



GREENSBORO URBAN AREA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

TECHNICAL COORDINATING COMMITTEE

August 24, 2005

11:00 a.m. Greensboro, NC

Blue Room (County Commissioners' Briefing Room)

Old Guilford County Courthouse

ATTENDANCE

| | | | |
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| Jim Westmoreland | GDOT / MPO | David Wasserman | TPB |
| Tyler Meyer | GDOT / MPO | Mike Cowan | NCDOT Div. 7 |
| Jeff Sovich | GDOT / MPO | Wayne C. Davis | NCDOT-Triad Unit |
| Craig McKinney | GDOT / MPO | Pam Hawley | NCDOT – Public Transportation Division |
| Peggy Holland | GDOT / MPO | Hanna Cockburn | PTRPO / PTCOG |
| Chris Spencer | GDOT / MPO | Les Eger | Guilford County Planning |
| Adam Fischer | GDOT / MPO | Mark E. Kirstner | Guilford County Community & Economic Development |

Jim Westmoreland called the meeting to order at 11:07 a.m.

Action Items

1. Approve Minutes of July 27, 2005

Mark Kirstner moved for approval of the minutes as presented. Hanna Cockburn seconded the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the July 27, 2005 meeting as presented.

2. Amend 04-10 MTIP

Jeff Sovich advised that the proposed MTIP amendment modifies PART's project TD-4723A, Intermodal Transportation Facility, by shifting the project from fiscal year 2005 to fiscal year 2006, in order to coordinate with the FTA's Grant approval process schedule. This project covers the environmental work, land appraisal and acquisition, and facility design. The requested action is to recommend that the TAC approve the amendment as presented.

Mark Kirstner moved to recommend that the TAC approve this amendment as presented. Adam Fischer seconded the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to recommend that the TAC approve the amendment as presented.

3. Proposed Thoroughfare Plan Amendment

Tyler Meyer advised that the proposed Thoroughfare Plan amendment would re-align the proposed corridor of the US 158 Bypass around the Town of Stokesdale. The existing corridor for this bypass is infeasible due to several environmental constraints. In early 2004, the Town requested that the MPO or the NCDOT conduct a study to determine a more suitable alignment for the proposed bypass. NCDOT has arranged to conduct an Environmental Assessment for the bypass project. Because the Environmental Assessment process could take three to five years to complete, the Thoroughfare Plan amendment was developed as an interim step, providing the Town with corridor it could protect through development regulation. The proposed alignment, which is intended to avoid the constraints impacting the existing bypass alignment, was developed by MPO staff with input from Guilford County planning staff. Several public meetings were held regarding the proposed amendment, and numerous public comments were received, predominantly in opposition to the re-aligned bypass corridor. The core concern of Stokesdale residents and officials is that a final alignment needs to be selected and preserved. The requested action is to recommend that the TAC not approve this amendment at this time due to a range of factors including public concerns over specific impacts, town officials' response to the proposal, and the Environmental Assessment, which is currently under way. NCDOT will determine the actual new alignment through Environmental Assessment.

Les Eger moved to recommend that the TAC not approve the proposed Thoroughfare Plan amendment. Mike Cowan second the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to recommend that the TAC not approve the proposed Thoroughfare Plan amendment.

4. Conformity Determination Report for 06-12 MTIP/Final MTIP

Jeff Sovich advised that in June, the TAC adopted the 2006 - 2012 MTIP, contingent upon approval of the Conformity Determination Report. A public comment period on the conformity report was held from June 22 through July 24. No comments were received. Following the public comment period, the conformity report was reviewed and approved by the federal agencies. The requested action is to approve the final Conformity Determination Report as presented. Following MPO approval, the Conformity Determination Report and the 06-12 MTIP will be submitted for approval by the North Carolina Board of Transportation.

Tyler Meyer moved to recommend that the TAC approve the final Conformity Determination Report as presented. Mark Kirstner seconded the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to recommend that the TAC approve the final Conformity Determination Report as presented.

Business / Potential Action Items

1. 07-13 MTIP Development Process

Tyler Meyer advised that the development of the 07-13 MTIP proceeds, even as the final approval on the 06-12 MTIP is pending. MPO staff have worked with the TCC to develop a draft priority needs list as well as an assessment of upcoming planning study needs. Staff will revised these items based on discussion during today's MPO meetings and present the final documents for approval and submittal to

NCDOT in September. The priority needs list has been prepared in recognition of the state's current fiscal situation and limited ability to fund new projects. As usual, the foremost priority is to maintain the funding and schedules of projects as programmed in the 06-12 MTIP. Priority roadway projects include the US 70 / US 29 section of the eastern urban loop, the Horse Pen Creek Road widening from New Garden Road to Battleground Avenue, the widening of US 70 from Mount Hope Church Road into Alamance County, the Norwalk Street Extension Phase II, the US-29 at Eckerson Road Interchange Reconstruction and Widening, the Pegg Road to Thatcher Road Connector, the Summit Avenue widening from Brightwood Road to Eckerson Road, the Cone Boulevard Extension and Interchange, and the Fleming Road to Lewiston Road Connector and Interchange. The bicycle and pedestrian priorities consist of Phase II of the Battleground Rail Trail, which is contingent on the rail line abandonment by Norfolk Southern. Regional study needs include funding for the environmental documents for the first tier of the Airport Area Transportation Study recommendations. The upcoming planning study needs document summarizes additional priorities.

