



TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Minutes of May 27, 2015
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>
Marikay Abuzuaiter	<i>TAC Member, City of Greensboro</i>	Tyler Meyer	<i>GDOT/MPO</i>
Jamal Fox	<i>TAC Member, City of Greensboro</i>	Craig McKinney	<i>GDOT/MPO</i>
Zack Matheny	<i>TAC Member, City of Greensboro</i>	Tram Truong	<i>GDOT/MPO</i>
Jeff Phillips	<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>
Shinita Wrenwick	<i>Town of Sedalia</i>	Mike Mills	<i>NCDOT Division 7</i>
David Tyeryar	<i>NCDOT</i>	Laura Peoples	<i>Bicycling in Greensboro (BIG)</i>
		Scott Rhine	<i>PART</i>

Nancy Vaughan called the meeting to order at 2:05 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.

2. Approve Minutes of March 25, 2015

Cheryl McQueary moved to approve the minutes of the March 25, 2015 meeting. Marikay Abuzuaiter seconded the motion. The TAC voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the March 25, 2015 meeting.

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

There was none.

Planning for the transportation future

4. Public Comments

Laura Peoples, Executive Director of Bicycling in Greensboro, thanked the City for assisting with Bike Month. The Open Streets event on May 1 was a great event and BIG is grateful that Greensboro Police provided in-kind services for the event. The Ride of Silence had a different route this year which seemed to work well, and Peoples again noted that Greensboro Police and the City provided in-kind services. The final event for Bike Month is Wheels on the Greenway on May 31. Peoples was appreciative for the City for partnering with BIG on Bike Month events. Nancy Vaughan thanked Peoples for BIG's work in raising awareness.

5. Governor McCrory's Connect NC Bond Proposal

Cheryl McQueary explained that the Governor's bond proposal would fund certain transportation projects, as well as state parks facilities, educational facilities, and other infrastructure improvements. There are actually two bonds in the proposal, one for transportation projects and one for other infrastructure. The bond must be approved by a voter referendum and this action item is to endorse placing this proposal on the ballot during the next election. McQueary read the text of the resolution.

Nancy Vaughan noted that the Greensboro City Council had unanimously passed a similar resolution that went a step further in support of passage of the bond referendum at their last meeting. McQueary suggested that the TAC resolution could be amended to also express support for passage of the bond referendum.

Jeff Phillips expressed his concern that he did not have enough information about the state's existing debt service and was hesitant to vote for or against the expanded resolution without more facts. Vaughan then recommended that the resolution be considered as originally presented, without the addition of support for passage of the referendum, to be clear that the question will be decided by the voters. McQueary pointed out that financing the bond would not require an increase in taxes. Phillips responded that that would make him feel more comfortable about it.

Cheryl McQueary moved to approve the resolution endorsing placing the Governor's Connect NC Bond Proposal on the 2015 ballot. Zack Matheny seconded the motion. The TAC voted unanimously to approve the resolution endorsing placing the Governor's Connect NC Bond Proposal on the 2015 ballot.

David Tyeryar, NCDOT CFO, explained that the transportation bond includes the funding of 27 permit-ready projects and the paving of 113 miles of secondary roads. The State Treasurer has agreed that this bond fits into the state's existing debt affordability model, and they would be general obligation bonds, with no increase in taxes needed. The second bond would include funding for other infrastructure projects and some non-highway transportation infrastructure projects as well.

6. MTIP Amendment: U-5306 B Battleground at Westridge

Craig McKinney explained that there have been delays in project development related to utility relocation, design, right-of-way acquisition, and environmental documentation. This Amendment would shift construction funding into 2016 but leave right-of-way funding in 2015. The funding source is also being changed from STP to NHPP. The current schedule is to let the project in May 2016 and have construction begin in late July 2016.

Cheryl McQueary moved to approve the MTIP Amendment: U-5306 B Battleground at Westridge. Zack Matheny seconded the motion. The TAC voted unanimously to approve the MTIP Amendment: U-5306 B Battleground at Westridge.

