



TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Minutes of February 26, 2014
2:00 p.m., Greensboro, NC
2nd Floor Greensboro Council Chambers
Melvin Municipal Office Building

ATTENDANCE

Nancy Vaughan	<i>TAC Chair</i>	Adam Fischer	<i>GDOT</i>
Jeff Phillips	<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>
Cheryl McQueary	<i>TAC Member, NCDOT BOT</i>	Lydia McIntyre	<i>GDOT/MPO</i>
Jamal Fox	<i>TAC Member, City of Greensboro</i>	Daniel Amstutz	<i>GDOT/MPO</i>
Dena Barnes	<i>TAC Member, Town of Summerfield</i>	Tram Truong	<i>GDOT/MPO</i>
Carla Strickland	<i>Mayor, Town of Pleasant Garden</i>	Mike Mills	<i>NCDOT/ Div 7</i>
Bill Greene	<i>Town of Pleasant Garden</i>	Scott Rhine	<i>PART</i>
Ophelia Jones	<i>Mayor, Town of Sedalia</i>	Laura Peoples	<i>Bicycling in Greensboro(BIG)</i>
Alex Rosser	<i>PTAA</i>	Charles Edwards	<i>NC Center for Global Logistics</i>
Michael Abuya	<i>TPB</i>		

Nancy Vaughan called the meeting to order at 2:07 pm.

Action Items

1. Conflict of Interest Policy Statement

Nancy Vaughan 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.

Tyler Meyer noted that a new form has been provided for TAC members to document conflicts of interest, should they have a conflict on an item.

Planning for the transportation future

2. Approve Minutes of January 29, 2014

Cheryl McQueary moved to approve the minutes of the January 29, 2014 meeting. Marikay Abuzuaiter seconded the motion. The TAC voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the January 29, 2014 meeting.

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

There were none.

4. Public Comments

Carla Strickland, Mayor of Pleasant Garden, thanked Cheryl McQueary, Mike Mills, Darryl Ferguson and Steven Robinson of NCDOT for attending meetings in the town.

5. 2013-2014 UPWP Amendment

Tyler Meyer presented an Amendment to the 2013-2014 Unified Planning Work Program. The Amendment will add \$130,000 in currently unobligated FHWA PL funds left over from FY 2012-2013 that are not currently included in the FY 2013-2014 UPWP and are needed to support this year's work program. The revised total PL funding for FY 2013-2014 would be \$549,209. The remainder of the FY 2012-2013 balance is reflected in the draft FY 2014-2015 UPWP. The recommended action was to approve the UPWP Amendment.

Cheryl McQueary moved to approve the UPWP Amendment. Jeff Phillips seconded the motion. The TAC voted unanimously to approve the 2013-2014 UPWP Amendment.

6. 2012-2018 MTIP Modification: P-5204 McLeansville Road Railroad Grade Separation & Carmon Road Railroad Crossing Closure

Tyler Meyer presented the 2012-2018 MTIP Administrative Modification for project P-5204. The Modification will shift right-of-way funding from FY 13 to FY 14 to allow additional time for planning and design. The recommended action was to endorse the MTIP Administrative Modification.

Cheryl McQueary moved to endorse the 2012-2018 MTIP Administrative Modification. Jeff Phillips seconded the motion. The TAC voted unanimously to endorse the MTIP Administrative Modification for project P-5204 McLeansville Road Railroad Grade Separation & Carmon Road Railroad Crossing Closure.

7. 2012-2018 MTIP Modification: U-5306A Battleground – Benjamin – Cone Intersection Improvement Project

Tyler Meyer presented the 2012-2018 MTIP Administrative Modification for the U-5306A that will shift construction funding from FY 14 to FY 15 to allow additional time for planning and design. The intersection improvement project was selected for State funding under Prioritization 1.0 and received a high score. Per the Strategic Transportation Investments Act, it will not need to be submitted for reprioritization under Prioritization 3.0 since it will be advertised for construction bids before July 1, 2015. The project is currently in the right-of-way acquisition phase and construction bid opening is scheduled for fall 2014. Meyer noted that there had been recent questions about the Westridge Project, which is a separate phase of this project. The recommended action was to endorse the MTIP Administrative Modification.

Cheryl McQueary clarified that it will not affect progress on the Western Loop. Jeff Phillips requested a timeline for project completion. Adam Fischer predicted a 12-month construction period with project completion in late 2015 or early 2016.

