



TECHNICAL COORDINATING COMMITTEE
Minutes of August 27, 2008
11:00 a.m., Greensboro, NC
Horseshoe Room
(Room 201)
Old Guilford County Courthouse

ATTENDANCE

Adam Fischer	<i>GDOT / TCC Chair</i>	Mike Kirkman	<i>Greensboro Planning</i>
Peter Ohlms	<i>GDOT / MPO</i>	Ted Partrick	<i>Greensboro Engineering</i>
Tyler Meyer	<i>GDOT / MPO</i>	Bill Bruce	<i>Guilford County</i>
Lydia McIntyre	<i>GDOT / MPO</i>	Mark Kirstner	<i>Guilford County</i>
Peggy Holland	<i>GDOT / MPO</i>	Roger Bardsley	<i>Guilford County</i>
Craig McKinney	<i>GDOT / MPO</i>	Michael Abuya	<i>NCDOT TPB</i>
Chris Spencer	<i>GDOT Engineering</i>	Mike Mills	<i>NCDOT Division 7</i>
Kyla Purtell	<i>GDOT Planning</i>		

Tyler Meyer called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m.

Action Items

1. Approve Minutes of June 25, 2008

Roger Bardsley moved for approval of the minutes. Bill Bruce seconded the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the June 25, 2008 meeting.

2. Approve Air Quality Conformity Determination for the 2009-2015 MTIP

Lydia McIntyre noted that the area had been having issues meeting air-quality conformity requirements for its new 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). She advised that air-quality conformity refers to meeting air-quality standards. It is required because the area is designated as Maintenance for 1-hour ozone and Non-Attainment for fine particulate matter (PM 2.5). The conformity determination was made in consultation with other Triad MPOs, so the summary of the conformity report is for the whole Triad and includes the four MPOs of Greensboro, High Point, Winston-Salem, and Burlington and the rural portions of Davidson and Davie counties.

Planning for the transportation future

In order to ensure that projects are not delayed, the conformity determination for the Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP) was based on the old conforming 2030 LRTP. Staff recommended that the TCC recommend adoption of the interim conformity determination to allow the MTIP to be adopted.

Tyler Meyer advised that this had been a long process but that it was in good shape and, in fact, better shape than expected a few months earlier.

Mike Mills moved for approval of the resolution. Mike Kirkman seconded the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of the air quality conformity determination for the 2009-2015 MTIP.

3. Approve 2009-2015 Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program

Lydia McIntyre advised that staff began identifying priorities in summer 2007. NCDOT released its draft State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), which includes all state projects, in November 2007. Public review for the MTIP occurred in February and July 2008 and resulted in a small number of comments. One comment was from the Division of Water Quality (DWQ). Another was a resident questioning the continued need for the High Point Road widening project. The Mayor of Sedalia requested information regarding the future widening of US 70, which is only scheduled for an environmental document, and a citizen noted that the limits for the West Market Street widening project were not matching up. Mike Stanley at NCDOT is aware of this needed correction.

McIntyre advised that the major projects summary provides a quick look at the status of projects in the area. She noted the addition of the I-73 Connector with the completion of its feasibility study. Page 13 of the document shows significant changes to the MTIP since the release of the draft STIP in 2007. Public comments begin on page 55, and a resolution for approval is included.

Bill Bruce inquired why the High Point Road project (U-2412) decreased in cost. McIntyre advised that she would need to look, but that NCDOT had looked more closely at its cost assumptions; the change may also have related to the project limits. Bruce noted that property owners along that stretch of road were inquiring about rezoning and potential development projects. McIntyre noted that the project was still funded but had been delayed by a year.

Adam Fischer inquired about the comment regarding the need for the High Point Road project. McIntyre advised that comments began on page 65, and that specific comment was on page 69. The resident asked questions about traffic forecasts and nearby facilities that could serve the traffic demand. Tyler Meyer noted that similar comments had been received in the past, and recalculated traffic forecasts had validated the need for the project. He advised that the 10 percent change in project cost may have been due to an overestimate of construction or right-of-way costs.

Mike Kirkman inquired about the status of the US 220 - NC 68 Connector. McIntyre advised that it would be discussed later.

Mike Mills noted that he could look into why the High Point Road project cost had decreased.

Meyer inquired what the DWQ comments were. McIntyre stated that they were general in nature and regarded avoiding and minimizing impacts to wetlands, streams, and things of that nature.

Mills inquired who put together the Project Update Newsletter and noted that it was helpful.

