



TECHNICAL COORDINATING COMMITTEE
Minutes of March 25, 2009
11:00 a.m., Greensboro, NC
Plaza Level Conference Room
Melvin Municipal Office Building

ATTENDANCE

| | | | |
|----------------|----------------------------|----------------|------------------------|
| Tyler Meyer | <i>GDOT / TCC Chair</i> | George Linney | <i>GTA</i> |
| Lydia McIntyre | <i>GDOT / MPO</i> | Roger Bardsley | <i>Guilford County</i> |
| Peggy Holland | <i>GDOT / MPO</i> | Patrick Wilson | <i>NCDOT</i> |
| Craig McKinney | <i>GDOT / MPO</i> | Hanna Cockburn | <i>PTRPO/COG</i> |
| Kelly Larkins | <i>GDOT Planning</i> | Jesse Day | <i>PTCOG</i> |
| Mike Kirkman | <i>Greensboro Planning</i> | Scott Rhine | <i>PART</i> |
| | | Mark Kirstner | <i>PART</i> |
| | | Bill Bruce | <i>Guilford County</i> |

Tyler Meyer called the meeting to order at 11:01 a.m.

Action Items

1. Approve Minutes of January 28, 2009

Hanna Cockburn moved for approval of the minutes. Rodger Bardsley seconded the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the January 28, 2009 meeting.

2. Annual MPO Self-Certification

Tyler Meyer noted that this certification comes up every year and is a requirement in connection with the planning Work Program. Before the MPO passes the Work Program it will consider this Certification resolution. This is just a statement indicating that all the planning documents are up-to-date and all procedures required by federal legislation is being followed. As indicated in the handout, the MPO is doing all of those things. A resolution from the TAC will make this binding.

Hanna Cockburn moved for recommendation to the TAC, Bill Bruce seconded. Committee voted unanimously to approve the recommendation to the TAC.

3. Approve 2009-2010 Work Program

Meyer noted that the Work Program also comes up every year. It accounts for the anticipated usages of planning grants expected over the upcoming fiscal year. There are FHWA planning grants which are called "PL" funds and funds from FTA. These are transit planning funds which is also called "5303." GTA also chooses to apply some of its formula funding to preventive maintenance and capital expenses. Also, NCDOT

Planning for the transportation future

uses some statewide planning research funds and are accounted for in the planning work program. The PL funds and the SPR funds are from FHWA; while the 5303 and 5307 are from FTA.

One thing to point out about this year's funding levels is that 5303 amount is the amount from NCDOT given to the MPO. It came ahead of approval of an appropriations bill that came out recently. The cause for this is because originally there was no known number for estimated amount. Later on another amendment might be recommended in the future. The total amount will be between \$70,000 and \$80,000.

The planning funds do include the annual allocation the MPO gets as well as holdover funds from previous years. Among the work expected to be done this year is model development work and various feasibility studies, and similar work.

Bill Bruce inquired about what special studies are programmed for this year.

Meyer noted that the document talks about some specific studies and studies that might be needed throughout the year. This is helpful because issues come up that will need to be addressed.

There has been discussion about a freight regional study, but this might be done at only the regional level with MPO participation. This type of study was emphasized during the recent MPO certification proceeding conducted by the FHWA. It is possible that this will need a further amendment for accounting purposes later in the year.

Jesse Day asked how specific funding goes to work initiatives and noted the amount of work expected to be done by MPO staff.

Meyer noted that some of the funds go towards staff cost in terms of providing directly for the position. There are some cases that the staff match exceeds the local funds available. Noted table identifies task and expected costs.

Scott Rhine moved for recommendation to the TAC, Bill Bruce seconded. Committee voted unanimously to approve the recommendation to the TAC.

4. Approve National Highway System Change

Lydia McIntyre noted there were two functional class changes last year. This current one is a result of the realignment of Bryan Boulevard and the relocation of the entrance into the airport. This area is an inter-model connector which acts as the primary way to travel into the airport.

With any functionally classified roads, the designation comes with funding options for improvements.

Mike Kirkman asked if the old road would become local.

McIntyre acknowledged Bryan Boulevard would become an urban collector. This issue of re-designation may come back to the MPO due to continued construction in the area.

Peggy Holland asked if this designation would include the ramps due to how long they are and the fact that four are in that vicinity.

McIntyre noted that this only covered the entrance into the airport. But would check with to see if included in previous amendment for Bryan Boulevard.