Jeff Phillips moved to endorse the 2012-2018 MTIP Administrative Modification. Cheryl McQueary seconded the motion. The TAC voted unanimously to endorse the 2012-2018 MTIP Administrative Modification for the U-5306A Battleground – Benjamin – Cone Intersection Improvement Project.

8. MTIP Administrative Modification: EL-5101DM Lowdermilk /Holts Chapel Sidewalk & Road Upgrade

Tyler Meyer presented an MTIP Administrative Modification for EL-5101DM that will increase STP-DA

construction funding and reflect revised right of way cost estimates and the current implementation schedule. The project will install sidewalks, curb and gutter and increase roadway widths and connect to the NCDOT Rail Division's Lowdermilk-Sykes Realignment and Pine Street Rail Crossing Closure Project. The recommended action was to approve the MTIP Administrative Modification.

Cheryl McQueary moved to endorse the MTIP Administrative Modification. Marikay Abuziater seconded the motion. The TAC voted unanimously to approve the MTIP Administrative Modification for EL-5101DM Lowdermilk /Holts Chapel Sidewalk & Road Upgrade.

9. Public Participation Plan Amendment

Tram Truong presented the Public Participation Plan Amendment that will reflect changes required by the FTA to cover Fare and Major Service Changes and the Program of Projects documents prepared annually by the Greensboro Transit Authority (GTA) and the Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation (PART). The public outreach efforts will follow Tier II procedures outlined in the PPP. The draft had been presented to the TAC in January and the 45-day period for public review concluded on February 10th with no public comments received. The recommend action was to approve the Public Participation Plan Amendment.

Marikay Abuziater inquired if there were strategies to increase public involvement in planning decisions. Meyer and Fischer noted that by its nature, the PPP revision had not been expected to generate public interest. For plans and projects that have more significant impacts, the MPO does promote opportunities for public engagement through multiple mediums.

Cheryl McQueary moved to approve the Public Participation Plan Amendment. Marikay Abuziater seconded the motion. The TAC voted unanimously to approve the Public Participation Plan Amendment.

Business Items

1. Triad: Future of Logistics

Charles Edwards from the North Carolina Center for Global Logistics presented on the importance of the Triad as a transportation and logistics hub. The North Carolina Center for Global logistics is a business driven educational program founded by four community colleges and led by Guilford Tech with the objective of coordinating logistics education opportunities from high school to graduate level. Employment in the logistics field is expanding and the United States currently has insufficient education and training opportunities for these high-earning careers. The Triad's supply-chain cluster is made up of approximately 60,000 employees in transportation, distribution, and manufacturing. The Triad cluster is one of the largest in the world, larger than the Rotterdam cluster, which should be marketed and promoted more strongly. The Triad has the third densest concentration of Interstates in the US and one of the few areas in the Southeast with double-tracked rail line. Edwards noted that truck drivers are instructed to follow "blue shield" routes and therefore are directed through Greensboro on a section of I-40 called "Death Valley" instead of by-passing congestion on the urban loop. Edwards advised that the Triad accommodate new federal laws requiring drivers to take more frequent breaks by creating more formal rest areas and to prepare future roadway designs in accommodation with current proposals for larger trucks. The Triad has one of the fastest growing intermodal inland container ports in the eastern U.S and is in one of the best locations on the east coast to easily access all of the ports, including the North Carolina ports. The container port grew 75% since last year and will have to relocate if they are unable to expand at their current location. Edwards concluded that the Triad should shape future logistics decisions based on the needs of current businesses and increase promotion of Greensboro's supply-chain to attract potential businesses.

Adam Fischer commented that I-40 was originally routed on the urban loop and Mike Mills noted the final plan was changed because the original would have eliminated the interstate route through the city resulting in the loss of federal highway maintenance funds. Eliminating an interstate from the system cannot easily be reversed. Mills also noted that the "Death Valley" section is a short distance and some years ago a project was completed to bring some parts of I-40 through Greensboro up to current interstate standards.

Cheryl McQueary inquired if speed limits were lowered on I-40 through the city. Mills confirmed and supported Fischer's observation that traffic should be directed to the loop to avoid the reduced speeds and potential congestion.

Jeff Phillips inquired about how much farther it would be to go around the southern loop as opposed to going through the city. Fischer answered that it is about 5 to 7 additional miles. Edwards explained that the additional mileage is not as much a concern as the speed and congestion which slows truck drivers. Mills noted that traffic could be better directed to the by-pass through improved signage. It was agreed that better signage and information is needed to help drivers navigate the system.

Fischer noted that the interstate and rail system position Greensboro as a major crossroads with access to large air potential.

