



GREENSBORO URBAN AREA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

TECHNICAL COORDINATING COMMITTEE

December 16, 2004

11:00 a.m. Greensboro, NC

4th Floor Conference Room (Room 401)

Old Guilford County Courthouse

ATTENDANCE

Jim Westmoreland	TCC Chair/GDOT	Kimberly Hinton	NCDOT, TPB
Tyler Meyer	GDOT/MPO	Frank Wyatt	Greensboro Engineering & Inspections
Jeff Sovich	GDOT/MPO	Amy Dominello	Greensboro <i>News & Record</i>
Peggy Holland	GDOT/MPO	Mike Cowan	NCDOT, Division 7
Craig McKinney	GDOT/MPO	Heidi Galanti	Greensboro Planning Department
Adam Fischer	GDOT	Hanna Cockburn	PTCOG/PTRPO
Libby James	GTA	Alpesh Patel	NCDOT, TPB

Jim Westmoreland called the meeting to order at 11:05 a.m.

Action Items

1. Approve Minutes of October 27, 2004

Tyler Meyer moved for approval of the minutes. Libby James seconded the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the minutes as prepared.

2. Recognition of Outgoing County TAC Members

Jim Westmoreland recognized and honored Mary Rakestraw and Bob Landreth for their years of distinguished service and leadership as members of the Transportation Advisory Committee. Both are stepping down from the Board of County Commissioners and their positions on the TAC, following the November election.

3. GTA and PART Transit 04-10 MTIP Amendment

Jeff Sovich advised that this amendment proposes to add two new projects to the transit program, specifically TA-4735 for construction of a Park and Ride Lot Facility for PART. This project involves a transfer of CMAQ funds to FTA and has a total cost of \$3,512,500. PART will be constructing approximately 20 Park and Ride lots with this project. It will be especially important to begin construction of these lots as soon as possible because they are included in part of the Triad's Early Action Compact strategies. The second project is TA-4825 which programs the purchase of 6 expansion buses for GTA and involves a transfer of STP-DA funds to FTA. The total cost of the second project is \$1,710,000. Both projects have federal, state, and local shares of 80%, 10% and 10%, respectively. The requested action is to recommend that the TAC adopt the proposed amendment.

Tyler Meyer moved to recommend that the TAC approve the amendment as presented. Hanna Cockburn seconded the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to recommend that the TAC approve the amendment as presented.

4. MPO Designee and Alternates for the Merger 01 Process

Tyler Meyer advised that the Merger 01 process combines the federal regulatory process for developing transportation projects with the federal environmental permit process. The Merger 01 process was developed by NCDOT in cooperation with NCDENR and FHWA. This process requires the MPO to designate an individual with authority to act in the MPO's behalf at concurrence meetings. The primary designee is Planning Division Manager, Tyler Meyer. The alternates will be Transportation Systems Planner, Craig McKinney and Transportation Planning Engineer, Lydia McIntyre, a recent addition to MPO staff, who begins work in January. The proposed resolution names only the staff positions, not the names of the individuals who currently hold those positions. This arrangement will avoid the need for future amendments to accommodate changes in staff. The requested action is to recommend that the TAC adopt the Merger 01 Process designations as proposed.

Kimberly Hinton moved to recommend that the TAC approve the resolution as presented. Adam Fischer seconded the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to recommend that the TAC approve the resolution as presented.

5. Amend Adjusted Urbanized Area Boundary

Jeff Sovich advised that the Adjusted Urbanized Area Boundary defines threshold between urban and rural areas for planning and information gathering purposes. This boundary is also significant for travel demand modeling, air quality conformity analysis, federal transportation funding, and other minor roles within the transportation planning process. The Adjusted UZA is intended to establish a consistent delineation of the urban and rural portions of the MPO's planning area in order to maintain uniformity in the transition from urban to rural federal functional classification. However, MPO staff recently determined that several roadways enter and exit the Adjusted Urbanized Area Boundary multiple times. In the federal functional classification system, urban and rural roads draw federal aid funds from different sources. Accordingly, staff have developed a proposal to amend the Adjusted UZA Boundary, to compensate for the identified deficiencies. The requested action is to recommend that the TAC adopt the amended Adjusted Urbanized Area Boundary as proposed.

