



**TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**Minutes of September 23, 2015**  
**2:00 p.m., Greensboro, NC**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Greensboro Council Chambers**  
**Melvin Municipal Office Building**

**ATTENDANCE**

Nancy Vaughan	<i>TAC Chair*</i>	Adam Fischer	<i>GDOT</i>
Marikay Abuzuaiter	<i>TAC Alternate Chair</i>	Tyler Meyer	<i>GDOT/MPO</i>
Jamal Fox	<i>TAC Member, City of Greensboro</i>	Craig McKinney	<i>GDOT/MPO</i>
Jeff Phillips	<i>TAC Member, Guilford County</i>	Tram Truong	<i>GDOT/MPO</i>
Alan Branson	<i>TAC Member, Guilford County</i>	Dan Amstutz	<i>GDOT/MPO</i>
Cheryl McQueary	<i>TAC Member, NCDOT BOT</i>	Lydia McIntyre	<i>GDOT/MPO</i>
Dena Barnes	<i>TAC Member, Town of Summerfield</i>	Mike Mills	<i>NCDOT Division 7</i>
Ophelia Jones	<i>Town of Sedalia</i>		

\*Although the TAC Chair attended this meeting, the meeting was officiated by the TAC Alternate Chair.

*Marikay Abuzuaiter called the meeting to order at 2:05 pm.*

**Action Items**

**1. Conflict of Interest Policy Statement**

Marikay Abuzuaiter 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 August 26, 2015**

Cheryl McQueary moved to approve the minutes of the August 26, 2015 meeting. Jeff Phillips seconded the motion. The TAC voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the August 26, 2015 meeting.

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

*There were none.*

**Planning for the transportation future**

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

*There were none.*

#### **5. 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<sub>x</sub> 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.

Alan Branson moved to approve the Triad Air Quality Analysis. Jeff Phillips seconded the motion. The TAC voted unanimously to approve the Triad Air Quality Analysis.

#### **6. 2040 MTP Approval**

Lydia McIntyre noted that the timeframe of the 2040 MTP is 2016-2040. It covers all modes 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. Respondents indicated that roadway was 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.

Marikay Abuzuaiter inquired about how staff had publicized the 2040 MTP and sought public input. McIntyre noted that the August 18 public meeting was held on the same day as a City Council meeting to attract more attendees to review the MTP. There was also a press release, newspaper advertisements, a notice to the Greensboro Neighborhood Congress, and an email was sent out to a list of around 1,000 people. The long-term timeframe of the document can make it difficult for the public to become interested in it, but people will turn out for controversial projects. Staff also does outreach to various interest groups throughout the year. Tyler Meyer added that fewer people commented on the plan than came to the meeting, which likely means most people generally agree with the recommendations of the plan. Abuzuaiter thanked staff for their work on promoting the plan and doing their best to inform the public.

Cheryl McQueary moved to approve the 2040 MTP. Alan Branson seconded the motion. The TAC voted unanimously to approve the 2040 MTP.

#### **7. 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 with right-of-way or construction 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.

Jamal Fox moved to approve the 2016-2025 MTIP. Cheryl McQueary seconded the motion. The TAC voted unanimously to approve the 2016-2025 MTIP.

#### **8. 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.

Jeff Phillips moved to endorse the Administrative Modification: U-5326 College/Guilford College at West Market Street. Cheryl McQueary seconded the motion. The TAC voted unanimously to endorse the Administrative Modification: U-5326 College/Guilford College at West Market Street.

#### **9. 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.

Nancy Vaughan moved to endorse the Administrative Modification: End of Year Transit Adjustments for Sections 5310 and 5303. Jamal Fox seconded the motion. The TAC voted unanimously to endorse the Administrative Modification: End of Year Transit Adjustments for Sections 5310 and 5303.

#### **10. PeopleForBikes Community Grant Endorsement**

GDOT plans to apply 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. This would be the first use of green paint for on-street bicycle lanes in Greensboro. The treatment has been used in Charlotte, 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.

