



GREENSBORO URBAN AREA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

TECHNICAL COORDINATING COMMITTEE

February 22, 2006

11:00 a.m. Greensboro, NC

Fourth Floor Conference Room

(Room 401)

Old Guilford County Courthouse

ATTENDANCE

Jim Westmoreland	GDOT / MPO	Greg Niles	Guilford County Planning & Dev.
Tyler Meyer	GDOT / MPO	Mark Kirstner	Guilford County Planning & Dev.
Jeff Sovich	GDOT / MPO	Bill Bruce	Guilford County Planning & Dev.
Lydia McIntyre	GDOT / MPO	Brian Thomas	NCDOT Regional Traffic Office
Heidi Galanti	Greensboro Planning	Wayne C. Davis	NCDOT Transportation Planning Branch
Bruce Adams	GTA	Bill Marley	FHWA
Hanna Cockburn	PTCOG / PTRPO		

Jim Westmoreland called the meeting to order at 11:06 a.m.

Action Items

1. Approve Minutes of January 25, 2006

Tyler Meyer moved for approval of the minutes as presented. Heidi Galanti seconded the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the January 25, 2006 meeting as presented.

2. Amend 06-12 MTIP

Jeff Sovich advised that the amendment as presented has been substantially modified from what was distributed prior to the meeting. Originally, the amendment affected only GTA's projects for purchase of replacement small buses, delaying each project by one fiscal year. Instead, the amendment as presented includes increased project costs to reflect increases in the unit prices of the vehicles. In addition, project TA-4915 is modified from eight to ten replacement small buses. Project TA-4769, which calls for thirteen replacement small buses, is delayed from FY '11 to FY '13. Project TG-4757A

is a routine capital project in which the project description is being changed to replace a spare parts item with a vehicle lift. The project descriptions for TA-4936, TA-XXX1, and TA-XXX2 being changed to show expansion buses rather than replacement buses. These are the three federal earmark projects that were previously listed as replacement buses; however, GTA has recently received authorization to use the federal earmark funds to purchase expansion vehicles instead. The funding status for these projects is changed from unfunded to funded. Project TA-XXX4 is a completely new unfunded project to purchase nine expansion small buses for paratransit use in FY '06.

An additional component of this amendment is the incorporation of the entire statewide element of the state transportation improvement program into the local MTIP. The NCDOT Transportation Planning Branch has requested that each MPO include the entire statewide component in their local TIP to make sure that those statewide projects can continue to move forward without requiring subsequent action by the MPOs. The requested action is to recommend that the TAC approve the amendment as presented.

Tyler Meyer advised that adjustments are being made to out-year GTA projects for longer range planning informational purposes. The change from replacement buses to expansion buses is showing up as unfunded, however, there is a federal commitment in the form of an earmark, but the formal agreement to NCDOT has not yet been completed. The statewide element includes a project replacement of the bicycle route signage and bicycle route map, which ties in with the BiPed Plan and will be moving forward in the upcoming months.

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

3. Annual MPO Self-Certification

Jeff Sovich advised that as a prerequisite for adopting the UPWP every year, the MPO is required to certify that it complies with all of the applicable federal regulations. This includes both the MPO planning regulations at the federal level as well as various environmental and civil rights legislation. Essentially, this certification is a formality and a required step in the UPWP approval process. Self-certification is not related to the tri-ennial joint certification review that is conducted by the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration. The requested action is to recommend that the TAC approve the self-certification resolution as presented.

Tyler Meyer moved to recommend that the TAC approve the self-certification resolution as presented. Greg Niles seconded the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to recommend that the TAC approve the self-certification resolution as presented.

4. Adopt FY '06-'07 Unified Planning Work Program

Tyler Meyer advised that the UPWP is essentially an accounting document that is adopted each year and it provides for the receipt and expenditure of federal grant funds for transportation planning, including funds used on planning projects conducted by MPO staff, by GTA for transit planning purposes, and by the NCDOT Transportation Planning Branch. All three of these funding obligations are accounted for in this document. The document describes the types of routine work that will be accomplished in the next year, including the breakdown of the expected allocation of resources over the various types of work. It also provides for some of the larger-scale planning efforts, such as various feasibility studies and the

development of the bicycle and pedestrian plan. The recommended action is to recommend that the TAC adopt the FY 06-07 Unified Planning Work Program as presented and forward it to the NCDOT, the Federal Highway Administration, and the Federal Transit Administration for review and approval.

Hanna Cockburn moved to recommend that the TAC approve the FY 06-07 Unified Planning Work Program as presented. Wayne Davis seconded the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to recommend that the TAC approve the UPWP as presented.

5. NCDOT Safe Routes to School Coordinator Designation

Tyler Meyer advised that the SAFETEA-LU transportation legislation established a new program and associated funding that identifies ways for the state, along with local cooperation, to improve safety of walking and bicycling routes to area schools. The program provides funding for physical improvements, as well as for marketing and promotional tools. The Safe Routes to School Program provides \$612 million nationally over the next five years. Each state DOT is required to appoint a coordinator in order draw down funding through the program. Last week NCDOT appointed Assistant Secretary Terry Canales as North Carolina's SR2S Coordinator.

