



TECHNICAL COORDINATING COMMITTEE
Minutes of September 23, 2015
10:30 a.m., Greensboro, NC
3rd Floor GDOT Conference Room
Melvin Municipal Office Building

ATTENDANCE

Tyler Meyer	<i>GDOT/MPO</i>	Mike Mills	<i>NCDOT Division 7</i>
Craig McKinney	<i>GDOT/MPO</i>	Scott Whitaker	<i>Town of Summerfield</i>
Daniel Amstutz	<i>GDOT/MPO</i>	Matt Wallace	<i>Guilford County Parks & Open Space</i>
Lydia McIntyre	<i>GDOT/MPO</i>	Oliver Bass	<i>Guilford County Planning</i>
Tram Truong	<i>GDOT/MPO</i>	Bill Bruce	<i>Town of Oak Ridge</i>
Adam Fischer	<i>GDOT</i>	Alex Rosser	<i>PTAA</i>
Chris Spencer	<i>GDOT</i>	Hanna Cockburn	<i>GSO Planning Dept</i>
Scott Rhine	<i>PART</i>	Cari Hopson	<i>GTA</i>
Michael Abuya (<i>by phone</i>)	<i>NCDOT TPB</i>		

Tyler Meyer called the meeting to order at 10:36 am.

1. Approve Minutes of August 26, 2015

Bill Bruce moved to approve the minutes of the August 26, 2015 meeting. Mike Mills seconded the motion. The TCC voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the August 26, 2015 meeting.

2. Triad Air Quality Analysis Approval

Lydia McIntyre explained that along with the development of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and the Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP), the MPO has to go through an Air Quality Conformity Determination because the MPO is a maintenance area for PM 2.5. This is a federal requirement, and projects in the MTP and MTIP are analyzed to determine if air quality will be adversely affected by the introduction of additional roadway traffic. The SIP budget determines how much NO_x and PM 2.5 can be emitted annually. Based on the air quality analysis for the new MTP and MTIP, the MPO is well within the SIP budget and is in conformity.

Scott Rhine moved to recommend the Triad Air Quality Analysis to the TAC for approval. Oliver Bass seconded the motion. The TCC voted unanimously to recommend the Triad Air Quality Analysis to the TAC for approval.

Planning for the transportation future

3. 2040 MTP Approval

Lydia McIntyre noted that the timeframe of the 2040 MTP is 2016-2040. It covers all modes throughout the MPO, including highway, bicycle & pedestrian, transit, and freight. It is financially constrained, meaning that the MPO can show that funding is available to implement the projects listed. A public comment period took place from August 14 to September 14. A public meeting was held on August 18 with was attended by over 30 people.

Nine people filled out the survey for the MTP online. A majority of people agreed with the recommendations of the MTP. Roadway was considered the most important mode, followed by transit, pedestrian, and bicycle. Almost all respondents agreed that local and state governments should collect new revenues for transportation, including from taxes and user fees. There were no significant comments about the MTP.

Scott Rhine moved to recommend the 2040 MTP to the TAC for approval. Michael Abuya seconded the motion. The TCC voted unanimously to recommend the 2040 MTP to the TAC for approval.

4. 2016-2025 MTIP Approval

The 2016-2025 MTIP provides greater detail on how upcoming projects are funded, their description, and their schedule. Projects that were selected to be incorporated into the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) through Prioritization 3.0 are included in this locally-adopted MTIP. Projects shown in FYs 2016-2020 are considered committed for funding by NCDOT, but projects with right-of-way past 2020 could shift depending on the outcome of Prioritization 4.0. This document went out for public review from August 14 to September 14, the same time as the MTP was out for review.