2. NCDOT Strategic Highway Corridors Initiative

David Wasserman advised that the Strategic Highway Corridors Initiative defines a series of four types of highways: Thoroughfares, Boulevards, Expressways, and Freeways. These categories provide for a more consistent application of cross-sections throughout the statewide network. This consistency enhances mobility, connectivity, economic prosperity, and environmental stewardship. Mobility is the ability to move unimpeded, safely, and efficiently using a reliable transportation system, but doesn't necessarily correlate with traffic volumes. Connectivity includes the ability to travel to desired destinations or activity centers. Economic prosperity is the ability to move people and goods efficiently making for a more competitive business climate, while providing a good quality of life for those employed. Environmental stewardship involves striving to preserve and enhance our natural and cultural resources by maximizing the use of the existing transportation infrastructure with the support of compatible land uses. The goals of the Strategic Highway Corridors Initiative include: creating a network of high-speed, safe, and reliable highways, developing an up front vision for each corridor, and affecting long-term decision making on funding, project planning and design, driveway permits and traffic signals, and local land use. The transportation benefits of the Strategic Highway Corridor Initiative include: a safer and more reliable transportation system, higher capacity, and more efficient movement of vehicles, with access management as the driving tool to help achieve these goals. Activity centers include MPOs, cities with at least 20,000 people, major military bases, airports, the University of North Carolina system, major tourist destinations, and trauma centers. Current Strategic Highway Corridor Initiative projects need to be reviewed in the final 06-12 TIP including: interchange configurations, control of access, medians / crossover movement, traffic signals, and driveways.

3. Airport Area Planning Update

Tyler Meyer advised that PART has recently been working on the "Heart of the Triad" concept in association with the planning directors of the major jurisdictions and will be conducting a study starting in September that will examine the development potential in the area, develop a land use plan, and recommend adjustments to the Greensboro, High Point, and Winston-Salem-Forsyth transportation plans accordingly. As an interim step, the Greensboro MPO recently conducted an evaluation of the proposal by the High Point MPO to amend the thoroughfare plans by adding a west side thoroughfare that would connect to I-40 and the I-73 / I-74 Connector. The High Point MPO has had a long-standing project to create a west side thoroughfare from I-85 to Main Street. An environmental study of that concept was begun, but was subsequently put on hold. The idea was later modified to connect with US 311 and further north, instead of Main Street. MPO staff evaluated High Point's plan to construct the proposed

west side thoroughfare as a freeway. Three different scenarios were analyzed. The first scenario included the West Side Thoroughfare as well as all of the proposed airport area thoroughfares. In this scenario, most of the traffic continued to travel north of I-40, since it is a more direct route. The second scenario involved dropping off the I-40 / Business 40 Connector. Scenario 2 resulted in more traffic shifting to the West Side Thoroughfare. The third scenario included a modified version of the West Side Thoroughfare that ended at I-40 to tie into the I-40 / Business 40 Connector. The Town of Kernersville originated this concept, which has been proven feasible, and the most cost effective of the three scenarios. No thoroughfare plan amendments are required at this time. The High Point and Winston-Salem-Forsyth MPOs may need to make some minor adjustments to their Thoroughfare Plans in the next few months to include this concept. MPO staff will continue to coordinate with the High Point and Winston-Salem-Forsyth MPOs, and with PART on transportation planning issues for this area, and will bring forward additional information at future meetings.

4. Signal System Replacement – Revised CMAQ Application

Jeff Sovich advised that the initial cost estimate of \$15.4 million for the Greensboro Signal System Replacement Project has been increased to a \$23.8 million. The cost increase is due to the fact that when the initial study was conducted, it was not known that the communications media would need to be replaced. The existing copper communication lines will be replaced by fibre optic cables to allow more flexibility and reliability. Previously, \$8.8 million in CMAQ funds was allocated to this project. With the recent approval of SAFETEA-LU, \$10 million has been earmarked for the project, which will be accompanied by a \$2.5 million local match. The \$21.3 million from these sources leaves a \$2.5 million gap between the available funding and the total project cost. MPO staff are working to identify options to close this gap. There will be more details pertaining to this item at the next meeting. Design of the project will begin in early 2006. Construction will take approximately 2 to 3 years due to the abundance of cable to be replaced. The fiber optic cable will greatly enhance the technology capabilities of the transit, Wi-Fi system, and video telecommunications.

5. MPO Strategic Reports

Tyler Meyer advised that MPO staff continue to investigate issues related to the area's PM2.5 non-attainment designation and will provide further information in the next few months.

Other Items

1. TCC Member Report

None.

3. Wrap-Up

The next TCC meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, September 28th at 11:00 am. The TCC adjourned at 12:34 pm.