Tyler Meyer moved to recommend that the TAC approve the amendment as presented. Hanna Cockburn seconded the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to recommend that the TAC approve the amendment as presented.

6. Approve Updated Federal Functional Classification

Tyler Meyer advised that the Federal Functional Classification defines the Federal-Aid Highway System. Since Census 2000 significantly altered the boundary of the Greensboro Urbanized Area, it has been necessary to update the federal functional classifications for roadways within the Metropolitan Area. The Federal Functional Classification system designates the categories of federal aid funding for which roads may be eligible. Roads designated as local streets serve to provide limited mobility, but high levels of access to and from residential and other low-traffic areas. Local streets are not eligible for federal funding. Collector streets generally provide a balance between mobility and access, while arterial streets provide a high degree of mobility with limited access. Collector streets and above may be eligible for funding from federal sources. As mentioned during the previous agenda item, there is also a distinction between federal funding sources applicable to urban and rural facilities.

MPO staff have reviewed the previous functional classifications for the area, examined how these facilities actually function, and have developed recommended amendments to the classifications. MPO staff have thoroughly reviewed the proposed changes with the NCDOT Transportation Planning Branch, and will continue to coordinate with TPB as the classifications are finalized, particularly with regard to a few changes that have not yet been resolved. Formal enactment of the proposed changes will be subject to approval by NCDOT, under the review of FHWA. The requested action is to approve the recommended updates to the Federal Functional Classifications, although no formal action by the TCC is needed. The TCC recommended that the TAC approve the updated Federal Functional Classifications as presented.

7. Endorse NCAMPO Recommended PL Fund Distribution Formula

Tyler Meyer advised that over the past year, the members of the North Carolina Association of MPOs have been developing a recommendation to amend the formula for distributing federal-aid planning funds among the state's 17 MPOs. The NCDOT Transportation Planning Branch requested NCAMPO to prepare a recommendation for revising the current PL Fund distribution formula, which was established in the 1970s. North Carolina's allocation of PL funds is based on the total urbanized area population. Under the current formula, half of the allocation is distributed among the MPOs in 17 equal shares, while the other half is distributed proportionally, based on each MPO's urbanized area population. The result is that the formula provides relatively less money for the larger MPOs and more for the smaller MPOs.

Under the proposed new formula, each MPO would receive an equal share of \$130,000, with the remainder of the state's PL fund allocation to be distributed proportionally, based on each MPO's urbanized area population. In addition, NCAMPO recommends that NCDOT supplement the PL fund allocations for those MPOs that would receive less money under the new formula, until future increases in the state's PL funds allocation makes such supplemental funds no longer necessary. The recommendation also ensures that MPOs deciding to consolidate will not experience any reduction in the total amount of PL funds they would have been eligible to receive separately. The NCAMPO recommendation is the result of a 14 month development process that was initially divisive but which in the end achieved a broad consensus among the MPOs.

This item is presented as an opportunity for the MPO to review and endorse NCAMPO's recommendation, in order to help persuade NCDOT to accept the recommendation. The TCC recommended that the TAC endorse the NCAMPO Recommended PL Fund Distribution Formula as presented.

Business / Potential Action Items

1. 2005 MPO Meeting Schedule

Jeff Sovich advised that the proposed 2005 MPO meeting schedule retains the same meeting times and the same standard meeting date, which is the fourth Wednesday of each month. It was noted that the Triad Transportation Forum is scheduled for March 23rd, which is the fourth Wednesday. Accordingly, the proposed March meeting date was changed to the 16th, which would be the third Wednesday of the month. The TCC approved the proposed 2005 MPO Meeting Schedule, with the amended March date.

2. Triennial Certification Review

Jeff Sovich advised that the 2000 Census determined that the population of the Greensboro Urbanized Area exceeds 200,000. As a result, the Greensboro MPO has been designated as a Transportation Management Area. Among the additional requirements that accompany TMA designation is an on-site review of the MPO's plans, programs, and services, conducted by FHWA and FTA personnel every 3 years. The triennial review includes a public hearing, at which residents may comment on the MPO's performance in meeting the area's transportation planning needs. The Greensboro MPO's review is scheduled to be held on January 11th and 12th, with the public hearing scheduled for the evening of the 11th, at the Depot.