Lydia McIntyre noted comments on needs that were not addressed in the MTP and MTIP documents. These include: a comment concerning bicycle lanes being used as parking lanes; a request for a traffic light to be installed at Old Lake Jeanette Road and Church Street at Canterbury School; and a comment concerning signage at Wendover Avenue and I-40 and sidewalks in a neighborhood in southwest Greensboro. Additional comments were gathered on projects the public thought should not be included in the MTP or MTIP. The first comment requested the removal of the Airport Connector from the MTP. McIntyre noted that this project has been placed in the Illustrative List in the MTP, and the MPO will not seek funding for it at this time but will review it later to determine if it is still needed. A second comment suggested removing the US 158 Stokesdale Bypass and again the Airport Connector.

Chris Spencer moved to recommend the 2016-2025 MTIP to the TAC for approval. Mike Mills seconded the motion. The TCC voted unanimously to recommend the 2016-2025 MTIP to the TAC for approval.

5. Administrative Modification: U-5326 College/Guilford College at West Market Street

Tyler Meyer noted that this project is currently in the right-of-way acquisition phase and is slated to be funded by NCDOT in 2016 as it was picked up for funding through P3.0. The right-of-way is being purchased with STP-DA and originally \$560,000 in STP-DA and \$140,000 in local funds were set aside for this purpose in 2011, but the right-of-way costs have proven to be higher than expected. This Administrative Modification is necessary to add \$320,000 in STP-DA and \$80,000 in local matching funds in FY 2015 to complete the right-of-way purchases. The City of Greensboro and NCDOT have approved this change, and this is the last step in the process to allocate these additional right-of-way funds. NCDOT asks that the TAC to endorse this change. This is a much needed project that is quickly coming towards construction.

Hanna Cockburn inquired as to why the right-of-way costs increased so dramatically. Meyer explained that the right-of-way impacts were much larger than they expected and additional costs have come from reworking driveways and other access points to properties in the area.

Bill Bruce inquired if the railroad line crossing Guilford College Road just south of Market Street is part of the high-speed rail line. Meyer answered that this was a different line, the K line, which runs to Winston-Salem. Cockburn asked if there would be crossing improvements made on account of the railroad crossing. Meyer noted that Norfolk Southern will perform the work needed to accommodate the project at the rail

crossing. Chris Spencer added that the work includes medians and improved crossing arms to prevent motorists from going around the crossing arms on to the tracks while a train is passing.

Adam Fischer noted that there was originally going to be an interchange at Market Street and the Urban Loop (I-73), but it was dropped due to the excessive costs associated with impacts to adjoining industry that it would have created. This project will help deal with the congestion and capacity issues GDOT is seeing, and address the traffic model projections showing that traffic at this intersection will increase due to the lack of an interchange at Market Street.

Chris Spencer moved to recommend the Administrative Modification: U-5326 College/Guilford College at West Market Street to the TAC for endorsement. Adam Fischer seconded the motion. The TCC voted unanimously to recommend the Administrative Modification: U-5326 College/Guilford College at West Market Street to the TAC for endorsement.

6. Administrative Modification: End of Year Transit Adjustments for Sections 5310 and 5303

Tyler Meyer explained that this Administrative Modification will reconcile end-of-year funding levels for the FTA programs Section 5310 (Elderly & Disabled) and Section 5303 (Transit Planning). Section 5310 will be adjusted to reflect the total available funding and the 10% administrative set-aside will be recalculated. In addition, the amount going towards capital projects must be adjusted to ensure that 55% of the grant is dedicated to capital expenses. The Section 5303 funding amounts will be adjusted to reflect the total available funding, which is more than expected, and allow GTA to draw down all the total available funds.

Scott Whitaker moved to recommend the Administrative Modification: End of Year Transit Adjustments for Sections 5310 and 5303 to the TAC for endorsement. Adam Fischer seconded the motion. The TCC voted unanimously to recommend the Administrative Modification: End of Year Transit Adjustments for Sections 5310 and 5303 to the TAC for endorsement.