Marikay Abuzuaiter asked why the roadway needed to be resurfaced. Adam Fischer explained that the resurfacing would allow fresh paint markings to be applied while removing the old markings, clearly delineating travel lanes, bicycle lanes, and pedestrian crossing areas. Daniel Amstutz added that the intersection where Davie Street meets McGee Street on the north side of the trestle has been identified as a high bicycle crash location, and this project would provide important safety benefits for bicyclists.

Nancy Vaughan inquired if this project will tie into other bicycle lanes in the area. Fischer noted that GDOT is considering adding bicycle lanes on Martin Luther King Jr. Drive in the near future, and the bicycle lanes on Spring Garden Street are within a couple of blocks of this project. The project is primarily meant to guide bicyclists through this unusual intersection. He added that bicycle lane projects are planned for Market Street between Eugene Street and Church Street, and on Church Street downtown. Vaughan noted that connecting existing bicycle facilities should be an important goal when adding new bicycle facilities. Amstutz noted that this is an important goal of the BiPed Plan and the potential bike lanes on Martin Luther King Jr. Drive would lead almost all the way up to this project, and it is due to be resurfaced in 2016. Fischer added that not every roadway may be able to have bike lanes, but many areas of the city have good parallel routes for connectivity.

Cheryl McQueary inquired about the timeline for the Downtown Greenway and if it would have an impact on the Martin Luther King Jr. Drive resurfacing where it crosses at Bragg Street. Fischer explained that the roadway will not be affected by the greenway at this point, as it will simply cross the road.

Cheryl McQueary moved to endorse the PeopleForBikes Community Grant. Nancy Vaughan seconded the motion. The TAC voted unanimously to endorse the PeopleForBikes Community Grant.

## **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 % indicated agreement with the bicycle recommendations, 81% with the pedestrian recommendations, and 90% 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 connection to Revolution Mill. 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: the City will be up for re-designation in 2017.

Staff plans to make several changes 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 in the bicycle and pedestrian chapters; 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.

Jeff Phillips inquired about the timeline of paved shoulder projects in his district on NC 150 and Lake Brandt Road. Meyer said these projects are not currently funded but are listed in the MTP in the 2030 horizon year. MPO staff will evaluate them, and if they appear likely to score well enough, will submit them for consideration for funding by NCDOT under Prioritization 4.0. If funded under P4.0, NCDOT would cover 100% of the cost. If not, the cost would be a 100% local responsibility, unless an STP-DA or TAP funding award were forthcoming, in which case the locals would be responsible for matching costs, expenses not covered by the grant, and project sponsorship including design and implementation. Meyer noted several years ago the MPO considered STP-DA funding for a Lake Brandt Road shoulder widening project but it did not move forward at that time because the impacted local jurisdictions (Guilford County, the Town of Summerfield, and the City of Greensboro) did not commit the required matching funds at that time. Phillips noted his interest in making this project a greater priority in the area, and perhaps going back to the local jurisdictions to discuss it if the project does not rank well for P4.0. Meyer noted that staff will provide cost estimates for that project.

Phillips noted that more enforcement may be needed on Lake Brandt Road near the Lake Brandt Marina because drivers do not seem to obey the speed limits as they travel through that area. Amstutz noted that

GDOT had been working to add signage and markings around that area because of the proximity of the hiking and biking trails to the road. Phillips requested that staff provide maps of the different projects so TAC members can visualize where the projects are taking place. Amstutz noted that this information would be in the BiPed Plan Update and future presentations.

Alan Branson asked if staff had encountered political opposition to the greenway projects in the Summerfield, Oak Ridge and Stokesdale areas, as concerns over the potential use of eminent domain for the greenways had become a hot-button issue during town council elections. Dena Barnes noted that there had been some discussion in Stokesdale about the issue after a resident had raised a question about it, and town council candidates were addressing how they felt about the issue in response to this question. Branson encouraged MPO staff to work closely with the towns on the implementation of trail and greenway projects and address concerns various they may have, such as eminent domain and responsibility for maintenance of the trails and greenways. Amstutz noted that MPO staff have worked closely with the Summerfield Open Space and Trails Committee and would continue to work with Stokesdale and other towns to address the concerns and issues they may have about these projects.

