



# GREENSBORO URBAN AREA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

## TECHNICAL COORDINATING COMMITTEE

June 22, 2005

11:00 a.m. Greensboro, NC

Blue Room (County Commissioners' Briefing Room)

Old Guilford County Courthouse

### ATTENDANCE

Jim Westmoreland	GDOT / MPO	Mike Mills	NCDOT, Division 7
Jeff Sovich	GDOT / MPO	Wayne C. Davis	NCDOT
Craig McKinney	GDOT / MPO	Pamela Hawley	NCDOT
Lydia McIntyre	GDOT / MPO	Derrick Lewis	NCDOT
Tyler Meyer	GDOT / MPO	Nicole Hackler	NCDOT
Chris Spencer	GDOT	Richard Atkins	Triad Transportation Partnerships
George Linney	GTA	Brian Peeler	Rummel, Klepper, & Kahl
Scott Rhine	PART	Amy Dominello	<i>Greensboro News &amp; Record</i>
Frank Wyatt	Greensboro Engineering & Inspections	Mark Kirstner	Guilford County Community & Economic Development
Heidi Galanti	Greensboro Planning Department	Greg Niles	Guilford County Planning & Development
Hanna Cockburn	Piedmont Triad COG / RPO		

Tyler Meyer called the meeting to order at 11:07 a.m.

### ACTION ITEMS

#### 1. Approve Minutes of April 27<sup>th</sup>, 2005

Frank Wyatt moved for approval of the minutes. Heidi Galanti seconded the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the April 27<sup>th</sup>, 2005 meeting.

## **2. Adopt 2006-2012 Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program**

Lydia McIntyre advised that there was previous discussion on particular projects and their status of the 2006-2012 MTIP. The TIP development process was delayed significantly due to the ongoing Congressional impasse on the surface transportation reauthorization bill. Currently, the legislature is debating funding levels between \$295 billion and \$284 billion, while a seventh extension of TEA-21 is in effect. A public review and comment period was held on the Draft MTIP between May 2<sup>nd</sup> and May 31<sup>st</sup> in which several written comments on highways and public transportation were received. The highway comments primarily involved concerns about the delay of Project U-2525 B & C, the Northern/Eastern Urban Loop, from US 70 to Lawndale Drive and requested that original schedule for this project be restored. There was also one comment requesting that Wiley Davis Road from Vandalia Road to Groometown Road be improved from two lanes to five lanes, creating a major east-west thoroughfare connection from Guilford College Road to Elm-Eugene Street. Finally, there was a comment requesting the widening of the railroad underpasses at Tate Street and Aycock Street. The public transportation comments involved concerns with the comfort and pedestrian accessibility of GTA's bus stops. There was also one comment that expressed concerns about the lack of future bicycle facilities listed in the TIP.

Because of the Greensboro MPO's designation as an air quality non-attainment area under the PM 2.5 standard, an air quality conformity initial review was conducted, to ensure that the projects listed in the TIP are a subset of the 2030 LRTP. A full air quality conformity analysis will not be required, but an air quality conformity determination report will need to be prepared and approved, before the MTIP can take effect. The requested action is for the TCC to recommend that the TAC approve the 2006 – 2012 MTIP as presented, contingent upon approval of an air quality conformity determination report.

Scott Rhine moved to recommend that the TAC approve the 2006-2012 MTIP as presented, contingent upon approval of an air quality conformity determination report. Hanna Cockburn seconded the motion. The Committee voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

### **BUSINESS ITEMS / POTENTIAL ACTION ITEMS**

#### **1. Recommend Updates to MPO Public Involvement Policy**

Jeff Sovich advised that earlier this year the Greensboro MPO went through its Federal Triennial Certification review and was certified by FHWA and FTA for its transportation planning process. In the Certification Review Report there were three specific recommendations related to the MPO's Public Involvement Policy. Those recommendations give rise to the need for updating the Public Involvement Policy. The PIP was last updated in January 2001. The MPO staff is currently developing a detailed update proposal that will accomplish a number of objectives: it will formalize the innovative and proactive public involvement practices the MPO already uses, which are not reflected in the current PIP; it will expand the range of public involvement strategies the MPO uses by tailoring the level of public involvement to the nature of the MPO function or activity; it will establish consistent public involvement procedures for key MPO functions not addressed in the current PIP, such as TAC & TCC meetings, UPWP adoption & amendment, CMS adoption and amendment; it will establish a system for measuring the effectiveness of the PIP, including the results of any future changes to the PIP; it will improve the overall cost-effectiveness for the MPO's public involvement efforts by reducing or eliminating less successful techniques; it will increase the MPO's efforts to engage minority and low income populations; and it will describe how the MPO's public involvement efforts meet and/or exceed the standards of applicable federal regulations and state statutes. The ultimate goal of this revision is to