7. PeopleForBikes Community Grant Endorsement

GDOT is applying for this grant on behalf of the city to improve the bicycling connections at the Hamburger Square intersection and the vicinity, including under the railroad trestle and at the roundabout just south of the trestle. This project originated through collaboration in 2014 between GDOT and Action Greensboro, PART, Elsewhere Museum, ArtsGreensboro, Bicycling in Greensboro, and the Forge. The intent was to improve the safety and comfort of bicyclists and pedestrians moving through this space, and to make the public areas more attractive for visitors. A Better Block demonstration project was created that was installed on a temporary basis on the evening of October 10, 2014, during the NC Bike Summit which Greensboro hosted last year. The improvements included narrowing existing travel lanes, adding a bicycle lane and shared lane markings, adding crosswalk markings, placing temporary art, and placing temporary seating for pedestrians. The community partners invested more than \$10,000 for public engagement, planning, and materials for the Better Block.

The GDOT Engineering Division drew up a marking plan for the area after the project was completed, which would include bicycle lanes, a new traffic pattern, and traffic control where it currently does not exist. It would also include the use of green paint markings at bicycle lane conflict areas, specifically at the intersection at Davie Street and the turnoff heading south towards Elm Street. Green paint for on-street bicycle lanes has not been used in the City before, but Charlotte has used it, establishing precedence for its use in North Carolina. The area would need to be resurfaced and remarked at a cost of about \$55,000-\$60,000.

This project would be in line with the recommendations in the draft BiPed Plan Update and would contribute towards the implementation goals of the plan. The grant could provide up to \$10,000 towards the cost of the construction. The City must cover the rest of the construction costs. While other organizations in NC have received this grant for trails and greenways this could be the first use of the grant towards an on-street bicycle project in NC. GDOT is prepared to fund the difference between the grant and the construction costs as required by the grant.

Scott Whitaker inquired about what part of the project requires resurfacing. Chris Spencer explained that the whole pavement area that is being improved would be resurfaced, and the green painted areas are where there are right turn conflicts with bicycle movements. Whitaker asked if there would be an education component to this project to teach the public about the purpose of the green paint. Daniel Amstutz explained that it would be necessary for GDOT to do this education ahead of the project, which could be completed within the next year. Spencer added that this has been identified as a high bicycle crash location. Scott Rhine suggested highlighting that this project would improve safety, particularly during the TAC presentation.

Rhine asked if other elements of the Better Block project, including pedestrian crossing treatments or artwork, would be included with this street redesign. Adam Fischer noted that this redesign will incorporate parts of the Better Block, but this is an especially important piece. Amstutz explained that this grant can only be used for bicycle infrastructure projects, so this is what the project focuses on. Hanna Cockburn noted that the Better Block did produce some results, including removing bushes that enclosed the grassy park areas and making big improvements to the lighting under the trestle. She also said it will make the area more predictable for all modes including making pedestrian crossings more predictable.

Hanna Cockburn moved to recommend the PeopleForBikes Community Grant to the TAC for endorsement. Scott Whitaker seconded the motion. The TCC voted unanimously to recommend the PeopleForBikes Community Grant to the TAC for endorsement.

Business Items

1. BiPed Plan Update

Daniel Amstutz noted that the BiPed Plan adoption timeframe has been pushed back to the November MPO meeting to provide more time to complete work on the document and respond to comments. More than 50 comments were received from the public on the draft plan during the public review period, which ran from August 14 to September 14. Also, in consideration of comments and media coverage for the plan, staff has determined to accompany the BiPed Plan adoption with the recommended adoption of an MPO Complete Streets Policy.

Amstutz discussed the public involvement during the public review for the draft plan. Along with the public review period, the draft plan was available for review during the August 18 public workshop at the same time as the MTP and the MTIP. More than 30 people attended this workshop, as noted before. An online survey was distributed by the MPO and through partner organizations such as Bicycling in Greensboro and Action Greensboro. 46 people responded to the survey, and several more comments were received via email. Two organizational comments were received as well.

