



**TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**Minutes of October 31, 2013**  
**10:00 a.m., Greensboro, NC**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Floor GDOT Conference Room**  
**Melvin Municipal Office Building**

**ATTENDANCE**

Robbie Perkins	<i>TAC Chair</i>	Adam Fischer	<i>GDOT</i>
Zack Matheny	<i>TAC Member, City of Greensboro</i>	Tyler Meyer	<i>GDOT/MPO</i>
Marikay Abuzuaiter	<i>TAC Member, City of Greensboro</i>	Craig McKinney	<i>GDOT/MPO</i>
Alan Branson	<i>TAC Member, Guilford County</i>	Lydia McIntyre	<i>GDOT/MPO</i>
Cheryl McQueary	<i>TAC Member, NCDOT BOT</i>	Daniel Amstutz	<i>GDOT/MPO</i>
Jeff Phillips	<i>TAC Member, Guilford County</i>	Tram Truong	<i>GDOT/MPO</i>
Dena Barnes	<i>TAC Member, Town of Summerfield</i>	Michael Abuya	<i>NCDOT/TPB</i>
Bill Greene	<i>Town of Pleasant Garden</i>	Mike Mills	<i>NCDOT/ Div 7</i>
Bill Marley	<i>FHWA</i>	Scott Rhine	<i>PART</i>
Laura Peoples	<i>Bicycling in Greensboro</i>	Alex Rosser	<i>PTAA</i>

**Robbie Perkins called the meeting to order at 10:03 am.**

**Action Items**

**1. Conflict of Interest Policy Statement**

Robbie Perkins read the Conflict of Interest Policy Statement required by the State Ethics Act. The policy statement states that it is the responsibility of each committee member to avoid conflicts of interest and if there are any, to present them before the committee at the beginning of the TAC meeting. There were no conflicts of interest identified before the Committee.

**2. Approve Minutes of September 25, 2013**

Zack Matheny moved to approve the minutes of the September 25, 2013 meeting. Jeff Phillips seconded the motion. The TAC voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the September 25, 2013 meeting.

**3. Reports, Concerns, and Discussion from MPO Area Towns**

**Planning for the transportation future**

Bill Greene, of Pleasant Garden, noted that on Monday, October 28, there was a public meeting about the Company Mill Nature Preserve and trails in SE Guilford County. He thanked the MPO for their continued assistance, and also thanked those that were able to attend the meeting.

#### **4. Public Comments**

There were none.

#### **5. Prioritization 3.0 Project Overview and Endorsement**

Lydia McIntyre presented the projects that have been submitted to the MPO for Prioritization 3.0 for inclusion into NCDOT's 2016-2020 TIP. The member jurisdictions that submitted projects for prioritization are the Town of Summerfield, the Town of Oak Ridge, the City of Greensboro, PART, and GTA. Projects submitted include nine new roadway projects, four rail projects, five transit projects, and 63 bicycle and pedestrian projects, which will be narrowed down. Rail and aviation projects are not ranked by the MPO, but were noted.

Existing road projects were allowed to stay in the prioritization database, but all other types of projects have been taken out and must be resubmitted. Newly submitted roadway projects include: 1) an interchange reconfiguration at I-40 and Sandy Ridge Road; 2) widening Alamance Church Road from Martin Luther King Jr. Dr. to the Greensboro city limits; 3) widening Vandalia Rd. from Elm-Eugene St. to Pleasant Garden Rd.; 4) widening Randleman Rd. from Glendale Dr. to Elmsley Dr.; 5) widening Pleasant Ridge Rd. from NC 68 to Old Oak Ridge Rd.; 6) widening Friendly Ave. from Wendover Ave. to Lindell Rd. which includes a culvert replacement; 7) intersection improvement at Aycock St. and Walker Ave.; 8) the Youngs Mill Rd. Extension from McConnell Rd. to US 70; and 9) intersection improvements at NC 150 and NC 68 in Oak Ridge, which will include roadway and bicycle/pedestrian enhancements.