Cheryl McQueary asked Mike Mills if there was potential for NCDOT to install paved shoulders on NC 150. Mills explained that a project to add four foot paved shoulders on NC 150 would need to be submitted to P4.0 for potential funding. The Division does not have the funds to do the work as a maintenance project. Also, adding that much shoulder requires purchasing right-of-way, moving ditches, and moving utilities, which makes it a TIP project rather than a maintenance project. Lydia McIntyre added that paved shoulder projects tend to not do well in Prioritization, partly because roadway project criteria focus on alleviating congestion. Meyer noted that the paved shoulder projects could be submitted as a bicycle projects instead of a roadway projects and possibly get a better score. The drawback is that NCDOT may only fund a portion of the project and completing the funding package would still require local participation. Barnes inquired if paved shoulders could be added to just one side of a roadway. Meyer noted it could be an option for a targeted safety improvement but would not make sense for an entire corridor. Mills added that resurfacing funds can sometimes be used to add an extra one or two feet of paved shoulder but it is beyond the scope of the resurfacing program to add four feet extra. However, bicyclists he has spoken with appreciate any extra shoulder that can be included on the roadway. Amstutz noted that MPO staff are reviewing the NCDOT repaving lists annually to see where small amounts of extra shoulder can be added to roadways up for resurfacing.

Branson inquired on the status of the Downtown Greenway and the A&Y Greenway corridor paralleling Battleground Avenue along the existing railroad bed. Adam Fischer explained that the City has been working with Norfolk Southern on abandoning that railroad corridor. The City has approached the railroad company in several different ways but has not had much success in convincing them to abandon it in the near future. Branson inquired if a resolution from the TAC or the City and County governments would help move the process along. Fischer noted that the City is using a law firm to help them with contacting the right people, but said that TAC members may wish to contact the leadership at Norfolk Southern to express their support for the railroad abandonment. McQueary suggested that the City use its political contacts to help move this project along. Amstutz noted that the City has engaged a design firm to develop a feasibility study for the corridor and bring the project closer to construction once the railroad corridor is abandoned.

McQueary observed that concerns about the A&Y Greenway crossing at Pisgah Church Road and Battleground Avenue have been brought up before. Amstutz noted that part of the implementation of the BiPed Plan Update is to study greenway crossings such as this that have been highlighted as having safety issues. Meyer noted that advisory signs had been put up to warn motorists and greenway users but that staff would ask GDOT Engineering to look at it more closely.

McQueary requested that staff provide information on the amount of funds that the City and the MPO spends on bicycle and pedestrian projects compared to highway projects. Meyer noted that staff can compile this information from various sources and provide it at the next meeting. McQueary suggested that staff put funding information about bicycle and pedestrian projects into the BiPed Plan Update for reference. Meyer noted that staff will be adding information to the plan about how much has been spent since 2006 as well.

## 2. Division Engineer Updates

Mike Mills noted that in response to MPO and community concerns the A&Y Greenway at the crossings of Cotswold Avenue and Lake Brandt Road will be kept open during the construction of the Urban Loop, although the details still need to be worked out. 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.

Alan Branson asked about the mesh matting underneath the pavement at the new US 421/Neeley Road interchange. Mills explained that it is likely a soil stabilization method and he will get more information and call Branson to provide him with more detail on this method.

## 3. 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 29<sup>th</sup> and a workshop will be held in Stokesdale on October 14<sup>th</sup> to bring the town up to speed 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.

## 4. 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 potentially 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. The budget also adds language that the Powell Bill funds are to be used primarily for resurfacing. However many municipalities currently 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.

- *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.

## **Other Items**

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

Cheryl McQueary noted that the increased transportation funding in the state budget is mostly for maintenance activities, although increases to the DMV fees are planned to go towards new projects. Additionally, the state budget 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 \$175,000 to use in their division. This is down from previous allocations which were around \$500,000. After the next budget year the small construction funds will be zeroed out.

### **2. Regional Updates**

*There were none.*

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

*The meeting was adjourned by Marikay Abuzuaiter at 3:38 pm.*