7. Revisit CMAQ Program FY 2016 & 2017 Project Selection

Tyler Meyer explained the FHWA Congestion, Mitigation, and Air Quality (CMAQ) Program. Projects must demonstrate an air quality benefit as documented through quantitative analysis techniques and must comply with certain eligibility requirements. Funding is suballocated to the Greensboro MPO by NCDOT

because it is part of an air quality management area for Fine Particulate Matter (PM 2.5). Transit projects such as purchasing clean fuel replacement buses are eligible, as well as certain roadway operational improvements and transit-oriented sidewalk projects. CMAQ projects for FY 2016 & 2017 were originally selected in 2012, but NCDOT has asked the MPO to revisit its project selections in part because the currently anticipated funding levels are 33% less than previously estimated. Approximately \$3.667 million in anticipated CMAQ funding is available over this timeframe, for a total of \$4.584 million when including the local match. An additional \$3.059 million is planned to be carried over from the FY 2013-2015 for 15 miles of transit-oriented sidewalks under project EL-5101 DL, which includes Yanceyville St, Lees Chapel Rd, Pisgah Church Rd, English St, and W Friendly Ave. Since these projects have been designed together, they must now be delivered together under FHWA rules.

The funding available would be used as follows: \$1.046 million would be added to complete the EL-5101 DL projects and C-5555B, which is a transit-oriented sidewalk project to fill in gaps on College Rd and New Garden Rd that can be completed in the same timeframe. The \$3.059 million carryover will be used to complete the EL 5101 DL projects, which need to be completed as soon as possible because the carryover CMAQ funds are time-sensitive. \$3.122 million would be used to purchase seven Clean Diesel replacement buses for GTA, which are cheaper than the hybrid buses GTA has been purchasing in the past. 19 GTA buses will be coming up for replacement in 2016 and 2017, and some are already past their useful life.

Meyer explained that an additional project request was received from PART, which is asking for about \$200,000 from each of the Triad MPOs to implement a new Saturday service. MPO staff do not recommend funding this request, due to the significant reduction in funding, prior committed funds to EL-5101 DL, and the magnitude of GTA's bus replacement needs. The projects under EL-5101 DL must be delivered within an appropriate timeframe or the City risks losing the federal funding. Additionally, GTA must replace its buses within an adequate timeframe or the maintenance costs of the older buses will become prohibitively expensive for GTA to maintain. Buses are allowed to be replaced only if they have at least 500,000 miles and/or have seen 12 years of service. Over the FY 2016-2017 timeframe, nineteen bus replacements will come due. The CMAQ funding will allow GTA to replace seven of the nine oldest buses, 2004 Orions, several of which already have more than 600,000 miles on them.

Adam Fischer reiterated that replacing buses is becoming a critical need and stated funding opportunities are limited. The last time GTA had to replace such a large number of buses in such a short time was a decade or so ago, with the help of a Congressional earmark. Since that time earmarks have been done away with, and CMAQ is the key source the MPO can turn to address this need. Meyer noted that since the end of earmarks, additional bus replacement needs have been met through CMAQ funding, including the purchase of ten buses over the FY 13-15 timeframe.

McQueary requested that staff include a map of the CMAQ sidewalk locations at next month's meeting. Meyer noted that this would be done. Jeff Phillips inquired as to what other uses CMAQ funds can be put towards. Meyer explained that CMAQ funds can be used for bus replacements, new transit service support (operational costs, up to three years), intersection improvements (but major capacity expansions are not allowed), diesel engine retrofits for public and private fleets, transit-oriented sidewalks, air quality education programs, and a few other types of programs. Some intersection improvement projects have been done with CMAQ in the MPO, but there are no eligible intersection projects under development that could be ready in the FY 2016-2017 timeframe. Therefore funding bus replacements and transit-oriented sidewalks reflects the best recommendation for the use of these funds.

An action item regarding this project selection will be brought to the TAC at the June meeting.

Business Items

1. NCDOT Financial Update – David Tyeryar, NCDOT CFO

Cheryl McQueary introduced David Tyeryar, the NCDOT CFO. Tyeryar oversees the NCDOT finances and is charged with looking at ways to find additional revenue for transportation projects. He was the CFO and Deputy Secretary for the Virginia Department of Transportation, where he helped the state consider

alternate sources of funding for transportation projects and developed a transportation funding plan for the state. McQueary thanked him for taking the time to come make this presentation.

Tyeryar explained that the transportation network is the largest infrastructure asset in the state of North Carolina, and it would cost more than \$500 billion to replace it in today's dollars. Users travel 104 million miles per year on the system, and about 760 million tons of freight is moved through the system. However, on average residents spend about 30 hours per person per year stuck in congestion.

In terms of funding, North Carolina is heavily reliant on gasoline taxes and federal funding for construction and maintenance, and the amount collected on the tax varies based on gasoline prices and consumption. As of his presentation, the gas tax in NC is \$0.36 per gallon. Each penny of gas tax represents about \$50 million. However, a single lane of interstate roadway, divided by a vegetated median, costs about \$10 million per mile, thus one mile of a four-lane divided interstate costs about \$40 million. Primary roads cost about half that amount, and secondary roads cost a fraction of that. The Highway Use Tax (sales tax paid for on a car) is at 3%, while the regular sales tax is at 5%. A one percent increase in the Highway Use Tax represents about \$200 million. There are other fees that go towards transportation besides these two main sources for state funding.