McIntyre noted that staff recommended approval of the MTIP. She advised that the area is now meeting its air quality requirements in the modeling process for the purposes of approving the new LRTP. The new results indicate that the area will be two-tenths of a ton under the pollutant limits. A new conformity determination will be included with the LRTP.

Meyer noted that the document becomes effective on October 1st and that the air-quality model is highly sensitive to its assumptions. McIntyre advised that the incorporation of local data had been a major

factor in getting the analysis to work out. Michael Abuya agreed that changing from default state-level data to local county-level data resolved the problems.

McIntyre advised that the requested action was to recommend adoption of the 2009-2015 MTIP.

Adam Fischer moved for approval of the resolution. Mike Mills seconded the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to recommend adoption of the 2009-2015 Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program.

4. Approve Functional Classification Changes on Airport Area Roads

Lydia McIntyre advised that a handout included a map related to Functional Classification. NCDOT made a request pursuant to the completion of the feasibility study for the I-73 Connector. Before the feasibility study, it was unclear where I-73 would be routed. The recommended alignment for the I-73 Connector was not included on the area's Functional Classification map, and in order to receive federal funds, the planned facility needs to be functionally classified. McIntyre advised that the federal Functional Classification system includes interstates, expressways, arterials, and collectors and is one basis of funding eligibility for various federal highway funding programs.

McIntyre advised that the first revision suggested was to add the proposed I-73 Connector as an urban freeway/expressway. The second revision was to re-classify a portion of Bryan Boulevard as an urban freeway/expressway. The third was to re-classify the relocated Bryan Boulevard from an urban freeway/expressway to an urban collector. The final suggestion was to delete the original alignment of Bryan Boulevard, which is no longer part of Bryan Boulevard.

Tyler Meyer noted that the system is based on the degree of mobility vs. the degree of access of a given roadway. He noted that if relocated Bryan Boulevard was ever extended beyond its current terminus, it could be reclassified as an urban arterial.

Peggy Holland inquired if, as an urban collector and not a freeway, the restrictions on bicycling on that segment of Bryan Boulevard could be removed to facilitate bicycle access to the airport. Craig McKinney advised that it would not help access the airport, because the airport interchange was still controlled-access and would prohibit bicycling. Committee members discussed this issue.

Adam Fischer inquired what classification the former Bryan Boulevard segment would become. McIntyre advised that it would no longer be functionally classified and would simply be a local road. Craig McKinney advised that although some of it no longer exists, it serves as an internal circulation function for the airport. Mark Kirstner suggested using a better base map that more clearly shows the existing facilities. McIntyre advised that NCDOT would eventually update its base map.

McIntyre advised recommending that the TAC approve the Functional Classification changes.

McIntyre, Meyer, and Mike Mills discussed the details and timing of the changes in relation to the new I-73 Connector. McIntyre advised that the changes do look at the long term, not just the short term. Committee members continued discussing the roadway system and future changes in this area. Meyer advised recommending the action to the TAC but clarifying in the communication to NCDOT that the MPO supports adding the proposed freeway and expressway and changing the designation of the relocated Bryan Boulevard pending completion of the I-73 Connector.

Mills noted that the route of I-73 as shown had not conclusively been decided pending completion of the environmental document. Michael Abuya advised that what was shown was what was in the feasibility study as the preferred alternative. McIntyre advised that it might not have to be the exact alignment for functional classification purposes. Meyer inquired if the categorical exclusion would look at the various alternatives. Mills advised that it had to look at the remaining alternatives. Committee members continued discussing the issue of whether Bryan Boulevard should indeed be classified as an urban collector instead of an arterial. Abuya noted that he would have to check with the systems unit, but that they needed to forward it to FHWA for approval quickly.

Meyer recommended approving the changes as proposed except to recommend designating the portion of relocated Bryan Boulevard as an urban arterial, not an urban collector. Mike Mills moved for approval of the resolution. Adam Fischer seconded the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of the changes with this additional recommendation.

Business / Potential Action Items

I. I-73 Update

Mike Mills described how plans for the funded US 220/NC 68 Connector were being coordinated with plans for the unfunded I-73 Connector project to ensure connectivity and avoid waste in construction. He presented a diagram with yellow lines showing proposed construction for the existing US 220/NC 68 Connector project and blue lines indicating the future I-73. The project would include a flyover at NC 68 and widening of 68 between Leabourne and Pleasant Ridge. A major concern is how to accommodate appropriate connections to Pleasant Ridge Road and I-73.