MPO staff will handle communication of the MPO's support to Ms. Canales in her new role as SR2S Coordinator.

Business / Potential Action Items

1. Review of Metropolitan Planning Regulations in SAFETEA-LU

Bill Marley gave a brief overview of some of the key changes to SAFETEA-LU. In regards to transportation planning, Section 6001 builds upon the advances of ISTEA and TEA-21. SAFETEA-LU moves forward with some relatively minor modifications in regards to transportation planning. Most of the provisions became effective immediately upon passage of the law, although some rule-making remains to be completed implementation of most of the provisions, which is anticipated by August, 2006. Under ISTEA, there were a total of fifteen planning factors that the MPOs had to consider in the development of long-range transportation plans. TEA-21 reduced this number to seven, while SAFETEA-LU adds an eighth by separating transportation safety and security. In regards to update cycles, everything in the metropolitan statewide transportation policy is cyclical, whether it is for one year or five years. However, the long range transportation plans in non-attainment and maintenance area will now have a four year update cycle. Non-attainment and maintenance areas refer to the air quality of an area which is an umbrella under which everything operates. In regards to the transportation management areas of MPOs with a population over 200,000, the certification cycle has been increased from three years to four years. The STIP and the TIP have also been increased to four year cycles. Any plans and programs adopted after July 1, 2007 must meet the new SAFETEA-LU requirements. There is also an annual listing of obligated projects that is a new requirement.

In regards to transportation conformity, there is now a twelve month conformity-lapse grace period. There is also a change in the update frequency cycle to four years; conformity re-determination on existing transportation plans and TIPs is required within two years of certain actions on the SIP for air quality. The SIP is the overall state budget for pollutant emissions, used to determine whether an MPO is in attainment or non-attainment status. Options now exist to shorten the time horizon for conformity

demonstration. Transportation Control Measures (TCMs) can now be substituted without requiring a new conformity determination or SIP revision, and adoption of a substitute TCM rescinds the previous TCM.

New requirements make the public involvement process for various plans more open and proactive. In order to achieve this, meetings need to be held at accessible locations and scheduled at more convenient times. Visualization techniques should be used to describe plans where possible, and public information should be made available in electronic formats, such as via the internet. Transportation plans that involve federal participants are now required to be published or made readily available by the MPO for public review in an electronic format. The plan has to be approved by the MPO and submitted for information to the Governor. MPOs are now required to consult with State, Local, and Tribal agencies responsible for land use, economic development, air, freight, natural and environmental resources, and historic preservation in the development of long range transportation plans as well as potential environmental mitigation activities and potential areas where these activities can be carried out. Future implications of SAFETEA-LU include more critical congestion management processes, operations and maintenance strategies to protect the existing infrastructure, and asset management. Training for MPO staff throughout North Carolina is under development and will be ready this spring or early summer.

2. BiPed Plan Update

Tyler Meyer advised that the BiPed Plan project has been a multi-group effort trying to take a systematic look at the bicycle and pedestrian needs and opportunities. A draft plan is currently being developed and a second round of workshops is planned for the first week in April to present the recommendations and receive comments from members of the community. An analysis of existing road conditions, including pavement condition and road width, was performed in order to obtain a better understanding of the current bicycling level of service. These findings can be used to evaluate the effectiveness of potential improvements. A map of proposed bicycling recommendations, including potential improvements for on-street bicycling, is under development. Some improvements that could be made include re-striping roads in order to provide bicycle lanes, or adding paved shoulders. A new system of signed bike routes throughout the MPO area will also be developed. There is also a Greenways Master Plan component which involves extending the current and planned greenway system and improving its connectivity being led by the Parks and Recreation Department. There is also a pedestrian portion to this project which involves refining the City's sidewalks master plan and noting future sidewalk needs. There will be a series of Walkable Community Workshops held during the last week of March, in part as a segue to the BiPed Plan workshops. While the BiPed Plan workshops will be open to the general public, the Walkable Community workshops will be primarily invitational. The Walkable Community workshops will each involve a walking tour through an area of the community, followed by a discussion of the group's observations. More information on these workshops and the BiPed Plan process will be given at the next meeting. TCC member attendance at the workshops is encouraged.

3. MPO Strategic Reports

Lydia McIntyre advised that the PM 2.5 conformity determination has been approved and the April 5th deadline has been met. Guilford County continues to come in under the fifteen micrograms level, however the Catawba and Davidson County monitors still register above that threshold. Due to our designation as a group with these counties, these exceedances do affect us. However, it looks as though the Triad will come into attainment by 2009, if not sooner.

Tyler Meyer advised that MPO staff have been in discussion with the NCDOT Project Development Division and the City of Burlington about advancing the study for the widening of US 70. Further discussions will follow. While this project is not currently funded in the TIP, keeping the environmental study phase moving forward will be beneficial in advancing to the construction phase when funding becomes available.

Other Items

1. TCC Member Report

Greg Niles introduced Bill Bruce, who has recently been hired as a planner with Guilford County. He will be representing the planning department at TCC meetings often.

Next TCC meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 22 at 11:00 am. The TCC adjourned at 12:25 pm.