With regards to federal funding, Congress has extended or continued existing legislation on transportation funding more times than they have authorized long-term funding bills. As a result, more and more states are looking at how to fix transportation funding at the state level. This includes North Carolina, which is exploring raising fees, the Connect NC Bond proposal, and public-private partnerships to help relieve the transportation funding gap. Despite changes in transportation funding from the STI bill, only about one out of every five transportation projects were able to receive funding in Prioritization 3.0. Tyeryar noted that there is no silver bullet for fixing transportation funding. Each state needs to solve the issue in a different way.

Tyeryar noted that 85% of interstate pavement is in good condition, and about 70% of primary road pavement is in good condition. Bridges are similarly in good condition overall. However, he emphasized that this cannot be sustained in the future, due to the significant age of many interstate facilities and bridges – 50 to 60 years old. 2,000 bridges will need to be replaced in the near future, otherwise they will receive weight restrictions. This is out of around 18,000 bridges that exist within the state.

Nancy Vaughan inquired if there is a “hard line” between the sales tax and the gas tax. Tyeryar explained that transportation funding does get transferred to support quasi-transportation activities, such as the State Highway Patrol. At other times transportation funding has been transferred to the general fund, but that has been paid back. There is no “fence” around transportation funding that requires it to go strictly to transportation-related costs.

Cheryl McQueary asked for Tyeryar to explain what percentage of transportation funding is federal and how much is state. He said that 43% of the funding is from the state gas tax and 27% is from federal sources, which mostly comes from the federal gas tax. In general, about 60% of the funding comes directly from the gas tax, whether federal or state. Most of the state gas tax goes to the Highway Fund for transportation maintenance, while the Highway Use Tax and federal funds go towards construction. He also noted that due to the STI law, there is a separation between maintenance and construction – the Highway Fund cannot be used for construction, and the Highway Trust Fund cannot be used for maintenance.

Jeff Phillips inquired about future funding needs for transportation and how the Governor's bond proposal would impact that. Tyeryar explained that the bond of about \$1.4 billion for transportation would double the amount of money the state can spend on construction, but only one time. NC currently spends about \$1.2 billion annually for transportation construction. This amount would need to be doubled annually over twenty years to catch up with the demand the state is currently seeing, which is about \$30 billion in projects.

Adam Fischer inquired about the process for receiving federal gas tax money back to the state. In the past, NC has been a “donor” state, receiving less money from the federal gas tax than it puts in. Fischer asked if there were plans to try and change that so NC received its full share. Tyeryar noted that about half the

states are donor states, but the recent MAP-21 legislation changed that so that donors are receiving more back than they used to. There has been discussion in Congress about “devolving” the highway systems to the individual states, and giving back to each state exactly as much as it put in, but Tyeryar and the Governor do not support this. A national system, built and maintained to the same standard, is a key to the national economy and should not be allowed to deteriorate or be managed at whatever standard each state chooses.

Cheryl McQueary pointed out that NC is one of three states in the U.S. that maintains county roads as well as state roads. This is part of the reason that the state gas tax is higher than in other states where counties take on this responsibility. Tyeryar noted that the states include North Carolina, Virginia, and West Virginia – technically Delaware does as well, but they only have three counties. He also noted that the argument against devolution works with regards to giving counties road maintenance: each county may have a different standard for how it maintains and builds its roadways.

Vaughan thanked Tyeryar for his presentation.

2. Aycock & Walker Safety Assessment Results

Daniel Amstutz reviewed the Pedestrian Safety Assessment for the Aycock & Walker intersection that took place on April 20. NCDOT Secretary Tata, FHWA NC Administrator John Sullivan, and City Councilwoman Nancy Hoffmann made opening remarks about the importance of bicycle and pedestrian safety and reviewed USDOT’s new Safer People, Safer Streets initiative. The assessment last about 4 hours and included sessions on crash data and land use related to the site, field review of the intersection and Aycock corridor, and group discussion and presentations on possible countermeasures for pedestrian safety. About 30 people attended the technical portion of the assessment and included representatives from GDOT, UNCG, NCDOT, FHWA, FTA, Greensboro Police, the Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center, and local bicycle and pedestrian advocates.