improve access to and transparency of the MPO's transportation planning process, giving the public a greater opportunity to make meaningful input at meaningful points in planning for the area's transportation system. MPO staff will present a draft PIP possibly during the August meeting, following a 45 day public review.

## **2. Proposed Thoroughfare Plan Amendments**

Tyler Meyer advised of two proposed thoroughfare plan amendments. These amendments are being presented for informational purposes only, so no action is requested today. Following today's presentations, there will be a public review and comment period on the two amendments. The first proposed amendment reconfigures the intersection of McConnell Road and Millstream Road, consistent with the project plans already underway by NCDOT. The second proposed amendment relates to the proposed widening of US 158 from Forsyth County into Rockingham County. The amendment replaces the existing new location portion of the US 158 Corridor with a different new location alignment. This revised alignment avoids impacting Stokesdale's historic Main Street as well as constraining natural features and existing and planned development that are located in the path of the former alignment. This project is currently in post-years in the TIP, but early stages of the environmental process are under way. The Town of Stokesdale will hold a public meeting regarding this amended alignment, with MPO staff on hand. Comments received will be used in determining any final revisions to the alignment.

## **3. I-73 Connector Feasibility Study**

Derrick Lewis of NCDOT advised of the updates on the development of the I-73 Connector (NC 68 / US 220 Connector). There are currently four proposed study corridors for the I-73 Connector. The corridor for Alternative 1 begins at the I-40 interchange with the western urban loop, traveling north to Bryan Boulevard, then follows Bryan Boulevard west to NC 68, then north on the NC 68 connector. Alternative 2 begins at the I-40 / NC 68 interchange, traveling north on existing NC 68, then north on the NC 68 connector. Alternative 3 follows the western urban loop from the I-40 interchange to US 220, then follows US 220 north to the Haw River. Alternative 4 follows the same path as Alternative 1 except that it follows a proposed extension of Bryan Boulevard from the Old Oak Ridge Road interchange northwest to the NC 68 connector. All the alternatives are approximately 14 to 15 miles in length.

The study will take a maximum of approximately two years to complete, although it could be completed sooner. NCDOT recognizes the importance of expediting this review in order to enable other local planning efforts to proceed. While some of these alternatives appear to be obviously impractical, NCDOT is studying all four corridors for several reasons. First, without an objective and quantitative analysis of all the alternatives, the decision to select one corridor over the others will not be adequately justified from FHWA's perspective. Second, having this additional level of detail regarding the infeasible corridors will help avoid potential delays in getting the necessary approvals later in the process. Evaluation of the impractical alternatives will continue only until enough information has been gathered to clearly eliminate them from further consideration. The majority of time and effort will be spent on in-depth study of the more favorable alternatives. Further information will be presented at future meetings.

Jim Westmoreland advised that during a recent meeting at the offices of PART a conceptual alignment for a future Thoroughfare Plan amendment was presented. The concept is referred to as the "West Side Thoroughfare Connector" and represents an extension of an alignment that has been on the High Point Thoroughfare Plan for several years. This new extension would create a north-south connection from

US 311, through the “Heart of the Triad” area, to the proposed I-73 / I-74 connector. This concept would involve making some adjustments to the airport area connectors currently on the Thoroughfare Plan, but further study will be needed to determine whether the changes would be advantageous. The idea for this connector arose out of continued interest in promoting the “Heart of the Triad” area as a viable opportunity for a major center for future employment and residential development, centrally located with the region. This effort will require considerable in-depth study involving policy support and eventually funding support from the MPOs and PART, in order to begin to develop functional designs and protect the corridors. In an upcoming meeting, MPO staff will provide the TAC with a list of recommendations about all of the project planning opportunities and resources that are available, so that you can make some decisions about what fund and to move forward with.

