



TECHNICAL COORDINATING COMMITTEE
Minutes of April 25, 2007
11:00 a.m., Greensboro, NC
Blue Room
(County Commissioner's Briefing Room)
Old Guilford County Courthouse

ATTENDANCE

Tyler Meyer	<i>GDOT / MPO</i>	Heidi Galanti	<i>Greensboro Planning</i>
Peter Ohlms	<i>GDOT / MPO</i>	Donald Arant	<i>Greensboro Engineering</i>
Lydia McIntyre	<i>GDOT / MPO</i>	Bill Bruce	<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</i>
Adam Fischer	<i>GDOT Engineering</i>	John Hunsinger	<i>NCDOT</i>
Hanna Cockburn	<i>PTCOG</i>	Brian Thomas	<i>NCDOT</i>

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

Action Items

1. Approve Minutes of March 28, 2007

Roger Bardsley moved for approval of the minutes. Adam Fischer seconded the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the March 28, 2007 meeting.

2. Approve Conformity Determination

Lydia McIntyre presented a summary of the requirements for demonstrating conformity with air-quality regulations. Because the urban area is a maintenance area for ozone and a nonattainment area for PM 2.5, conformity analyses must be performed for Long-Range Transportation Plans and metropolitan transportation improvement programs. The MTIP conformity analysis was conducted on a regional level, and Winston-Salem and High Point already approved the Triad Conformity Determination Report. The conformity document confirms that the MTIP is a subset of the projects in the conforming LRTP.

Planning for the transportation future

McIntyre advised that the final conformity document would be posted on the MPO Web site and would include any public comments received in any of the region's MPOs. No comments were received in this area. The final document will also include public notice advertisements and proof that the ads were run in appropriate media.

Roger Bardsley moved for approval of the conformity determination. Hanna Cockburn seconded the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to recommend that the TAC certify conformity of the Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program for FY 2007-2013 with applicable air-quality regulations.

3. Approve 2007-2013 MTIP

Lydia McIntyre presented an overview of the Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program and the development and approval process. An initial public review draft in November 2006, a second in March 2007, and a public meeting on March 8 provided opportunities for public participation. Public comments received were incorporated into the final MTIP.

Major project changes include funding restoration to the Urban Loop from US 29 to US 70, which is scheduled for construction to start in 2011; resurfacing of I-40/I-85 from High Point to the I-85 bypass, which had its project limits extended, was accelerated with GARVEE bonds, and is scheduled for 2007; and the environmental document for US 70 between Greensboro and Burlington. Page 13 of the MTIP lists significant changes for highway and transit projects.

Regarding transit projects, many changes were made to GTA's projects, ensuring that key capital needs, preventive maintenance, and operational needs could be funded wherever possible. Projects shown on the unfunded needs list are key needs for which additional funding will be sought. Also, the announcement of federal appropriations for transit systems for FY 2007 caused changes to some transit projects and facilitated the addition of others. NCDOT has approved the State TIP already but will incorporate changes due to approved MTIPs by July 1.

Adam Fischer inquired about the status of the western Urban Loop from Bryan Boulevard to Lawndale Drive. McIntyre advised that it was not scheduled in the current TIP. Fischer stated that it was a critical link, and John Hunsinger advised that the section includes a long, very expensive bridge over a wetland. Hunsinger discussed possibilities for alleviating traffic in the area of this project. He noted that the funding of the Eastern Loop was a big win for the urban area.

Tyler Meyer, Craig McKinney, and Hunsinger discussed the status of the Western Loop project development process. The project has been redesigned multiple times due to increased development in the corridor. Neither right-of-way purchase nor construction are funded at this time. Meyer noted that when the design is completed, it will be critical to begin obtaining and protecting the right-of-way.

Heidi Galanti inquired when the section of the Urban Loop from I-85 to Bryan Boulevard would open. Hunsinger advised that November was the goal, but that delays were likely. Hunsinger described various challenges that had led to delays.

Meyer noted that the process of developing priority needs for the 2009-2015 MTIP would begin shortly, with completion of the priority development process during the summer.