As a result of this safety assessment, the scope of the Aycock and Walker intersection project has been expanded beyond the intersection. The project will now include a vegetated median island on Aycock between Walker Ave and Cobb St. A dedicated mid-block pedestrian crossing will be created with a refuge area between Morton St and Cobb St. This will help channel pedestrians towards a safe crossing which will have high-visibility crosswalks and a Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB). UNCG has agreed to construct a paved path down to their parking lot opposite this crossing to help facilitate a movement that is already being made by students. The design of the intersection itself has not changed, but City traffic engineering staff is still reviewing the possibility of installing a protected phase for left turns from Walker onto Aycock. The plantings in the median are intended to be dense and discourage crossings away from the designated areas. The sidewalk on the east side of Aycock on the UNCG side would also be pushed back to allow for a buffer area with more dense plantings to again discourage erratic crossings. A handrail would also be installed along the sidewalk by the UNCG parking lot to channel pedestrians towards the parking lot entrance.

Marikay Abuzuaiter inquired whether the project could be speeded up any more. Craig McKinney noted that some temporary improvements to the signals to mitigate turning conflicts have already been made. However, the assessment added new work to the scope. 75% plans are expected to be ready by September, and at that point right-of-way discussions can begin with UNCG. Final approval is expected from NCDOT in March, and the contract could be let in May for construction in the summer. Abuzuaiter inquired about the right-of-way purchases. McKinney noted that GDOT plans to swap land with UNCG by giving up some right-of-way along the north side of the Aycock and Walker intersection where the third lane is being filled in. Adam Fischer noted that UNCG cannot give away right-of-way – there must be some compensation or trade for it.

Zack Matheny asked how the project is being funded. Tyler Meyer explained that it is funded through the Transportation Alternatives Program with a match from City bond funds. The TAC will need to approve an increase of funding from TAP to cover the increased scope of the project for the expanded project to proceed. Matheny requested that staff include a before and after picture for them to see at the next meeting. Meyer noted that this would be done.

Cheryl McQueary asked Mike Mills about the schedule for the replacement of the railroad bridge on Aycock St south of Spring Garden St. Mills stated that right-of-way will be completed around 2018 or 2019 and construction will begin a couple years after that.

Matheny asked Fischer how traffic would be facilitated during the project's construction. Fischer noted that work can be scheduled around peak hour traffic. The main work will be around the intersection and in placing the median, but it will not cause delays like other transportation projects that have occurred in the city. Matheny inquired if the Aycock & Walker project and the railroad bridge project could be done simultaneously to minimize traffic impacts. McKinney noted that the Aycock & Walker project is planned to be started next year. Fischer explained that the bridge project is five to seven years out and will be a bigger traffic problem than the Aycock & Walker project. They will strive to avoid any unnecessary delays to drivers with either project.

Jeff Phillips inquired as to how students would be prevented from jumping over the median and encouraged to use the pedestrian refuge. Fischer explained that there will be bushes close in to trees to block their movement. GDOT has learned what works from the Spring Garden St streetscape. There will also be bushes in the buffer next to the sidewalk on the east side of Aycock.

3. Section 5310 Call for Projects Update

Tram Truong presented an update on the MPO Call for Projects for the FTA grant program Section 5310, *Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities*. The Greensboro MPO has an estimated FY 2015 funding allocation of \$236,379 for the Section 5310 program, of which about \$215,619 is available for eligible projects. Projects will be prioritized through a competitive selection process overseen by the MPO as defined by the 2014 Coordinated Plan update. Project submittals were due May 15. MPO staff received three applications, from GTA, Guilford County Transportation and Mobility Services, and a non-profit. Unfortunately, the non-profit submission was deemed ineligible because they could not provide a local match for the funding. The remaining applications have been sent to the Winston-Salem MPO for scoring. Truong will also score the applications. A funding recommendation will be made once the scores are completed and compared. The funding recommendation will be brought to the June 24 MPO meeting for approval.

4. Long Range Transportation Plan/Transportation Improvement Program Update

Lydia McIntyre noted that the name of the LRTP would be changing to Metropolitan Transportation Plan, or MTP. The development of the document is underway, including the air quality analysis. The MTIP is also being updated to incorporate projects that were included in the recently released State Transportation Improvement Program, and will follow the same public input and approval schedule as the MTP. Public involvement for the MTP roadway list took place in February and the air quality conformity list was approved in March. The next major milestone is to complete the MTP and MTIP documents for public review in July. The goal is to bring both documents to the TAC for approval at the September MPO meeting and have the air quality conformity approved by October 1.