Robbie Perkins noted that the I-40/Sandy Ridge Road project is a high priority for the High Point MPO and has significant economic development impacts. Truck traffic from nearby distribution facilities is increasing the need for this project.

Perkins also noted that the Youngs Mill Road Extension is a critical project for east Greensboro and inquired on a timeframe for it. Adam Fischer responded that it would take at least 5 – 10 years due to environmental impacts that would need to be assessed. Tyler Meyer noted that the West Market Street widening took about 10 years. Perkins inquired if using local funding on design could speed up the process. Fischer noted that it can make a difference with the timeline. Perkins stated that this project would open up a lot of land for development and be an excellent north-south connector. McIntyre noted that benefit-cost is one of the NCDOT prioritization criteria and putting local money towards a project can lead to a higher score.

Perkins inquired about the cost of the US 29/Reedy Fork Interchange project. Meyer noted that a new interchange design is being considered that may reduce the cost of that project.

McIntyre highlighted certain existing projects, including the western and eastern portions of the Urban Loop (U-2524D and U-2525C), which will now be subject to prioritization at the Statewide Tier. The interchange replacement at US 29 and Reedy Fork Parkway is awaiting an environmental assessment. The widening project at NC 68 (U-5607) scored well last submittal and is expected to score well again. There has been a request from the Town of Summerfield to remove the NC 150 relocation from the existing project list. Battleground Avenue (U-5306B) may need to be reprioritized, depending on the construction schedule. The Youngs Mill Road Extension is being proposed as a substitution for the Florida Street Extension project. Fischer noted that the Youngs Mill Extension follows a similar alignment to the Florida Street Extension and is a good substitute for it. Certain projects which are considered modernization projects will stay in but are not expected to do well because the NCDOT ranking criteria are heavily weighted towards congestion. Additionally, shoulder widening projects that may be considered specifically as bicycle improvements may need to be removed pending further guidelines from NCDOT

Based on the NCDOT criteria for roadways, statewide and regional projects in the MPO were analyzed and given a ranking strength for how well they could expect to do in Prioritization 3.0. These criteria are

travel time, congestion, multimodalism, and economic competitiveness. Regional tier projects do not receive a score for the multimodal and economic competitiveness metrics. Roads that are heavily congested will score well in the congestion category. Multimodal refers to any project that carries increased freight and is a direct line to an airport terminal, rail, bus depot, or other alternative freight mode. Economic competitiveness is based off of travel time savings; therefore any project scoring well in travel time will score well under economic competitiveness. Projects that are expected to do well are the Urban Loop, the Airport Connector, NC 68, I-40/Sandy Ridge, and NC 150/NC 68. How the US 29/Reedy Fork Parkway interchange will score is an unknown since the way in which interchanges are scored has changed significantly.

Bicycle and Pedestrian projects must be resubmitted as they do not persist in the database from prior submittals. The list of projects will be cut down to 20 of the top scoring projects. Ideal projects will be cost-effective, dense, and with varied land use connectivity. The final list of recommended bicycle and pedestrian projects to be submitted to NCDOT will be presented at the December MPO meeting. Unlike roadway projects which are calculated by NCDOT, bicycle and pedestrian project costs must be calculated by the submitting team and should be as accurate as possible.

Rail projects are submitted directly to the rail division and are not prioritized by the MPO.

Robbie Perkins inquired about the grade separation at Hilltop Road. Fischer noted that he was not sure if it would be an over- or underpass. Cheryl McQueary inquired if NCDOT Rail Division's double tracking project would impact this grade separation. Fischer noted that this section has already been double tracked.

The date for submitting projects to NCDOT has been pushed back to February, but the MPO's schedule will remain the same. MPO staff will analyze the projects from the list of submittals and present a final list at the December TCC meeting. The TAC will vote on the final list of projects at the January meeting. In April the MPO will need to submit their local public input process to NCDOT for review. Public review of the MPO methodology for ranking and scoring projects will take place in June.

