



TECHNICAL COORDINATING COMMITTEE
Minutes of September 24, 2014
10:30 a.m., Greensboro, NC
3rd Floor GDOT Conference Room
Melvin Municipal Office Building

ATTENDANCE

Adam Fischer	<i>GDOT</i>	Hanna Cockburn	<i>GSO Planning</i>
Tyler Meyer	<i>GDOT/MPO</i>	Mike Mills	<i>NCDOT - Div 7</i>
Lydia McIntyre	<i>GDOT/MPO</i>	Michael Abuya	<i>NCDOT - TPB</i>
Daniel Amstutz	<i>GDOT/MPO</i>	Mark Kirstner	<i>PART</i>
Tram Truong	<i>GDOT/MPO</i>	George Linney	<i>GDOT - GTA</i>
Chris Spencer	<i>GDOT Engineering</i>		

Tyler Meyer called the meeting to order at 10:37 am.

Action Items

1. Approve Minutes of August 27, 2014

Mike Mills moved to approve the minutes of the August 27, 2014 meeting. Michael Abuya seconded the motion. The TCC voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the August 27, 2014 meeting.

2. STP-DA and TAP Program Modifications and MTIP Amendment

Tyler Meyer noted that the STP-DA and TAP Program Modifications and MTIP Amendment are in response to items discussed in previous TCC meetings which required a follow-up analysis, and are now ready for approval from the TAC. The MPO and NCDOT coordinate together to direct STP-DA funding to priority areas. One current goal of program management is to work towards achieving a higher delivery rate of projects and to create more efficient allocation of funds towards priority projects. After a detailed review by MPO staff, it was determined that a certain amount of sidewalk projects were going to experience delays past 2018. This action proposes to reallocate funds towards shorter term projects in order to manage possible delays.

The Florida Street Extension is proposed to be deleted from the list of funded projects and replaced with the East Lee Street sidewalk and roadway upgrade project. The East Lee Street project is in the same relative location as the Florida Street Extension and was determined to have greater need after a detailed review by MPO staff. Meyer explained that removing the Florida Street Extension project will free up \$2,560,000 of STP-DA funds and another \$640,000 of required local matching funds to be reallocated to the U-5532 East Lee Street project, helping to expedite the project scheduled for construction in 2018. Other projects

Planning for the transportation future

experiencing delays included 22 miles of the total 85 miles of STP-DA funded sidewalk projects. Meyer noted that the 22 miles of delayed sidewalk are expected to lapse beyond the 2018 timeframe into a 2019-2020 timeframe, but this should free up \$2,700,000 STP-DA funds for shorter term projects before 2018.

As part of this modification, the Downtown Greenway Phase 2 will be added to receive \$4.5 million in STA-DA funds. This is possible by reallocating the \$2,700,000 from delayed sidewalk projects, \$900,000 from the local match, and an additional \$900,000 from unallocated STP-DA funds. Although the current estimated construction cost is \$6 million, additional funds are expected to come from the prioritization process as the project ranked second in the state for bike and pedestrian projects. If a funding gap remains after, additional funds may be found to close the gap. Meyer indicated that the Phase 2 could begin construction as early as FY 2017 with this new allocation.

Adam Fischer noted previous City Council concerns with exactly where funds from the Florida Street Extension project were being transferred. Fischer stated that the council member has been reassured that the funds are remaining within the same district. Mark Kirstner inquired what percentage of the \$3.6 million Greenway Phase 2 funds specifically pertained to the overall construction costs. Meyer stated that those funds are for construction only. The right of way and utility costs will be taken care of with local and private funds. Fischer added that an additional \$500,000 from the Prioritization 3.0 process is expected based on its high score. The project's design is on schedule after the original scope was reduced from being a full reconstruction of Murrow Blvd to a reconstruction of just the east side.

Fischer moved to recommend the STP-DA and TAP Program Modifications and MTIP Amendment to the TAC for approval. Kirstner seconded the motion. The TCC unanimously voted to recommend the STP-DA and TAP Program Modifications and MTIP Amendment to the TAC for approval.