2. Draft 2014-2015 UPWP

Tyler Meyer presented the draft for FY 14-15 Unified Planning Work Program to guide MPO planning work activities for July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015. The plan provides for FHWA PL funds of \$457,329 and FTA Transit Planning funds (GTA) of \$111,152. The final document will also contain the MPO Self-Certification finding that ensures the plan is in compliance with all federal regulations and requirements. Major components of the UPWP include updates to the Transportation Improvement Program, amendments to the Long-Range Transportation Plan, completion of the BiPed Plan Update and additional enhancements to the regional traffic demand model to more efficiently incorporate freight traffic. The TAC members were asked to review the document and make any recommendations before the next meeting in March. The 2014-2015 Unified Planning Work Program will be brought to the TAC in March for adoption.

3. Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan schedule

Dan Amstutz presented the proposed Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan schedule that was requested in a public comment at the TAC meeting in January 2014 and suggested by the TAC in June 2013 to provide better access for non-profit service providers for Section 5310 funds. The schedule for revising the Coordinated Plan includes holding a public meeting in April, using the input from the meeting in development of a revised document by May, and adopting the update and selecting the projects for Section 5310 at the June TAC meeting to ensure funding for this fiscal year.

4. BiPed Update Progress

Dan Amstutz provided information on progress towards completing and implementing the BiPed Plan Update. The most recent meeting with the BiPed Update Advisory Committee took place on February 3rd and focused on feedback for proposed improvements at the Walker/Aycock intersection and infrastructure improvements for pedestrian activities at other intersection corridors and sidewalk gaps.

Tram Truong presented progress on the Sidewalk Evaluation Model where the projects were assigned to tiered priorities based on a quantile classification for each council district. Truong also noted that the NCDOT has selected the Greensboro region to participate in the Bicycle and Pedestrian Counting Pilot Program. The MPO staff met with the NCDOT to discuss the implementation of the permanent counting stations and proposed 6 locations for pedestrian counting stations and 6 locations for bicycle counting stations.

Cheryl McQueary inquired about the process in selecting the location of Spring Garden and South Chapman for a counting station. Tyler Meyer and Adam Fischer noted the proximity of the large student population and people going to and from the colleges. McQueary inquired if there was an expected combination of bus and bicycle trips. Meyer noted that it is possible bicyclists are connecting through the Depot to reach NC A&T and other colleges, while many are accessing UNC-G, which is a short ride. He also added that more locations may be selected later and the current proposed locations were chosen to give a cross-section of different areas in Greensboro.

Fischer noted the tiered Sidewalk Evaluation model will be used towards the goal from the current BiPed plan to add 100 miles of sidewalk over the next 10 years. Meyer added that the methodology and classification

system behind the Sidewalk Evaluation Model will be applied for scoring future projects in different council districts as well as in the county and towns.

Jeff Phillips inquired about the purpose and ultimate objective of stations at the proposed locations on Spring Garden/Aycock and on Air Harbor/Lake Brandt. Meyer noted that the data will be used to understand commuting patterns and the Air Harbor/Lake Brandt is a popular recreational route that serves as a gateway between the city and the rural areas. Fischer noted the data will be used as a baseline and applied to future projects in prioritizing future improvements by projecting estimated users. Phillips noted his concern about bicycle traffic in that area and their safety, given a recent fatal accident off Church St. Meyer explained that there is a project in the planning phase to widen those roads to provide shoulder that would have to be funded by STP-DA funds, but it would require a local match from three different jurisdictions, which requires additional coordination. Amstutz noted that the importance of the counting program is to provide quantitative data in support of future bicycle and pedestrian planning projects. Truong noted that the counters are especially crucial because they support continuous data collection.

Laura Peoples inquired if the counters could differentiate from pedestrian and cyclists and Meyer confirmed this capability.

Amstutz provided a review of the Bicycle Friendly Community Feedback Report from the League of American Bicyclists. The top recommendations included completion of the BiPed Update, adoption of Complete Streets Policy, increasing staff time on bicycle projects, and establishing an official Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee.

The Watch for Me NC program aligns well with two additional recommendations from the Feedback Report: expansion of the public education campaign and enforcement of motorist and cyclist infractions. The application for Watch for Me NC is due April 17th and the UNCG Police Department has extended their support. MPO staff members are in an ongoing discussion with Greensboro Police to achieve the support from a high-ranking official required by the application.