Cheryl McQueary moved to endorse the project list for Prioritization 3.0. Alan Branson seconded the motion. The TAC voted unanimously to endorse the project list for Prioritization 3.0.

Robbie Perkins requested that MPO staff send the list of projects to the TAC members.

## **Business Items**

### **1. Strategic Transportation Investments**

Tyler Meyer presented on the Strategic Transportation Investments update. Although the Department had at one time indicated agreement with giving more weight to local jurisdictions on projects at the Regional Impact Tier, NCDOT has made the point split even between the NCDOT division office and the local jurisdictions. Also, an accessibility and connectivity measure has been added to the regional impact category. The three components of this measure are: 1) commuting time by census tracts; 2) upgrading roadway functions; and 3) county tier designation for economically depressed areas.

Cheryl McQueary inquired how the unemployment percentage plays into the economic distress component. Lydia McIntyre noted that it is a factor in the TREDIS software used to determine the economic impacts of transportation projects. Guilford County is in the middle of the tier ranking on the economic distress measure.

NCDOT is reviewing the existing roadway projects and scoring them. This information will be sent to the MPOs and RPOs to review in order to ensure that all inputs are correct. The scores should be released by the end of the year which will help when submitting the new list of projects for prioritization.

Interchange and intersection projects will be evaluated differently moving forward. The detailed analysis using TransModeler will more accurately analyze the traffic volumes and provide a more realistic scenario of the proposed improvement which should allow for higher interchange scores.

NCDOT has proposed to remove modernization projects that are essentially bicycle and pedestrian projects. This could change since many of these types of projects improve conditions for automobiles as well.

Robbie Perkins inquired how feasible it is to make modifications to interchange designs, such as for the eastern side of the Urban Loop. Meyer explained that this was not feasible because the design has already gone through the environmental review process and reopening its design could trigger a new environmental study, which will significantly delay the project. New interchanges should be proposed sometime after construction on the current project begins in Spring 2014.

## **2. Transportation Alternatives Program Update**

Tram Truong presented on the Transportation Alternatives Program. Eligible jurisdictions must submit their projects to the MPO by Monday, December 2<sup>nd</sup>. After that, the MPO will score the projects and release those scores to the applicants. Any comments or concerns will then be returned to the MPO for review. A public meeting will be held by the MPO in early December where the projects will be announced. Once the TAC has approved the project list, the projects will be submitted to NCDOT. The TIP will be amended to include the selected projects by the MPO and the STIP will likewise be amended by NCDOT.

Marikay Abuzuaiter inquired about how the eligible sponsors are determined. Tyler Meyer explained that local governments, Guilford County schools, and the National Park Service are eligible sponsors based on the program guidelines. Eligible sponsors will be contacted about the call for projects and the general public will also be notified that this program is soliciting sponsors for projects. This program is mainly for bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, but other projects such as school safety education and outdoor billboard removal are also eligible.

Laura Peoples inquired if the new Safe Routes to School-type program that the State is creating would be eligible to access the TAP funds. Meyer stated that he did not think so; the program guidelines have very specific eligibility requirements.

## **3. Bicycle Friendly Community Award**

Daniel Amstutz presented an update on the Bicycle Friendly Community Award. Greensboro has been designated as a Bronze level Bicycle Friendly Community for the years 2013-2017. Next steps include reviewing recommendations from the League of American Bicyclists on how to improve bicycling in the City of Greensboro and a presentation of the award to City Council by the bicycle community. Bicycle Friendly Community signs will be posted in areas more heavily trafficked by bicycles.

Zack Matheny inquired about the bronze designation and how the city could get to silver or gold. Amstutz noted that silver and gold communities are expected to have a larger bicycle mode share and have the data to back it up. Education is a significant focus for the League, and more bicycling infrastructure also helps. Matheny requested that a strategy be developed to get Greensboro to become a silver (and eventually a gold) Bicycle Friendly Community. Adam Fischer noted that a plan will be developed. Cheryl McQueary expressed her support for a strategy and suggested that staff contact higher-ranked communities to get their advice. Robbie Perkins noted that the Downtown Greenway should be a priority and that it could help put Greensboro into the Silver category. Education is also an essential part of the strategy, and connecting with the universities is especially important. Matheny recommended a bicycle fit-it station on the greenway could provide significant added benefit for users.