Business Items

1. NCDOT 25 Year Infrastructure Plan

Tyler Meyer noted that the NCDOT 25 Year Infrastructure Plan, which discusses the state transportation vision of Governor McCrory's administration, will be presented in detail at the TAC meeting. Mike Mills added that while some controversy has stirred in the public lately concerning the plan, he does not believe that it has inserted politics back into the state transportation planning process. Many of the projects listed had required planning documents to be completed by July 1, 2014. NCDOT Division 7 has two projects that have made the list of projects in the 25 Year Infrastructure Plan: the 119 Bypass in Mebane, and the 68/Eastchester and I-73 interchange. However, the interchange also made the STI list and will be removed from the 25 Year Infrastructure Plan if it scores well. The plan is not meant to replace the STI process, but will help where other funding has fallen short in some of the more rural projects, as it has for the construction of the 119 Bypass.

Lydia McIntyre asked how this new plan would affect the Winston-Salem Loop which is also in the STI list, and if it would help with the tight funding issue for regional tier projects. Mills commented that funding the urban loops is a big concern and the new plan may help supplement the necessary funding if the loop can score well enough in the STI, and may free up reasonable funds for the regional tier projects. Meyer elaborated and explained that Winston-Salem can first max out regional funding allocated to constructing the loop, then receive additional funding under the new plan, allowing more projects to be completed more swiftly. This will in turn assist the reprioritization process in following cycles.

2. Piedmont Together: Presentation & Resolution of Acknowledgement

***Note: This item was moved to the beginning of the meeting before the action items by Tyler Meyer; it is presented in its original spot on the agenda to provide consistency within the meeting minutes.*

Mark Kirstner introduced the Piedmont Together regional plan which is a comprehensive project designed to build a more resilient, prosperous economy and a better quality of life for North Carolina

Piedmont Triad residents. Kirstner noted that he will be presenting on what has been done pertaining to the plan and in what direction the plan is moving. He will be seeking resolutions of support for Piedmont Together from the MPOs within the region, including Greensboro. Kirstner stressed the strong commuting patterns into Guilford and Forsyth counties from their outlying counties, and the transportation connections between the Mecklenburg, Triangle, and Triad regions. There has been a strong effort in reaching out to the people within the region including an email listserv of about 2,000, various regional events, and direct community outreach engagements within High Point, Greensboro, and Winston-Salem. One of the main components of the plan is focused on equity.

Kirstner explained that the plan consists of 16 goals, 172 objectives, and 259 strategic actions focused on the areas of housing, transportation, health, places and spaces, and jobs. The jobs portion was developed under a separate strategy led by the Piedmont Triad Regional Council under state and federal funding, but has become the comprehensive economic development strategy focused on four key areas: develop an economic competitive advantage, build on and invest into regional infrastructure, invest in the talent cluster of human capital and the support systems, and create vibrant communities. In respect to housing, the plan considers new housing projects within “opportunity areas.” Opportunity areas have access to public transit, are not in low income areas, and close to jobs. Most recent research indicates that people want more walkable communities and access to various modes of transportation. Kirstner also pointed out recent studies showing that out of 140,000 new housing units constructed, 70% of those need to be multi-family, part of a generational shift away from detached single family homes. To promote health, the plan has sponsored three different studies. One study focused on creating a business plan for incubator farms where individuals learn how to farm. Another was to review best regional designation for cold food storage and their location. The third study involved collecting data on the importance of agriculture within the region.

For the area of transportation, one of the pillars of the plan is finding a solution to the issue that the region has higher than average transportation and housing costs when compared to other regions. Another concern within the plan is to review freight as a major component to the local economy and more so than has been done in the past. Two online tools have been developed to observe transportation infrastructure. One tool combines various GIS layers, such as transportation routes, bus routes, points of interest, and truck terminals, and the other tool represents housing data within Census tracts. The tools become very useful when combined to review how the quality of transportation matches certain Census tract characteristics.

An important way Piedmont Together received community feedback was by reaching out to different communities and having local design teams build design concepts incorporating smart growth principles based off input from what residents wanted to see. The results were largely positive as communities were able to visualize the impact of their feedback.

Kirstner noted that Piedmont Together encourages more mixed-use, multi-story development as studies have shown that mixed-use development performs better on a revenue per acre comparison. An example of this compared a Wal-Mart development to a 6 story, mixed use property in downtown Winston-Salem. The Wal-Mart generated \$2.64 per acre, while the 6 story, mixed-use property generated \$45.19 per acre. This would generate greater city revenue to use towards creating a better quality of life.

