staff are confident that they will be able to secure the needed permits for that segment by August, 2005. Because the transportation funding in the state is distributed among 14 divisions, when a funded project in one division cannot proceed on schedule due to permitting or other non-funding delays, that funding can be reallocated to projects in other divisions that are ready to move forward. This arrangement benefited the Greensboro in construction of the southern Urban Loop. But the Wilmington Bypass has replaced the eastern Urban Loop, due to permitting delays. By placing a high priority on the permitting and design for the eastern Urban Loop, this project will be ready and waiting for funding opportunities created by delays to projects in other areas.

The equity formula does not reflect population growth which is a great disadvantage to the urban areas. And because of the current structure and composition of the legislature, the equity formula is very unlikely to change. One of the biggest problems this creates is that divisions that have interstate highways to have to fund interstate maintenance out of their equity formula money, while isolated rural areas do not. Board Member Nancy Dunn has developed a proposal that would create a separate pot of money to fund the maintenance of interstates. Also, Mayor Holliday is a member of a committee called Thinking Ahead that is working to create better ways of funding our transportation needs.

The current TIP development schedule includes the MTIP being available for public review beginning May 2; a public review and comment meeting on May 12, and the NCDOT public hearing for Division 7 being held on May 15. Adoption of the 06-12 MTIP is anticipated to occur around July, to become effective on October 1st. In December, NCDOT will begin development of the 2007-2013 TIP, which will signify a shift preparing the TIP to begin and end in odd-numbered years. Consequently, the MPO will prepare the priority needs list for adoption this Summer.

2. Roadway Network Traffic Volume Overview

Don Bryson gave an overview of traffic volume forecasts on arterial roads in the Greensboro Urban Area in terms of vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and vehicle hours traveled (VHT), as determined by the travel demand model. Because VMT and VHT continue to increase, congestion is becoming significant on an increasing number of arterial roads. Most of the traffic on the network is created by trips that begin and end internally, rather than by trips for which the origin, destination, or both are outside of the network. As congestion increases on the arterials, congestion will also increase on the lower level streets as drivers try to find other routes to their destinations. The Long Range Transportation Plan forecasts decreases in VHT, but VMT will not change. The Long Range Transportation Plan also predicts a decrease in congestion on the Greensboro freeways, but not a decrease on the arterial roads, where most congestion occurs. Because many of the major arterial roads in developed areas cannot be widened any further, in order to minimize the effects of growing arterial congestion, it will be necessary to find innovative means of maximizing the capacity of arterial roads while offering improved travel choices such as public transportation and pedestrian and bicycle accommodations. Discussion followed regarding the different road projects that could help with congestion issues and how the planned University and College Service and GTA service enhancements can fit into such a strategy. TAC expressed significant interest in the presentation and requested additional information be made available in the future.

Doug Galyon asked whether figures were available on the number of southbound trucks on US 220 that terminate in Greensboro. This will be important information in determining the magnitude of the effect that the US 220 / NC 68 Connector will have on truck traffic coming into Greensboro. The level of traffic on US 220 is a prime example of the fact that the area's main traffic problems are on arterials. As development takes place it will be important to require developers to share in the cost of needed roadway improvements. Chapel Hill often requires developers to contribute to the costs of new traffic signals, turn lanes and other improvements, not just on or adjacent to their properties, but also up to three blocks away. This is the kind of requirement that the Greensboro area will need to pursue. Another major contributor to traffic problems in the area is that the County School Board gives little or no forethought to roadway access for the properties it purchases for construction of new schools. NCDOT has professionals who can help the school systems with both roadway access to the school site, and with internal traffic circulation and safety. But the school systems need to let us know what their needs are and work with us to ensure that their new facilities don't become sources or victims of unnecessary traffic congestion.

Robbie Perkins pointed out that historically planning efforts have strongly directed higher intensity land uses toward freeway interchanges, which is reflected in the City's comprehensive plan. Better planning would be to move higher intensity land uses away from interchanges, in favor of multi-family residential and other lower intensity uses that require fewer special treatments for vehicular access. Another means of improving traffic conditions surrounding interchanges may be to proactively upgrade existing cloverleaf and diamond interchanges to the modern Single Point Urban Interchange configuration. Also, the City needs to consider establishing an ordinance requiring arterials to be median-divided. Otherwise traffic conditions will deteriorate to gridlock due to turning traffic. Putting this kind of provision in place now and implementing a few streets at a time will help drivers become accustomed to the change.

3. Results of Triennial Certification Review

Bill Marley advised that FHWA conducts a certification review every 3 years for MPOs which have been designated as Transportation Management Areas (TMAs). This was the first certification review for Greensboro. The review team consists of two planners from the FHWA division office in North Carolina and others as appropriate, FTA, and USEPA. The certification review is a federal requirement that involves investigating MPO compliance with the metropolitan planning requirements, identifying problems areas, making recommendations for improvement, and determining if corrective action is necessary. Major review items include: coordination between the MPO and NCDOT, agreements with contracts, the UPWP, the LRTP, the MTIP and STIP, transit planning, regional travel demand modeling and land use planning, air quality planning, environmental justice issues, public involvement, CMS planning, and the needs of the MPO.

The commendations for Greensboro were: land use planning coordination with neighboring jurisdictions; the public involvement policy; and the impact matrix for early identification of potential environmental justice issues. Recommendations included: continuing to foster the coordination with NCDOT; inclusion of traffic safety management data to identify high accident corridors in the LRTP; continuing to address bicycle and pedestrian safety issues; ensuring that any TIP amendments initiated by DOT be approved by the TAC before federal funds are authorized; increasing efforts to involve the freight industry in TIP projects; increasing involvement in the State Implementation Plan for air quality issues; completion of the PM2.5 conformity determination by April 5, 2006 and the LRTP update on conformity determination for ozone by October 1, 2007; coordination of an ITS plan with the signal system replacement project; updating the CMS in conjunction with the LRTP update; updating amendments to the public involvement policy to reflect current practices; documenting the effectiveness of how the public involvement process is evaluated including changes made as a result of the evaluation; identifying and accounting for all minority groups, not just Hispanics and African Americans; reconsidering the 50% threshold for warranting the effectiveness of environmental justice issues; and engaging the minority populations in the public involvement process. No corrective actions were needed in Greensboro. The MPO process has been certified as of April 12, 2005 for a period of three years.

4. MPO Strategic Reports

The public officials meeting in Pleasant Garden for project R-2612, US 421 interchanges, went well. After the meeting, the Pleasant Garden Town Council voted unanimously to support an interchange with access rather than a grade separation at Neelley Road.

Other Items

1. Board Member Report

None.

2. Reports, Concerns, and Discussion from MPO Area Towns

Robert Gordon of Summerfield expressed appreciation for the participation of the MPO staff in a public meeting the town recently held regarding the US 220 widening project.

3. Citizen Comments

None.

4. Regional Transportation News

Tyler Meyer advised that PART sponsored a field trip to Charlotte to observe transit oriented development in connection with the rail system. A workshop for those who attended followed, to explore possibilities for the Triad's proposed commuter rail system. Charlotte imposed a ½ cent sales tax strictly for transit that is generating \$1.2 million per week. In the Triad, a car rental tax is currently supporting the efforts of PART, but this revenue will not be sufficient to fund the entire costs of the proposed Triad system.

5. Wrap-Up

Next TAC meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 25th at 1:45 pm. The TAC adjourned at 3:43 pm.