Mike Kirkman moved for recommendation to the TAC, Hanna Cockburn seconded. Committee voted unanimously to approve the recommendation to the TAC.

5. Endorse Scenic Byway Designation

Hanna Cockburn noted that this proposed Scenic Byway designation was presented a year and a half ago to NCDOT. This pertains to a scenic byway that exists in Rockingham County and begins in Guilford County.

The scenic byway program is statewide and funded under federal funds coming to each state for scenic byways. There are around 50 of these in North Carolina which total around 1,800 miles. Several of these are already in this region.

Back in 2007 there was a study done to see if there were additional roads that could have the byway destination in the rural counties. The idea was this could provide tourism and dollars into the counties.

The criteria used for scenic byways are that they must be a public road, at least a mile in length, and no outdoor advertising. Another aspect in the designation proposal to NCDOT is telling a unique story ensuring and giving drivers a one-of-a-kind experience. In 2007, volunteers from each county identified candidate routes to submit to NCDOT. There were 17 routes all together that were reviewed and out of those only eight met the qualifications for NCDOT review.

In December of 2008, eight routes had been selected for further study for designation. The route discussed at this meeting is in Rockingham and Guilford counties and is tied to the Revolutionary and High Rock Road. In Rockingham County we are proposing three extensions because of the underlying theme of colonialism and how it ties to the Race to the Dan and the retreat of the Battle of Guilford Courthouse. It connects NC 150 and begins in Ossipee and includes interesting features such as the ford on the Haw River at High Rock and a nationally registered historic property. The route goes through actively farmed agricultural lands, passive rural lands, as well as some historic homes.

In the past several months the RPO has been seeking resolutions from local government members, chambers of commerce, and tourism authority boards. At this meeting the organization is seeking support for the Transportation Advisory Committee. Press releases have already been sent out to news outlets in the region along with maps and photographs. These will be submitted at the end of March to NCDOT and hopefully the consideration of the Board of Transportation. The final decision may take up to a year judging from past experiences.

One question that has been asked is if there are going to be changes to the road. Only signage directing drivers around the byway will be added. At the RPO when this is approved, there is a plan to create an interactive map resource that people can use to download maps and see a flyover of the route.

Mark Kirstner noted that PART will be publishing a regional transit map that will be a multi-model effort. This map will include the scenic byways in the region and possibly this new one in the future.

Roger Bardsley moved for recommendation to the TAC, Scott Rhine seconded. Committee voted unanimously to approve the recommendation to the TAC.

6. Modify 2009-2015 Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program - Stimulus Projects

Meyer noted there were several MTIP amendments.

CMAQ Fast Tracking

The first amendment is the GTA expanded evening service. The new service will expand the current seven routes into the full fourteen. At the January MPO meeting, an amendment was approved to allocate funding for the first 3 years of service using CMAQ funds for expansion of evening service.

Since this amendment NCDOT has made a call for projects to be 100% funding in 2009 or fast track. The 100% federal funding is allowed through a provision in federal law Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007. NCDOT has approved the GTA expanded evening service for 100% CMAQ funding in fiscal year 2009. The next step is approval from the TAC to amend the MTIP accordingly. Overall this will save GTA some money that they can use towards other things.

Bill Bruce asked if GTA was comfortable in keeping the expanded service beyond the time it would be using the funds.

Meyer noted that the service would be covered in the third year with operating funding support. The ideal plan would support this service on Sunday which remains a project GTA will seek future funding for.

Roger Bardsley moved for recommendation to the TAC, Jesse Day seconded. Committee voted unanimously to approve recommending the amendment to the TAC.

Stimulus Amendment

Meyer explained the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 also known as the stimulus package. A component of the act pertains to transportation. The main goals of the transportation infrastructure program are to stimulate the economy with a side goal of restore liquidity in transportation infrastructure investment. This will put money in the hands of agency that currently have project backlogs.

For this program the readiness of a project is an underlining requirement. The way the program is setup, half of the funding for highways needs to be used in 120 days, while half of the funding for transit needs to be used in 180 days. The projects must be authorized with these time frames. The money that came to North Carolina in the federal highway projects totaled a little over \$735,000,000. The way NCDOT is managing this is through breaking it up into two phases corresponding to the time frames mentioned previously. The first phase of the projects is being handled as NCDOT directive investments. This includes resurfacing and enhancements which will include bicycle and pedestrian projects. Under the second phase is funding directly allocated through the MPOs. The amount for the Greensboro area is \$7,400,000. There is also FTA funds that directly allocated to transit in which Greensboro will receive \$5,400,000.