The online survey results showed that a majority of respondents agreed with the recommendations in the BiPed Plan Update. Specifically, 87 % agreed with the bicycle recommendations, 81% agreed with the pedestrian recommendations, and 90% agreed with the trails and greenways recommendations. A majority of respondents (74%) also rated building more bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure and maintaining current infrastructure as the two most important strategies for improving bicycle and pedestrian safety. On average, education programs were listed as the least most important strategy for improving safety.

There were three open-ended questions in the survey: one asked to identify needs that were not included in the BiPed Plan Update; one asked to identify projects or programs that should not be included in the plan; and last question asked for any additional comments. Seven comments were received in support of the Downtown Greenway, three in support of the A&Y Greenway, and one in support of the N Buffalo Creek Greenway. Four comments requested that implementation of projects move faster, and two said the recommendations did not go far enough. Four comments were received in support of the paved shoulder projects on Lake Brandt Rd, Church St, and NC 150. Three comments noted support for a bike share system. Three comments noted the need to reduce speeds for bicycle and pedestrian safety, and two comments cited the need for better enforcement of traffic laws to protect bicyclists and pedestrians.

Several specific areas were identified for bicycle and pedestrian improvements, including adding sidewalk the Old Oak Ridge Road; improving the intersection of Pisgah Church Road and Battleground Avenue where the A&Y Greenway crosses; reviewing how bicycle traffic will be impacted on Lake Brandt Road due to the construction of the Urban Loop; and creating a better connection between the A&Y Greenway and Bicentennial Greenway. There was also a request to lower speed limits on downtown streets and to name specific streets for lower speeds limits. A commenter suggested that the plan should consider horse trails. Finally, better greenway amenities and better education of street maintenance crews were suggested.

The West Friendly Avenue/Guilford College Alliance requested that bicycle and pedestrian connections be improved in the Guilford College area, and also asked that bicycle recommendations in the area be moved into the short term. Bicycling in Greensboro made several comments, including: dedicate specific funds to bicycle and pedestrian projects in addition to increased maintenance funds; move Gate City Boulevard and Four Seasons Boulevard bicycle recommendations into the short term; include content about Share the Road signage and other advisory signage in the plan; use sharrows on roadways with medium-term and long-term priority bicycle recommendations; and to set a target date for developing a strategy to get the City of Greensboro to become a Silver Bicycle Friendly Community. This last point is particularly thoughtful because the City must get re-designated in 2017, which is coming up soon.

Hanna Cockburn inquired if the City is currently a Bronze Bicycle Friendly Community. Amstutz confirmed this and noted that staff will work to assess what Greensboro can do to achieve a Silver Bicycle Friendly Community status.

Of the persons that responded to the survey, 60% were male and 40% were female. The range of ages that responded was broad, and split fairly evenly between older and younger adults. The ethnicity of the respondents was predominantly white.

There are several changes that staff plans to make to bring the BiPed Plan Update to completion. These changes include adding lists of priority sidewalks and priority trails and greenways in response to TAC requests; expanding the maintenance sections for the bicycle and pedestrian chapters to include needs for other types of maintenance activities; adding information on resource and funding needs for constructing and maintaining the non-motorized transportation network; and fully documenting the public comments. Some of the media attention to the draft plan noted the City and MPO's lack of a Complete Streets Policy. This coverage did not reflect that the City and MPO have worked for many years to improve bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure under what amounts to a de facto Complete Streets Policy. Partly for that reason, staff recommends adopting a formal Complete Streets Policy to better publicize its current practices as well as to guide future efforts to improve conditions for bicycling and walking. This policy will be brought up for adoption at the November 10 MPO meeting along with the adoption of the BiPed Plan Update.