Adam Fischer added that the mixed-use development would also help concentrate use of resources and would lead to less costly provision of services when compared to the same level of services provided to a sprawling community.

Kirstner explained that they reviewed different scenarios incorporating various growth principles. One scenario focused on current trends, another ‘connections’ scenario focused on transportation and transit, a ‘conservation’ scenario focused on preserving natural resources and rural areas, and an ‘efficient’ scenario focused on concentrated development in urban cores. A fifth model incorporated a hybrid mixture of all the better qualities from the other models. The ‘connections’ scenario proved to be the poorest performer for reducing transportation costs resulting from sprawling development. The hybrid scenario was the best overall performer.

With regards to implementing the regional plan, there is a consortium of 63 members who meet monthly.

Financial assistance was just received from the Community Foundation of Greater Greensboro to develop an organizational structure and hire part-time staff. For those who are interested, Piedmont Together will offer updates of their activities through email.

The economic development strategy has led to the formation of the Regional Development Corporation through the Piedmont Triad Regional Council, mostly replacing the work of the Piedmont Triad Partnership used in promoting the region and its regional strategies. This will also open access to federal assistance from the Economic Development Administration.

Other elements of Piedmont Together include a Brownfield study, a Regional Equity Profile, freight modeling, and a regional housing plan. The Piedmont Triad Regional Council received a grant for a Brownfield study along the Business 85 corridor. This study is important so that all the areas along the corridor with old abandoned mills can take advantage of investments in the property. The freight component is being developed by PART and the MPOs to become included into the Regional Travel Demand Model. In addition, the Regional Equity Profile will describe job opportunities by socio-economic characteristics and provide strategic and workable action items to deal with regional inequities.

Tyler Meyer inquired on what kind of process is in place to continue the efforts of the plan after the grant expires. Kirstner answered that the grant already expired in March, but efforts are currently being made to expand the work of the consortium, have it designated as a formal organization, and encourage all respective regional planning agencies to implement the action items of the plan.

Fischer asked about the vision to implement the action items of the plan. Kirstner pointed out that there are ongoing efforts to create collaborative efforts among local organizations. One method is through the use of Piedmont Connect, an online resource where companies create a business profile of what their organization can offer, and this information is shared among other local organizations. Kirstner commented that once these companies come together, the plan is to expose them to certain action items of the Piedmont Together plan that those companies can carry forward.

Fischer moved to recommend the Piedmont Together Resolution of Acknowledgement to the Transportation Advisory Committee for approval. Hanna Cockburn seconded the motion. TCC voted unanimously to recommend the Piedmont Together Resolution of Acknowledgement to the Transportation Advisory Committee for approval.

3. Division Engineering Updates

Mike Mills discussed some key projects around Greensboro including the construction of the Urban Loop and various interchanges. Mills presented work taking place for the I-5110 project around NC 68, Old Oak Ridge Rd, and Bryan Blvd where preparations for bridge construction are under way. The work is about 10% complete, but construction is about to pick up a faster pace. Mills next pointed out active work in progress for the Western Loop, including construction of the interchange on Battleground Ave, grading near Drawbridge Rd and Horse Pen Creek Rd, and construction of a retaining wall for the Horse Pen Creek Rd Bridge.

Work has just recently started for the Eastern Loop. A proposed installation of an interchange is currently active near Huffine Mill Rd. Preparations are being made for a new bridge which will cross over US 70 with developing the field, embankment, and sedimentary basin where US 70 and I-40 cross. Cranes have already been moved into place to start the bridge construction.

Mills commented that plans for the construction of the new US 220 South are to hopefully be completed by the end of October, at which time construction of various structures crossing over US 220 will commence. A good deal of work still needs to be completed on the project, but the October deadline is necessary to begin the following construction plans. The construction taking place for the diverging diamond on High Point Rd crossing over I-73 will create better traffic flow with the combined use of traffic signals and on/off ramps proving for an overall better design. Current activity includes construction of the ramps, bridge, and new High Point Rd crossover. Tyler Meyer inquired if High Point Rd will ever become designated as an NC

route. Mills replied that the request would have to go to the AASHTO committee to become designated as a primary route after seeking approval from NCDOT, but is a possibility.