Fischer noted that Watch for Me NC will help address improving bicyclist safety in Summerfield and the county while infrastructure improvements are still being worked out. Jamal Fox inquired if there had been outreach to the other universities in the area for them to participate in the program. Amstutz noted he had communicated with the other universities through UNCG but not received a response. Meyer noted that additional efforts would be made to include all of the universities.

Phillips requested clarification on the timeline for the Bicycle and Pedestrian Counting Program. Meyer noted that it was a 3-year program and the NCDOT was considering allowing the municipalities to maintain permanent ownership of the equipment.

Amstutz noted the first Bike Month Meeting had taken place on February 24th in preparation for Bike Month in May and the Pleasant Garden Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan Steering Committee had their first meeting.

Cheryl McQueary requested that the presentation of the BiPed Update, and particularly the bicycle counting program, be made available to the TAC.

5. Prioritization 3.0 Update

Lydia McIntyre presented information for the update on the Prioritization Process, including a review of existing project scores and the MPO Methodology for assigning points to projects. After approval from the TAC last month 10 new roadway projects and 20 new bicycle and pedestrian projects were submitted. McIntyre noted quality checking for the projects is expected to continue until the system closes on March 3rd. The scores for existing regional and divisional projects will be available by March 31st and scores for new regional and divisional projects and existing and new statewide projects will be available May 1st. McIntyre noted that changes have been made to the methodology since the last meeting. Step four of the methodology outlines the quantitative and qualitative analysis for assigning the 1700 available points across all modes at both the regional and divisional tier. Points can be donated to and by neighboring MPOs. There are six factors in assigning points with different weights for each factor. Upon the request of NCDOT the MPO staff has developed a matrix to define the calculation of these points. Step five outlines steps for obtaining

public involvement and includes: public notice newspaper ads; posters displayed on transit, parking decks, libraries, and recreation centers; press releases; mass emails; Facebook; a newsletter on the MPO and Prioritization Process; and a public review with a minimum of one meeting. Additional strategies identified were to “piggyback” off other meetings and a possible spot on the City of Greensboro website to draw interest.

Marikay Abuzuaiter suggested contacting neighborhood congresses, obtaining a list from public affairs that have a list of neighborhoods not in the neighborhood congress, and to include notices in neighborhood newsletters.

Tyler Meyer noted that the matrix is part of an on-going discussion with NCDOT and may not be part of the final methodology. Meyer also noted that all weights and values will be subject to calibration based on how projects perform under the process.

McIntyre noted that projects not approved for funding at their current tier than they can be brought down to the next tier where they may perform better and have a better opportunity for funding. Additional meeting dates were proposed for reviewing scores and allowing presentations from project proponents.

6. Project Updates

Tyler Meyer presented on several project updates:

Administrative Modification to the “Greensboro Pedestrian Signals” TAP project: An Administrative Modification was presented to change the “Greensboro Pedestrian Signals” project to “Greensboro Intersection Improvements: Pedestrian Signals and Accessibility Enhancement Project” to expand the project scope to include wheelchair ramp installations and upgrades. Jeff Phillips moved to endorse the Administrative Modification. Cheryl McQueary seconded the motion. The TAC voted unanimously to endorse the Administrative Modification to the TAP project.

EB-5518 Latham Park Greenway: A public information workshop for EB-5518 Latham Park Greenway will be held on March 17th from 4-7pm at the First Baptist Church at W. Friendly Avenue and Mendenhall Street.

A&Y Greenway in Summerfield: The Town of Summerfield has authorized retaining a design consultant and a selection of design services for the southern section of the A&Y Greenway in Summerfield.

7. Strategic Reports

Tyler Meyer noted that as part of the Ethics Commission Act a form is now available to disclose conflicts of interest. New members are required to submit their Statement of Economic Interest form upon joining the TAC. Existing members will need to submit their Statement of Economic Interest form by April 15th. Meyer also noted that the NCAMPO conference will take place in Wilmington from May 14-16.

Other Items

1. Board Member Update

There was none.

2. Regional Updates

Scott Rhine of PART requested time in a future meeting to present a general overview of the PART organization and discuss areas where PART would like to have increased education and involvement within the region.

3. Wrap-Up

Jamal Fox requested more information on the steps needed for improving the Highway 29 corridor including the fencing and pedestrian bridge. NCDOT and GDOT are to discuss issues regarding clean-up, beautification, and repairing the fencing along the corridor and will report back.

The next TAC meeting will be held on March 26th at 2:00 pm on the 2nd floor in the Greensboro Council Chambers.

The meeting was adjourned by Nancy Vaughan at 3:25 pm.