Mills advised that with either project, Pleasant Ridge Road will be an at-grade intersection with NC-68. Because two alternatives are still under consideration for the route of I-73 and the final choice will not be set until environmental documentation is complete, the US 220/NC 68 Connector is being designed with the possible alternatives in mind.

Mills noted that when the next project takes place connecting to Kernersville, the North Carolina Turnpike Authority will have to look at how to handle Pleasant Ridge Road. The design presents some problems for property access on NC 68, and another public workshop will be held late in 2008 or early 2009. Craig McKinney advised that details of the roadway portion of the design would be available in November. At the workshop, NCDOT may be able to show the proposal and let the public raise issues of concern. Mills noted that perhaps it would be warranted to perform a study to look at constructing a service road versus purchasing the property.

Adam Fischer inquired about the design and controlled access status. Mills advised that Edgefield Road was shown as right-in, right-out only, but there may be the possibility to install a traffic signal there to provide full access. It would be properly spaced, but there would be a lot of signals on that portion of NC 68. The public workshop is needed to refine the concepts.

Fischer inquired if what was shown for I-73 was the final recommended option. Mills advised that it was an option but was not final. If I-73 is built as shown, the projects constructed beforehand would work with it. Mills noted that the big issue had been how to handle Pleasant Ridge.

Mills advised that I-73 would likely have a Categorical Exclusion and most of the right-of-way is owned by the airport, so theoretically, if funding were available, that project could be completed at the same time as the US 220/NC 68 Connector. McKinney advised that what is shown should dramatically reduce the cost estimate for I-73, because the original estimate included reconstructing an interchange at Pleasant Ridge. Fischer noted that the property to the west of NC 68 would need to be acquired, and Mills advised that this would have to be studied. McKinney inquired about when the decision would be made about the Categorical Exclusion. Mills stated that it was likely.

Mike Kirkman inquired if Pleasant Ridge would have access onto I-73 with this scenario. Mills advised that it would not have direct access. Kirkman noted that there are various development projects south of Leabourne, and the question is how or whether these projects would have access. Mills advised that the issue would be whether to build a service road or to buying out properties. Tyler Meyer noted that the main factors at the workshop would be access provisions between the properties and NC 68. Fischer inquired about a Superstreet design, and Mills advised that he hoped not, but that it could be an option.

Chris Spencer inquired how Regional Road would be affected. Mills advised that it would dead-end, although an original plan showed a circulation element at the end. Mills discussed access to the water tank for the City.

Peter Ohlms inquired how the changes would affect existing Bryan Boulevard. Mills advised that it would dead-end as well once I-73 is constructed. Ohlms inquired if this would change the Committee's recommendation for Functional Classification. Meyer asked Mills to explain again. Mills confirmed that the newly relocated Bryan Boulevard would be closed. Meyer advised that the concept had been to build the new interchange and hook in I-73 with a minimal amount of disruption. Mills advised that there would be no interchange work, but that there would be no way to make the connection to the existing Bryan Boulevard with the limited amount of space; Bryan Boulevard will likely be dead-ended or could make a connection to Regional Road. Meyer stated that he thought there would have been a multilevel connection to keep the relocated Bryan Boulevard open.

Committee members discussed how to navigate the roadways as they will be constructed in the future. McKinney advised that the feasibility studies showed at one time that the portion of Bryan Boulevard would be extended across I-73 to intersect with Pleasant Ridge Road. Meyer advised that additional information was needed regarding the design process.

Mills advised that the US 220/NC 68 Connector (R-2413) is funded for right-of-way in 2010 and construction in 2013. Regardless of the status of the I-73 Connector, the former project will go forward.

Fischer inquired how the connector ties in to NC 68 without I-73. Mills advised that it would be an interchange, and Committee members continued discussing how to navigate each movement of the future interchange, which will be built regardless of I-73.

Bill Bruce inquired how much space is between the proposed flyover and NC 68. Mills and McKinney advised that the flyover will be elevated, so the space there will likely not be developable.

Fischer inquired if NC 68 would remain two-way in this section, and Mills stated that it would, but it would be widened. Fischer and Mills discussed design options.

Mark Kirstner inquired about how vehicles traveling south on the US 220/NC 68 Connector would be routed to I-40. Mills advised that with I-73, they would be directed onto that and then onto the Urban Loop. He noted that without I-73, that traffic would be dumped onto NC 68, and the interchange with NC 68 and I-40 would cease to function properly. Bruce inquired about signing Bryan Boulevard as the connection. Mills and Spencer noted that it could be done, but people would likely learn the other route as being more direct.