Bill Bruce clarified that the Complete Streets Policy that will be brought up for adoption in November is for the MPO, not just GDOT. Amstutz confirmed this. GDOT already operates under a de facto complete streets policy: it is standard policy for GDOT to include sidewalks in all new roadway projects and to consider and address the needs of bicyclists as well. Adam Fischer noted that various aspects of Complete Streets are addressed in GDOT's sidewalk design guidelines, street design standards, the Walkability Policy, and other areas. Tyler Meyer added that the policy would cover the MPO and its jurisdictions, but that as with all complete streets policies, implementation is handled one decision at a time by the appropriate governmental body.

Oliver Bass asked how this policy would be communicated and coordinated with the MPO jurisdictions. Meyer noted that the first BiPed Plan was presented to the local jurisdictions and that they were given the option of adopting that plan to make it part of their own local plan. The Plan was adopted by the City of Greensboro, Guilford County, and the Town of Oak Ridge. While MPO jurisdictions will be under the MPO Plan, local adoption is a good opportunity to establish local buy-in to the plan. Amstutz noted that Oak Ridge and Pleasant Garden have bicycle and/or pedestrian plans, and Sedalia is crafting their own, so this policy is in alignment with the direction the towns are currently going. Bruce noted that he was involved with the development of the BiPed Plan Update when he worked for the County, so they have been involved from the beginning.

Meyer noted there is a lot of good material in the plan and encouraged TCC members to go over the plan as well. Chris Spencer noted that MPO staff had done a good job on the plan, especially with coordinating between the various agencies and stakeholders.

2. Project Updates

- *R-2577 A/B/C – US 158 Stokesdale Bypass*: The Guilford County/Stokesdale portion is considered the C section of the project, with A and B in the Winston-Salem MPO. This project will be brought to the Merger Team, which includes representatives from the various permitting agencies and the Greensboro and Winston-Salem MPOs. They will discuss bridging and various alternatives for moving forward with the project. The right-of-way portion of section A, which is in the Winston-Salem MPO, is expected to begin in 2019 though the Guilford County portions are currently unfunded. The Merger Team will meet on September 29th and a workshop will be held in Stokesdale on October 14th to bring the town up to speed on the project. Tyler Meyer noted that the MPO had received quite a few opposing comments to this project at various points in the past, including requests to drop it from the MTP and MTIP. However, NCDOT is committed to at least funding the Winston-Salem MPO portion of the project, and for that to happen the environmental document for the entire project must be completed, in Guilford County as well as Forsyth County. McKinney said it was important to communicate to the town the impacts of not building the project as well, given the amount of truck traffic that currently runs through the town could increase.

Hanna Cockburn inquired as to how many alternatives were being considered for the Stokesdale portion. McKinney noted that there were about six alternatives for the route. Oliver Bass inquired as to the preferred route. McKinney explained that the Merger Team will determine the two routes for further evaluation along with a no-build alternative at the next meeting

Scott Whitaker suggested contacting the media in the area, particularly the Northwest Observer, to get coverage of the workshop and educate the public on the project.

- *U-5505 – Fleming & Isaacson*: Construction of this project is nearing completion. On September 28 the traffic signals at Fleming & Isaacson and Isaacson & Horse Pen Creek Road will start flashing yellow. The signals are scheduled to go to full operation on October 12.
- *Pending Projects*: Bids were recently opened for sidewalk projects on Florida Street and Randleman Road (EL-5101 DG) and the Cone-Nealtown extension, with construction expected to start in October for Cone-Nealtown and October or November for EL-5101 DG. The Battleground-Benjamin-Cone intersection project is planned to be re-bid in late October. The Battleground-New Garden intersection project is planned to have a bid opening in mid-November. Finally, Downtown Greenway Phase 2E, 3A, & 3C will be re-bid at the beginning of December.
- *Freight Project Map*: Last TAC meeting Commissioner Phillips requested that staff overlay MTP projects on the map of the freight survey comments that were received during the Triad Freight Study. The map shows that certain areas where staff received comments should be addressed by upcoming or future projects. However, some comments had to do with access into specific facilities and would need to be handled individually. This map and information will be shared with the TAC.