MPO staff also need to look ahead to the schedule for Prioritization 4.0 and the 2018-2028 MTIP. The current schedule is as follows:

- *August 2015* – changes due for existing projects that were not selected for funding under P 3.0
- *September 2015* – new projects must be submitted for consideration under P 4.0
- *October 2015-February 2016* – NCDOT develops quantitative scores for projects
- *March 2016* – Statewide projects identified
- *April-May 2016* – Regional local input points are decided
- *July 2016* – Regional project scores released
- *August-September 2016* – Division local input points are decided
- *November 2016* – Division scores released
- *December 2016* – Draft STIP released

McIntyre noted that the changes in scope, cost, and other information are needed by August 2015. Something new for this process is that the regional project scores will be released before the division local input points need to be decided. Some of the criteria for scoring the projects have changed, including for the transit and roadway projects.

5. Division Engineer Updates

Mike Mills noted that there are many projects listed in the status report. It will be about 5 weeks before they get the steel posts to finish putting up the signs for the Greensboro Science Center. The roundabout project at Southeast School Rd will be let in June to begin construction this summer. At the June Board of Transportation meeting, final funds are expected to be appropriated for the reopening of Old Stagecoach Rd near Honda Jet. There has been a request to realign the railroad crossing in Browns Summit because transfer trucks cannot cross the tracks without going over the centerline. 19 of 21 projects on the status report list are or will be under construction in 2015. About \$600 million worth of projects are underway in the Greensboro area. Eight are smaller projects, but there are some big-ticket items like the Urban Loop that are currently being worked on.

6. Project Updates

Craig McKinney noted that there will be bid openings for two projects occurring on May 28: Battleground/Benjamin/Cone intersection, and the Downtown Greenway Phases 3a, 3c & 2e. This will be the second bid opening for both of these projects.

Nancy Vaughan inquired as to why there had to be a second bid opening for these projects. McKinney explained that at the first bid openings for these projects, each had only one bidder. They were required to have another bid opening for the projects to get additional bids.

7. Strategic Reports

State Ethics Commission Recap: Tyler Meyer noted that all TAC members had complied with the filing requirements of the State Ethics Act, and thanked them for doing so.

P 4.0 Committee: Tyler Meyer explained that he had served on the Prioritization Work Group, which met every two weeks between September 2014 and May 2015. The work has recently concluded and the recommendations have been sent to the Board of Transportation for review and approval. There have been some enhancements and adjustments to the prioritization criteria, including the use of use of new methods such as statistical scaling. Overall, the process was worthwhile and should lead to improvements in the process and results for the next round of prioritization. Adam Fischer thanked Meyer for his service on the work group and for bringing back his insight to the Greensboro MPO. The TAC members also thanked Meyer for his work on the committee.

NCAMPO Conference: The 2016 NCAMPO conference will take place in Greensboro. A date has not yet been set. The NCAMPO conference in Raleigh this year had over 400 registered attendees. It is anticipated that at least 300 will attend the conference in Greensboro next year.

Zack Matheny inquired where the conference will be. Meyer explained that staff are attempting to set it up at the downtown Marriott, with the Koury Convention Center as a backup plan. Ideally it will be located downtown.

Bike Month Recap: Daniel Amstutz reported on highlights from Bike Month. The Open Streets event on Elm St on May 1 was very successful, and hundreds of people were able to experience it. Safe Kids Guilford did a bike rodeo, several bike shops were represented, skateboarders and people with BMX bikes did tricks, and there was music and other entertainment. The Ride With the City on May 11 had about 27 people. The Ride of Silence on May 20 had about 150 people. The last event of Bike Month will be the Wheels on the Greenway, which will take place Sunday May 31 at the Morehead Park section of the Downtown Greenway. It will be a kid-focused event with another bike rodeo for kids to learn about bike safety, along with music, games, and other activities. Amstutz noted that Bicycling in Greensboro was a great partner in working on events for Bike Month.

Other Items

1. Board Member Update

Cheryl McQueary noted that the Board of Transportation is going to have a meeting next week and will vote on the STIP at that time. Next MPO meeting she will be able to come back and confirm all the Greensboro projects.

2. Regional Updates

Scott Rhine noted that PART is wrapping up the freight study and have received state funds to do the second phase. With regards to the MTIP and LRTP, they will have the draft air quality conformity report ready in June. He also noted that the Triad MPOs will need to approve a resolution adopting the updated version of the travel demand model.

3. Wrap-Up

The next TAC meeting will be held on June 24th at 2:00 pm on the 2nd floor in the Greensboro Council Chambers.

The meeting was adjourned by Nancy Vaughan at 3:21 pm.