Bill Bruce moved for approval of the MTIP. Heidi Galanti seconded the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to recommend that the TAC adopt the 2007-2013 Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program.

Business / Potential Action Items

I. State Bicycle Committee Update and Bike-to-Work Week

Hanna Cockburn advised that May is National Bike-to-Work Month, and National Bike-to-Work Week is May 14-18. The PedPower program of the Piedmont Triad Council of Governments has been working with area MPOs to recognize Bike-to-Work events. A resolution of support recognizing Bike-to-Work Month was included with the agenda items. Bike-to-Work events are intended to educate the community about the benefits of cycling in terms of health and air quality and to encourage people to try bicycling.

Cockburn also summarized the efforts of the North Carolina Bicycle Committee. Its seven members, including Cockburn, advise NCDOT on all matters related to bicycling in North Carolina, including safety programs, greenways, and on-road facilities. Recent committee initiatives include state bicycle and pedestrian grant programs, implementation of the Safe Routes to School program, and establishing a statewide education and awareness program around the Share-the-Road concept. Share-the-Road license plate sales raise funds for the education and safety campaigns. To date, \$20,000 has been allocated from this program and the Governor's Highway Safety Program to purchase bicycle helmets for children.

Tyler Meyer advised that Bicycling In Greensboro, Inc. was planning a community event to celebrate bicycle lanes on Florida Street. Cockburn advised that new partners would be involved in Bike-to-Work events this year, including the Heart and Stroke Health Partnership and the Triad Air Awareness group, which is offering a commute challenge that ties in with Bike-to-Work events. REI has expressed interest in hosting events at their outdoor equipment store. Peggy Holland noted that a nationwide bicycle "ride of silence" had been organized to honor the victims of bicycle crashes, and that the local ride would begin at First Horizon Park.

Heidi Galanti moved to support Bike-to-Work events. Roger Bardsley seconded the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to recommend that the TAC adopt a resolution of support for Bike-to-Work Month and related events.

2. CTP Highway Map Review

Lydia McIntyre presented a draft of the Comprehensive Transportation Plan's highway element. The CTP, which replaces and builds upon the Thoroughfare Plan, is a multimodal plan with four major elements: highway, public transportation and rail, bicycle, and pedestrian. NCDOT has produced templates for each element's map. Supporting documentation will accompany each map. McIntyre noted that each element's draft map will be brought to the TCC for review and discussion.

McIntyre presented an overview of the CTP process, which is similar to and integrated with the process for the Long-Range Transportation Plan.

The highway map uses various classifications to describe different types of highway facilities. Freeways are high-mobility, high-volume, high-speed facilities with full control of access. Expressways are also high mobility and high volume, but speeds may be medium and access control may be partial. Boulevards are moderate-mobility and have medians.

Tyler Meyer noted that the "needs improvement" category for the highway element does not consider pedestrian and bicycle needs, which will be considered in those elements of the CTP. Craig McKinney noted that boulevards will have many more driveways than expressways.

The Other Major Thoroughfares category includes roads with four or more lanes without a median. The Other Minor Thoroughfares type cannot have more than three total lanes, including a center turn lane. McIntyre noted that the map was included with TCC handouts so that members could provide feedback and discuss any potential corrections needed. In addition to the facility types, the CTP maps classify highways as Existing, Needs Improvement, or Recommended.

Hanna Cockburn inquired why NC 62 did not show up as needing improvement. McIntyre advised that additional recommendations may be added to the CTP maps as a result of running the regional travel models. The map is the output, but it is attached to considerable amounts of other data. Heidi Galanti inquired about High Point Road between downtown and I-40, and McIntyre advised that it was shown because of the Planning Department's corridor study.

Meyer noted that the minor thoroughfare definition had changed, but that the new definition did not present a problem. McIntyre said that she would appreciate comments on the map before the May meeting, when a new map would be presented. After TCC review, the maps will eventually be distributed for public review.