The final update concerned the Greensboro Science Center signage. Due to a recent expansion, the Science Center voiced a need for improved signage. Presently signs exist at US 29 and the Cone Blvd interchange, and one will be added in Rockingham County at US 220 as construction completes. There are plans in progress to design more, possibly around the I-40 and Randleman Rd interchange, and on I-85 near Holden Rd. A temporary measure is being considered to remove signage from I-73 and Bryan Blvd, but Mills believes the permanent signage will be placed on the Urban Loop near Lawndale Ave where most visitors will arrive.

4. Project Updates

Tyler Meyer addressed the status report for Project Updates for the locally administered projects scheduled for authorization in 2014. The East Wendover Sidewalks are the largest project and currently under construction, along with the Market-United-Walker Sidewalk and Intersections. Soon to go into construction is the Fleming-Isaacson Connector and Intersection project, and the Pleasant Garden Greenway recently received authorization for construction.

A few projects experiencing delays include the Randleman Rd and Florida St sidewalks, the Downtown Greenway Phase 2E/3, Phillips Ave Sidewalk, and the Aycock and Walker Intersection. The delays for Randleman and Florida sidewalks and Downtown Greenway Phase 2E/3 are expected to be minimal. Phillips Ave just recently ran into administrative delays, but will hopefully be back into construction soon and completed by 2016. The design process for the Aycock and Walker Intersection is expected to start soon.

5. Strategic Reports

Daniel Amstutz highlighted the upcoming Bike Summit taking place at the UNC-Greensboro campus on October 9th through the 12th. October 9th includes training on bicycle traffic for transportation professionals, while the 10th through the 12th involves speaker sessions with keynotes from Jeff Miller and Tommy Pacello. Jeff Miller is the CEO of the Alliance for Biking and Walking, while Tommy Pacello is from the Mayor's Innovation Delivery Team in Memphis, TN and will speak about public process input and neighborhood/community revitalization.

A Better Block demonstration will be held on October 10th at the McGee and Elm intersection located by the railroad trestle. Amstutz mentioned that previous week, Jason Roberts, who started the Better Block idea, visited Greensboro and spoke at the Triad Stage. After his presentation, he visited the McGee and Elm area with a group from the Better Block Planning Committee and shared some of his own ideas. The Better Block demonstration is set up to take place between 5:00 and 10:00 pm.

Tram Truong discussed an update on the NCDOT Pilot Bicycle and Pedestrian Counting Program. Training on the program was held September 15th, and on September 18th and 19th permanent bicycle and pedestrian counters were installed at three separate locations (S Elm St, Spring Garden St, and the Lake Daniel Greenway). Truong thanked GDOT staff for their hard work and excellent collaboration with NCDOT and ITRE on the project. Truong noted that the next step of the program will be to evaluate and analyze the data collected by the recently installed counters, and to develop a short duration counting program.

Tyler Meyer commented on how much of a critical development in planning this program will be as it will utilize the data collected from bicycle and pedestrian traffic where a gap has existed for many years, allowing more accurate assessments of pedestrian traffic. Truong replied that as the short term counting already exists, the combination of the short term counting with permanent counting will allow a fuller picture of bicycle and pedestrian movement throughout the city.

Other Items

1. NCDOT Update

This was stated in Division Engineering Updates.

2. TCC Member Updates

Tyler Meyer mentioned the NCDOT Transportation Planning Branch has hired Patrick Norman as a new branch manager. Michael Abuya stated that Mr. Norman's first day will be October 27th.

Hanna Cockburn noted Lindley Elementary received a grant from the Safe Routes to School program at NCDOT to support their Walk and Roll to school event that will be held Wednesday, October 1st. The PTA works with the neighborhood to establish remote 'park and walk' sites around the school for kids who walk to school. In addition, students who ride the bus will be given an opportunity to walk the route with the school's principal.

Daniel Amstutz noted that Safe Kids Guilford was worked with Irving Park Elementary to establish a Walk to School Day for October 8th.

Chris Spencer highlighted the status of the High Point Road streetscape and explained there have been recent delays in the project, but bidding will open next month. There is a push from Councilman Wilkins to designate the road as International Restaurant Row and expressed that there may be some concerns with the signage.

3. Wrap-Up

The next TCC meeting will take place on November 12th at 10:30 am in the 3rd Floor GDOT Conference Room.

The meeting was adjourned by Tyler Meyer at 11:57 am.