McQueary suggested that a more focused discussion for the TAC on bicycling conditions and opportunities would be beneficial for the group. Perkins noted that efforts need to be coordinated and transition areas from the city to the county have safety issues for bicyclists. Adam Fischer stated that a workgroup session would be put together for the TAC.

## **4. BiPed Plan Update Progress**

Daniel Amstutz presented on the BiPed Plan Update progress. A BiPed Update Advisory Committee meeting is scheduled for convening in mid-November for submitting suggestions and recommendations. Outreach to surrounding areas will continue to increase. Internal discussions of bicycle, pedestrian, and greenway recommendations will continue to take place. The member list for the advisory committee was presented.

Tram Truong presented the Pedestrian Crash Analysis. The analysis covered crash trends, where they occurred, why they occurred, when they occurred, and who was involved. A complete analysis will be included in the BiPed Update.

Marikay Abuzuaiter inquired on how the schools can get involved to apply for funding to improve safety based on the analysis. Adam Fischer noted that conversations have been ongoing with UNCG about student safety at Aycock Street and Walker Avenue and also along Lee Street.

Jeff Phillips observed that the data show many of the crashes involve black males between 40 and 50 years old, which should influence the direction of the safety recommendations that will be made. Tyler Meyer noted that staff will look closely at the data to determine what kinds of education are most appropriate for the populations that are disproportionately affected. Meyer also noted that staff will provide the TAC with the sidewalk construction schedule for the next few years.

## **5. Project Updates**

Craig McKinney presented on project updates. The US 70 merger team meeting has been rescheduled to November 20<sup>th</sup>. The team is proposing a best fit location based on the environment surrounding the roadway with widening and some curb and gutter. Five proposed alignments will be trimmed down to three possible alignments with widening the existing roadway likely to be one of the options to act as a baseline.

Robbie Perkins inquired on when a final alignment will be selected. McKinney stated that it will not likely be until 2015 or 2016, and afterwards the project will need to go through NCDOT's Prioritization for funding. Perkins requested that staff send the map of alternatives to the TAC.

## **6. Strategic Reports**

A handout from the Ethics Commission was passed out.

## **Other Items**

### **1. Board Member Update**

Cheryl McQueary reported that the Board has approved a new process for funding statewide road maintenance and will distribute funds based on need. Roads conditions will be assessed and areas where roads are in worse condition will receive more funding. However, there are greater problems with infrastructure funding that are coming to light. McQueary requested time at the next meeting to bring in more information about revenue projections and strategies.

### **2. Regional Updates**

Scott Rhine noted that November 14<sup>th</sup> is the second annual Triad Community Planning Project related to the Piedmont Together program. Rhine also noted that PART is working on the regional Travel Demand Model to incorporate more freight logistics metrics.

Robbie Perkins inquired about the \$10 million in Congressional earmark funding that PART is seeking to use to add a maintenance and passenger transfer facility operation to the PART Headquarters building. Rhine noted that the earmark is for an intermodal transportation facility and a project management plan is being updated to determine how to utilize the funds. It appears that the Galyon Depot is the only facility other than the PART Headquarters facility that meets the requirements of the earmark. Perkins expressed concern about making sure the funds are used for a needed project, and not returned to the federal government. Cheryl McQueary requested clarification on where the funds can be spent. Rhine noted that it is specifically for PART, whose address is in Greensboro: even if the Depot renovations were included or done instead of the PART Headquarters facility, PART would still have to be the grantee working in coordination with the City of Greensboro. Zack Matheny requested that staff send information about the PART earmark to the TAC.

### **3. Wrap-Up**

The next meet will be held on December 11<sup>th</sup>. The meeting was adjourned at 11:49 am.