3. Draft 06-12 Transportation Improvement Program Update

Tyler Meyer advised that the process for developing the Transportation Improvement Program is different this year than it has been in the past. The 2006 to 2012 TIP development process has been somewhat delayed, largely by the fact that the re-authorization of the federal surface transportation legislation has not been completed. The delay in re-authorization has created a lot of uncertainty about the levels of federal revenue streams. More information will be provided in January and February as events in the Congress unfold. Hopefully, we will be able to approve a draft TIP with reasonable certainty and begin the air quality analysis that is required prior to final TIP adoption if warranted by significant project changes, which typically occurs around June.

4. NCDOT Statewide Transportation Plan

Alpesh Patel advised that the recently adopted Statewide Transportation Plan is a long-range state transportation blueprint for North Carolina. It will provide guidance and strategic direction for this department 20-25 years into the future. The federal government mandates that all state DOTs undertake a comprehensive planning process. NCDOT's planning process, which began in 2000, took four years to complete. The includes a 25-year inventory of multi-modal infrastructure needs for the state, as well as a forecast of available revenues for the same time period. Taken together, these two assessments enable the state to maximize the investment of available resources, and underscore the need for investment flexibility.

Excluding local needs, the plan identified over \$84 billion in statewide transportation infrastructure needs for the future. However, the plan identifies only \$55 billion in revenue. Consequently, the plan anticipates a shortfall of about \$1 billion per year over the next 25 years. The \$84 billion in needs, includes almost \$67 billion for highways and bridges, over \$10 billion for public transportation, \$4 billion for passenger and freight rail, \$1 billion for ferries, \$1 billion for ITS, and \$300 million for bicycle and pedestrian improvements. As a result of the \$32 billion shortfall, the plan establishes a new direction for the state's future transportation investments. While recognizing that only two thirds of all projected needs can be met, the goals of this plan underscore the importance of safety in all investments, creates a focus on preserving and/or upgrading the existing transportation system, target investment in statewide mobility, and extend the intent and emphases of the NC Moving Ahead! program.

Active efforts at implementation of the plan will be crucial to its success. Two Implementation Leadership Teams will be established to oversee the implementation process. Key implementation tasks include: pursuing greater flexibility in transportation funding, improving the project selection process, monitoring and reporting implementation progress, establishing revision cycles, and implementing the strategic highway corridors concept. The plan will be updated every 4 years, to ensure that it remains current and accurate. Discussion focused on the need for MPO and local official involvement in plan implementation. Staff was directed to prepare correspondence to NCDOT noting these concerns. Alpesh Patel suggested that similar NCAMPO action would be appropriate. The discussion also addressed the plan assumptions for the future needs analysis. One point of note was that the bicycle and pedestrian needs figure is intended as the amount that NCDOT feels is needed to support the projects and activities of the NCDOT Bicycle and Pedestrian Division, and does not represent an assessment of the level of need statewide, which in actuality far exceeds the \$300 million figure noted above.

5. MPO Strategic Reports

Tyler Meyer advised that the staff is preparing to begin a comprehensive bicycle and pedestrian plan for the MPO area, as recommended by the LRTP. Staff will provide additional information in future meetings.

NCDOT is still conducting environmental review of the High Point Road widening and relocation project based on comments received during the public hearing. The review should be completed and approved around spring of 2005. Construction of the section of this project in the vicinity of Hilltop Road is expected to be delayed until 2008.

The US 421 interchanges project is still waiting on the environmental document to clear the internal review at NCDOT so the public officials meeting can be held. Due to a backlog of reviews, it is uncertain how soon this review is expected to be completed.

Other Items

1. TCC Member Report

Mike Cowan reported that construction of the Urban Loop from I-85 to I-40 will involve installation of some very large girders at the I-85 interchange. This procedure will necessitate either completely closing the Loop for approximately 10 days to complete the work as quickly as possible, or closing several lanes of the Loop while the work is completed, which would take considerably longer and result in more inconvenience to the traveling public. NCDOT prefers to completely close the loop during construction, and TCC concurred following a brief discussion. Advance notice will be posted shortly

after the start of 2005. NCDOT is also currently working on additional lighting and improvements to the wayfinding signage for the Southern Urban Loop.

The TCC adjourned at 12:38 p.m.