3. Project Updates

Craig McKinney discussed U-2412, the High Point Road widening project. The public hearing date has been changed from May 15 to May 22. The meeting will be at 7 p.m. at the Ragsdale High School auditorium and will be preceded by a pre-hearing workshop from 4:30 to 6:30. The workshop is a chance for residents to discuss the design with NCDOT officials, and the hearing is an opportunity to show the public how the project has changed since the environmental document and give the public an opportunity to comment on the design of the roadway. The routing of the roadway has already been finalized.

McKinney summarized the status of B-4534, a project to replace the bridge on eastbound I-40 over southbound I-85 Business. NCDOT has scheduled the project to begin next year. The design plan indicates that four lanes will approach the project limits. One lane will drop into a ramp onto I-85, and three lanes will continue over the new bridge. The leftmost lane will drop past the bridge as the left exit ramp for Randleman Road.

McKinney advised that the project may help congestion some, but that the bottleneck to two lanes will still exist at the Randleman Road exit, and careful signage will be needed. John Hunsinger noted that eliminating the bottleneck would require rebuilding the interchange at Randleman Road. The project is proposed to be let in July 2008.

Tyler Meyer inquired whether the I-40 resurfacing project through the "Valley" would include any restriping changes. Hunsinger said that the pavement will be restriped as it is, and that the outdated design of the interchange with Randleman Road is the root of the problem. Hunsinger suggested that when the southern section of the Urban Loop is completed, the reduced traffic on Business I-40 should alleviate the problem. Hunsinger continued discussing the situation and noted that the intent of B-4534 was to replace a bridge for structural reasons, not to alleviate congestion at the interchange. Adam Fischer inquired if the ramp to Randleman could be eliminated, and Hunsinger responded that it could be considered in the future, but that the access is probably necessary at this point. McKinney noted that there would still be a need to drop a lane before the underpass at Randleman Road and merge with I-85 Business. Brian Thomas advised that the new configuration would be marked as a left exit, just as it is now, and noted that most of the traffic through there should be people familiar with the area when it becomes I-40 Business.

4. MPO Strategic Reports

Tyler Meyer advised that the Congestion Management Process, formerly known as the Congestion Management System, takes a look at operational issues along corridors and corridor-level congestion, building off of the City's Congestion Management System. Staff hope to complete the draft of the CMP in late 2007 in order to incorporate it into the Long-Range Transportation Plan.

The LRTP update must be completed by fall 2008, and staff are beginning to prepare tasks for it. Meyer discussed the need for public involvement in this update, which might be slightly less than what was required for the previous extensive reworking of the plan. Long-term funding issues will be one of the items addressed, and the Comprehensive Transportation Plan maps will help to support the LRTP process.

Meyer described upcoming project-level studies, which include the Downtown Greenway, an expanded Battleground corridor assessment to factor in traffic at Wendover and Battleground, and potential other studies.

Of the four upcoming MPO meetings, Meyer noted, one or two may be cancelled.

Meyer advised that the urban area bicycle map was nearing completion. Peggy Holland noted that the longest delay will be waiting for the state to approve the reimbursement agreement. It is unlikely that the bicycle route signage will be installed and the map released by the end of May.

Other Items

1. NCDOT Update

John Hunsinger advised that all the changes in NCDOT projects since the March meeting had been shown in bold in the project update. Most of those changes were minor. Hunsinger noted that a large number of bridge projects would be underway. Tyler Meyer inquired when the Church Street shoulder widening would occur, and Hunsinger responded that it would be completed by the end of June. Hunsinger advised that as a two-foot shoulder, the project would not serve as a bicycle lane and might not improve safety, but it might be an incremental improvement in terms of cycling conditions.

2. TCC Member Reports

Adam Fischer advised that the design of the new Greensboro Signal System is underway. The project is anticipated to be let in summer 2008.

Tyler Meyer noted that Westridge Road, one of the short-term bicycle improvements in the Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Greenway Master Plan, would be striped with bicycle lanes in the near future.

3. Wrap-Up

The TCC was adjourned at 12:00 p.m.