Meyer inquired about the future of Bryan Boulevard at Regional Road and at NC 68. Mills advised that the intersection, segment of Bryan Boulevard, and interchange would remain, but Bryan would be dead-ended past that point. Meyer noted that with this, the portion of Bryan Boulevard would indeed appear to be more like an urban collector.

2. Airport Area Roadway Planning Update

Tyler Meyer noted that the Airport Area Transportation Study completed in 2003-2004 led to the addition of several new freeways and revisions of the Thoroughfare Plan. These included an I-73/I-74 Connector towards Winston-Salem, an I-40 Connector from that facility to I-40, and extension of Sandy Ridge Road as an arterial thoroughfare connection. NCDOT prepared this study in cooperation with the MPO and the High Point and Winston-Salem MPOs. Additional studies needed to validate or refine this part of the planned roadway network were on hold until the state completed the majority of its routing recommendations for I-73 in this area. Given that NCDOT has a recommended alignment for I-73, Meyer advised, it appears to be time to conduct additional planning work.

The High Point MPO plans to conduct a feasibility study for the proposed North-South Connector from US 311 to Macy Grove Road to enhance access on the western side of High Point. High Point also plans to develop an environmental document for widening Johnson Street and Sandy Ridge Road in connection with a federal earmark. High Point requested for Greensboro to do a feasibility study of the

Sandy Ridge Road Extension north of I-40 as well. One goal is to clarify how to connect a surface-street Sandy Ridge Road to the airport area, independent of any longer-term future freeways in the area.

Reevaluation of the planned airport area future roadway connections is needed to support these studies, because the connections would have significant effects on area traffic patterns and traffic on the North-South Connector as well as Sandy Ridge Road and Johnson Street. Meyer advised that work would begin with a planning-level assessment of the airport area roadway network, looking at traffic flows and cost-effectiveness given traffic flows before conducting a more detailed study.

Roger Bardsley inquired about extending Bryan Boulevard, which was just discussed as being a future dead-end road. Fischer noted that it may make more sense to do that instead of directing traffic from Sandy Ridge Road onto Pleasant Ridge Road. Fischer advised that another reason for the study was to provide access for land being bought up for development. The committee continued discussing options for the Sandy Ridge Road extension. Bardsley noted that High Point residents were concerned about having another way to access the airport. Meyer stated that, although it may not be the original vision, these changes would provide the new connections, but existing connections may be faster. Meyer noted that Kernersville supports constructing a new interchange at Macy Grove Road.

3. Development of Priority Needs for 2011-2017 MTIP

Tyler Meyer advised that the next stage of the Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP) process was to begin looking at priority needs for the 2011-2017 MTIP. This is an opportunity to look back at the key transportation needs for the years ahead. Multimodal priorities should be considered, including freeways, surface streets, bicycle and pedestrian projects, and public transportation. For transit, GTA essentially determines how to use its formula funds and identifies its key needs. The priority needs list is intended to give NCDOT a clear sense of what the area's multimodal priorities are.

Meyer advised that staff have begun reviewing existing priority needs and will give an update at the next meeting regarding former priorities for discussion and guidance, with a draft final list for consideration at a future meeting. Meyer repeated that the list is important in terms of determining priority needs and allocating discretionary resources such as the CMAQ and STP-DA funding programs.

4. Bicycle Safety Month and Bike-for-a-Day

Peggy Holland advised that September would be Bike Safety Month, primarily due to multiple bicycle-related activities scheduled for September, including the Tour to Tanglewood on Sep. 6-7, the Carolina Cup on Sep. 7, and the Tour de Tammy on Sep. 20.

Also on September 20, Greensboro will host a Bike-for-a-Day event to encourage people to try getting around by bike. At a location yet to be determined, the event will offer quick safety checks, bike-on-bus practice, bike rodeos for children to learn maneuvering and signs, helmet fittings for children and adults, and helmet giveaways for children. Partners include Bicycling In Greensboro, Inc.; the Bike Me! Collective; GTA; the Greensboro Police Department; Greensboro Fat Tire Society; Greensboro Velo Club; PART; the Piedmont Triad Council of Governments; and Safe Guilford. A live broadcast from a Clear Channel radio station would be part of the event. Four billboards promoting sharing the road will be placed around the City during September, and one has been up continuously since October 2007. The City's bicycling web site will be updated as well.