Three potential TIP amendments and project request that have been made.

Phase I- NCDOT Projects

NCDOT area projects include the resurfacing of I-85 from Groomtown Road to US-29/ US-70 interchange with a total being a \$4,000,000 project. There is also project to resurface I-40 from Rock Creek Dairy Road to University Drive in Alamance County which will have a cost of \$10,000,000.

Tyler noted that the next projects are statewide but still needed to be included in the MTIP. The two projects that will fall under the statewide element include one for bicycle and pedestrian with a total of \$2,000,000. The element is for roadside environmental projects and tree plantings for \$5,500,000.

A trail project is being worked out in this area. This is part of the Bicentennial trail project phase four and five which is situated between Market Street and Ballinger Road. It was noted that Guilford County is currently ready to bid.

NCDOT identified a proposal to fund section 1-A of the Downtown Greenway along with some previous request that were made. However this project is not ready to go in the required timeframe. The request to NCDOT is to substitute the money for the Downtown Greenway could be used for the Bicentennial Greenway. Meyer also noted that this would almost finish the project. The NCDOT recommends acting on this now.

Bruce noted the right-of-way is already available.

Bardsley noted that depending on what funds get used towards the greenway it could allow of one part to become complete and stretch from Market Street to Summerfield. This would complete the Bicentennial greenway excluding a part on Burnt Poplar Road. Bardsley also noted that there are still some gaps in the way, but otherwise due to construction by High Point and Greensboro, the greenway will one day be fully connected.

Mark Kirstner asked if the \$600,000 funds the full construction of the project.

Bardsley acknowledged that it does and if they run short, there is a recreational trails grant for \$75,000 that can be used.

Meyer noted that this is a good project due it connecting two schools, a recreation center, natural areas, and contains some population densities.

Bardsley noted that the trail will go directly through the middle of Western Guilford high school.

Patrick Wilson asked who was responsible for letting the project.

Bardsley noted it was the county that would.

Jesse Day asked about how the Pedestrian and Bike projects would be spent.

Meyer noted that he is unsure about what would fall under that.

Phase II- FHWA Projects

Meyer noted that the next part is the FHWA Program Allocation. Projects that are recommended are phase two projects and funds for them could be authorized by October 1st. The first is a current bond project and would put a median and sidewalk down South Elm-Eugene Street between JJ Drive and Vandalia Road with a cost of \$2,300,000. The next project is widening portions of Lake Jeanette Road with intersection improvements and the installation of sidewalks. The estimated cost is \$600,000,000, but expect bids to come in lower. The final part is resurfacing of roads. Eligible facilities must be federally classified roads and total \$1,500,000. All of these will replace bond funds. The amendment would allocate \$1.6 million to Elm-Eugene, \$4.3 million to Lake Jeanette, and \$1.5 million to resurfacing. This can assist the city with its liquidity with freeing up bond funds for projects needing fund matching for fiscal year 2010 including STPDA matches.

Phase II-FTA Projects

The final one is related to the FTA Stimulus Program with \$5,400,000 available for the area. The current allocation for the money is towards the GTA Operations, Maintenance, and Administration facility. This has been identified as the top transit need. Completing this is critical to current and future operations with GTA. The conditions that the GTA is under now is increasing operating cost and limiting future expansion with their growing fleet. Meyer noted that under the current schedule that site preparations is should begin in July with building construction in September. The total cost is currently \$20,000,000 and this amendment would fully fund it. If the cost does not go up, there could be some residual STPDA funds that could be reallocated to other projects.

Additional Project Requests for Stimulus Funds

Meyer noted that there were further additional projects that need funding. This is for a new bus and PART park-and-ride lot in the Pleasant Garden area.

The town of Summerfield is requesting funding for the trailhead of the Lake Brandt greenway on US-220 and Strawberry Road. This project is being shared between Greensboro, the county, and the town of Summerfield together because it affects all three of them. This will go towards replacing the current parking lot at Strawberry Road due to the current one being unsafe. The total cost is estimated with the property acquisition is \$150,000. This project could be done in a short amount of time due to there already being a site plan. We would recommend to the TAC to consider this for further funding.

Mike Kirkman asked if there was already PART service down US-421.