#### **4. MPO Strategic Reports**

Jeff Sovich welcomed Pamela Hawley as the MPO’s new transit coordinator with the NCDOT Public Transportation Division.

To celebrate the month of May as National Bike Month, GTA has compiled data about the usage of bike racks on its buses. The figures indicate how many times a rack has been folded down for use, not necessarily the total number of bikes occupying a rack. During the month of May, GTA’s bike-on-bus racks were activated a total of 1,837 times. The routes with heaviest usage are North Elm Street, Summit Avenue, Battleground Avenue, High Point Road and South Elm Eugene Street / Randleman Road, each with over 100 uses during the month.

Craig McKinney advised that NCDOT will be holding a public information workshop regarding the future widening of Gallimore Dairy Road from NC 68 to I-40. The meeting will be held at Western Guilford High School from 4 to 7 p.m.

On June 15, the Greensboro Planning Board reviewed the proposed Collector Street Plan and made a recommendation for the City Council to approve it at its next meeting. The Pleasant Garden Long Range Planning Board will be reviewing the plan on July 11, and hopefully recommending approval by the Town Council for August 9. The Guilford County Planning Board will review the plan on July 13, with a recommendation to County Commissioners for their August 18 meeting. Finally, the Stokesdale Planning Board will review the plan on August 4, and make a recommendation for the Town Council’s August 18 meeting. There are three communities remaining to review the Collector Street Plan: Oak Ridge, Summerfield, and Sedalia. We hope to schedule these presentations in the near future.

Tyler Meyer advised that MPO staff are reviewing upcoming project planning opportunities in an effort to bring some prioritization to them. One such opportunity that has recently been requested by the Town of Summerfield is a feasibility study of the NC 150 connector, which would facilitate development plan implementation by providing a basis for limiting development in the corridor. The TCC was asked to contact MPO staff with any feedback on this study request. MPO staff will discuss this and other potential planning priorities with the TCC at the next meeting.

## **OTHER ITEMS**

### **1. TCC Member Report**

Scott Rhine advised that PART's Park & Ride Lot project is progressing well. Construction contracts for two sites were recently awarded, while property was recently acquired for three more sites, which are now under design. PART is also investigating sites for next construction season, including locations in Alamance, Forsyth, Randolph, and Rockingham Counties.

Also, PART is about to begin the region's transportation conformity planning process for PM 2.5 and will have an interagency consultation meeting July 12<sup>th</sup>. The consensus plan will be mailed out with the schedule of activities for all of our partners within the MPO and RPO, and state and federal agencies. The ultimate deadline for completing all of this work is April 5, 2006. Continual updates on this process will be provided to all participants.

Finally, PART is nearing completion of the Triad Regional Travel Demand Model. The model will be completed by August, with final calibration to be completed for initial model runs in early September. Training of MPO personnel and other model users will be provided in September and October.

Mike Mills advised that several NC Moving Ahead! projects and resurfacing projects are under way throughout Guilford County. The biggest project currently is the Western Urban Loop, which is progressing well and is still on schedule for completion in July 2007.

Wayne Davis advised that the NCDOT Transportation Planning Branch is still conducting a search for a new urban area coordinator for the Greensboro MPO.

Chris Spencer advised that GDOT is about to begin a feasibility study for North Church Street, with the assistance of Wilbur Smith Associates. This project, which was funded through the 2000 Transportation Bond Referendum, involves a roughly three year study for widening Church Street from Wendover Avenue to Cone Boulevard.

Jim Westmoreland advised that Phase II of the renovation of the Depot continues to progress and is on schedule to be complete by the end of September. We are also working tentatively with NCDOT to plan a dedication ceremony in the middle of October to welcome the return of Amtrak to the facility. More information will be provided at a later date. Also, the remaining 20,000 square feet of lease space available at the Depot, is nearly complete for accepting future tenants.

GDOT has been working with Mike Mills and other staff in the NCDOT Division 7 office to develop an access management safety and operations study for US 29, which involves some improvement and ramp closures. Mike and Doug Galyon have been able to locate some funds for us to be able to begin implementation of this plan later this summer.

Finally, during its meeting last night, the Greensboro City Council approved a contract for just over \$750,000 in new sidewalk construction, which further demonstrates the Council's ongoing support for implementing the Walkability Policy.

The next TCC meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, July 27th at 11:00 am. The TCC adjourned at 12:28 pm.