Holland noted that staff would be sending a bicycle safety brochure to parents through the public schools. Holland distributed blinking lights to attendees and noted that they could be used for walkers or bicyclists to make sure they are safe and visible.

5. Transportation Bond Update

Adam Fischer advised that City Council had authorized placing a \$134 million transportation bond package on a referendum for fall 2008. Ten-year critical needs are estimated at \$228 million. Some projects

would be fully funded with the 2008 bond, while others will require additional funding from a future bond in 6 to 8 years. The bond package includes \$73 million in roadway improvements, \$13 million for intersection improvements, \$9 million for sidewalks, \$18 million for streetscapes, \$8 million for maintenance, and \$12 million for greenway and trail projects.

Fischer described the projects expected to be funded. Roadway projects that are expected to be fully funded and completed in 5-7 years include Battleground Avenue intersection improvements, Florida Street Extension, North Church Street, and the Cone Boulevard/Nealtown Road Connector. The Horse Pen Creek Road project will include completion of a feasibility study and construction. Mackay Road is a small section from west of Adams Farm Parkway to the state's High Point Road project, and Alamance Church Road is also included. Roger Bardsley inquired if the roadway improvement projects would include sidewalks. Fischer advised that they would include sidewalks on both sides of the street and may also include provisions for bicyclists where space is available, such as on North Church Street.

Fischer advised that partially funded roadway projects included North Elm Street corridor improvements, Stanley Road, Vandalia Road, Elm-Eugene Street, Pleasant Garden Road, and the connector between Fleming and Lewiston Roads. Another inbound lane on Bryan Boulevard/Benjamin Parkway rounds out the list.

Fully funded intersection improvements include West Market Street and College Road, Battleground Avenue and Cone Boulevard, Clifton Road and Wendover Avenue, and downtown pedestrian crossing enhancements to shorten the crossing for pedestrians and slow traffic. Smaller intersection improvements include Friendly Avenue and Friendway Drive and Norwalk Street and Wendover Avenue. Other intersection improvements will be funded for design but not construction: Lawndale and Pisgah Church, Elm and Pisgah Church, Florida and Randolph, and Fleming and Lewiston.

Sidewalk projects to be completed total \$8 million, many of which were under design and ready to go quickly. Additional sidewalk projects will receive partial funding for design, only a few of which are already underway. Fischer noted that all projects anticipate another bond in six to eight years to cover the remaining costs for partially funded projects.

Streetscape improvements can improve multimodal functionality and pedestrian friendliness. Projects include South Elm-Eugene Street from JJ Drive to Vandalia Road, which is fully designed. Other streetscapes include Summit Avenue from Murrow to Sullivan, which has significant support from the Aycock neighborhood, and the High Point Road/West Lee Street corridor. Fischer noted that the funding for this segment would likely not complete a full-blown streetscape project there. Church Street in the Cultural District is a partially funded streetscape and would move forward with design.

Maintenance needs include \$8 million for resurfacing, bridge repairs, and sidewalk repairs.

Two greenways are fully funded, the Red Oak Greenway and Riddick's Creek Greenway. Two additional greenways, the Battleground Rail-Trail Phase II and the Downtown Greenway, have significant partial funding, and a number of others have funding for design only.

6. Transportation Project Updates

Tyler Meyer advised that the US 220 widening project was on track with right-of-way acquisition scheduled to begin in October. Craig McKinney noted that there had been delays in final development.

Meyer advised that the MPO and NCDOT had negotiated funding for an environmental document for widening of US 70 in eastern Guilford County. The study has not yet commenced, but the state recently determined to begin it using a consultant designer.

7. MPO Strategic Topics

Tyler Meyer advised that the meeting schedule for the rest of the year is Tuesday, September 23 in the 4th Floor Conference Room, which may be moved to a larger room; Thursday, October 23 in the Plaza

Level Conference Room; and Wednesday, December 3 in the Blue Room. Meyer noted that at least the September and October meetings would be needed, as well as, possibly, the December meeting.

Other Items

1. NCDOT Update – None.

2. TCC Member Reports

Adam Fischer noted that NCDOT is administering the signal system replacement project, which is getting underway but will not be under construction until 2009. Fiber-optic cables will be laid throughout the project. It will be the most modern traffic signal system in the state.

3. Wrap-Up

The TCC was adjourned at 12:40 p.m.