Scott Rhine acknowledged that this new service would begin it. The new route would fall into the ten major corridors in the region. Other services coming to PART is eastbound and westbound on I-40 as well as one going in the direction of Burlington and Graham.

Holland asks if it was possible for PART to use existing park facilities.

Kirstner noted that there were several parking options. There is an undeveloped shopping center that could be a potential site.

Bruce asked how much space is needed for a lot.

Rhine noted that it can range anywhere from one to two acres. A two acre would allow 150 to 170 parking spaces. The looks for each lot is supposed to be similar so there is a distinction for the lots purpose. There are 13 in region set in rural areas to increase mobility options.

Rhine also noted that all the funding for PART is through either earmarks or CMAQ funding. The organization never receives an annual proportion of the funds. If there are any capital projects that need funding, PART has to ask around and seek that funding since it is not a formal recipient.

Meyer noted that there could be additional federal funding available that could go to PART. The recommendation is to provide the TAC at the next meeting for more funding resource information for future PART projects.

Rhine noted that organizations across the country that are buying buses are doing so and that puts everyone in competition for the same resources.

Jesse Day moved for recommendation to the TAC, George Linney seconded. Committee voted unanimously to approve recommending the amendment to the TAC.

Business / Potential Action Items

1. USDOT Certification Review Update

Meyer noted that the MPO had its USDOT certification process recently. It is on a four year cycle and FHWA and FTA staff meets with the MPO staff over two days. The review is to find out what the MPO does and how it does it. This took place on the 16th and 17th of March. On the night of the 16th there was a public meeting in the city council chambers with around 15 citizens attending. The findings from the review will result in a report and the MPO was issued no corrective action. Thanked Craig McKinney for pulling information together for the Review.

2. Transportation Project Updates

Craig McKinney reported on R-2577 where the study area covered more than half of Stokesdale. NCDOT had a merger meeting for the project in February.

The result of meeting was the permitting agency agreed to three corridors; the northern, the middle, the southern, and two crossovers with the middle and southern corridor. NCDOT has suspended the study due to economic conditions at this time. There is also no funding to keep the study going.

The second item is the Naco Road extension. Information gathered during a North Carolina Rail Road Forum included the news that over \$2,000,000 for the environmental impact study has been received for the extension and nearby interchanges. These are items that came out of the Eastern Guilford Track Separation study in 2004. There are two grade separations. One is at Franklin Boulevard and the other at the Naco Road extension before it reaches US-70. This is a project that will be completed and then put aside until funding is available.

Bardsley noted that the bypass around Stokesdale was proposed around 1985. The problem is that there has been no resolution about where it should be and the current plans make it worse with the study looking at three corridors instead of one. The question was raised about how much money it would take to get this project into the functional design stage to make whatever is chosen protected corridor.

McKinney noted that this topic was not discussed during the meeting. Noted that the corridors do reduce the study area impacts. Meyer noted unfortunate result of economic situation.

3. MPO Strategic Topics

Tyler noted that the next meeting is April 21st.

McIntyre gave update on new 8-hr standard. The old standard is .08 while the new one is .075. The Division of Air Quality reported to the Triad about its findings that were being sent to the EPA. These findings indicated that Guilford County should be designated as non-attainment. The EPA will give a response on December 12th. The current reading for Guilford County is .082 which was included in the report by DAQ and made up the second highest reading in the state. The area is on track for PM 2.5 maintenance. The area will need to conform to the new 8-hour standard. The MPO will no longer be required show conformity for 1-hour after April 2009.

Other Items

1. NCDOT Update

Peggy Holland asked Pat Wilson from NCDOT about the sidewalks Wiley Davis Road, Vandalia, and Bridford Parkway which the Greensboro DOT thought should have already gone to construction.

Pat noted that the landscape projects are near completion on the urban loop. He also noted that the contract for replacing the signs on the loop has been let. It will be starting in the next few weeks.

2. TCC Member Reports

Kirstner noted the 3rd Triad Commute Challenge has started. It is a three month event.

Mike Kirkman noted that the discussion about High Point Road and Lee Street changes has started. There is a push to include land-use with transportation in this corridor.

George Linney noted that GTA is getting ready for its new service enhancements starting in July. There is also increase in fare from \$1.20 to \$1.30 that was previously approved. Informational meetings are starting at The Depot on proposed service changes.

Meyer noted MPO will be doing a call for JARC and New Freedom Projects in April.

3. Wrap-Up

Meyer adjourns meeting at 12:24pm.