3. Strategic Reports

- *State Budget*: The state budget has been enacted. On a positive note it adds \$705 million over two years for transportation needs. This has been accomplished by eliminating a \$216 million annual transfer from the Highway Fund to the General Fund and through increased fees such as DMV fees. It is not yet clear how the additional resources will be directed, however the intent is clearly for a substantial boost to STI funding. The Governor's bond proposal was included with a referendum set for 2016, but only for state, university, and community college facilities, not transportation projects.

One more problematic change is that the Budget removes the Powell Bill from the gas tax funding to which it has been tied since 1959, making it instead subject to annual appropriations. For the next budget the Powell Bill funding has been maintained at current levels. In future budgets however, it will be subject to appropriations, creating a need for ongoing monitoring and outreach by cities. Adam Fischer noted that the changes to the Powell Bill will need to be watched carefully now that it is subject to legislative appropriations. Hanna Cockburn observed that small towns rely heavily on Powell Bill funds for their road maintenance. Tyler Meyer added that the budget adds language that the Powell Bill funds are to be used primarily for resurfacing. However many municipalities use these funds for more general road maintenance activities. The budget creates a new requirement that NCDOT report to the legislature annually on how the municipalities are using the funding.

Mike Mills noted that the budget also reduced the amount of small construction funds that are controlled by the Board of Transportation members. In this new budget each member only has about \$180,000 to use in their division. This is down from previous allocations which were around \$500,000. It will be difficult now for the NCDOT Divisions to help small towns with small projects with this reduced funding.

Meyer also noted that the budget capped the state's contribution to light rail projects to \$500,000 per project. It is unclear whether this would apply to the light rail line in Durham and Chapel Hill which was awarded a much larger state funding match under P3.0. Previously, the state had a policy of contributing up to 25% of the cost of rail projects, which is what they did for Charlotte's light rail line. Scott Rhine noted that the construction of the light rail project in Durham hinges on this funding, as the project is estimated at \$1.4 billion. Fischer added that Charlotte's costs were projected at \$30 million per mile for its light rail line. Rhine noted that it will make applications for federal funding for rail projects much harder. Meyer said that freight rail projects are still competitive projects, and will likely do better during Prioritization 4.0 than during 3.0 due to improvements in the rail prioritization criteria.

- *Prioritization 4.0 Update:* MPO staff are soliciting member jurisdictions for candidate projects until the end of September. Staff will evaluate the projects in October, and there will be a special TAC meeting in October or early November to review the submitted projects. Only 14 projects can be submitted per mode. Various intersection projects and interchanges have already been submitted or re-submitted. Projects can begin to be submitted to NCDOT on October 18.

Daniel Amstutz inquired about the special TAC meeting between now and the November meeting. Lydia McIntyre noted that a date has not been set and staff will be checking in with the TAC today to determine if they would like to have an extra meeting.

Other Items

1. NCDOT Update

Mike Mills noted that the US 220 widening project is still behind schedule. The I-73 connector from NC 68 to US 220 is expected to be open to traffic next fall, so it will be essential that the US 220 widening move ahead to handle this traffic. Work will begin on the Inman Road Bridge over Bryan Boulevard starting September 28. Bryan Boulevard will be closed at night over several months while this work is going on. The High Point Road relocation should be completed next spring.

2. TCC Member Updates

Scott Whitaker noted that Summerfield awarded a contract for the design of the southern portion of the A&Y through the town. Mike Mills added that the A&Y Greenway near Lake Brandt Road and Cotswold Avenue will be kept open during the construction of the Urban Loop.

3. Wrap-Up

The next TCC meeting will take place November 10 at 10:30 am in the 3rd Floor GDOT Conference Room. The meeting was adjourned by Tyler Meyer at 11:51 am.