



**TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**Minutes of June 21, 2017**  
**2:00 p.m., Greensboro, NC**  
**Plaza Level, Plaza Level Conference Room**  
**Melvin Municipal Office Building**

**ATTENDANCE**

Marikay Abuzuaiter	<i>TAC Chair</i>	Tyler Meyer	<i>GDOT/MPO</i>
Nancy Vaughan	<i>TAC Member, City of Greensboro</i>	Dan Amstutz	<i>GDOT/MPO</i>
Alan Branson	<i>TAC Member, Guilford County</i>	Craig McKinney	<i>GDOT/MPO</i>
Skip Alston	<i>TAC Member, Guilford County</i>	Lydia McIntyre	<i>GDOT/MPO</i>
Carla Strickland	<i>TAC Alternate, Town of Pleasant Garden</i>	Tram Truong	<i>GDOT/MPO</i>
Mark Kirstner	<i>PART</i>	Pat Wilson	<i>NCDOT Division 7</i>
David Hampsten	<i>Bikesboro</i>	Joe Geigle	<i>FHWA</i>
		Chris Spencer	<i>GDOT</i>

*Marikay Abuzuaiter called the meeting to order at 2:02 pm.*

**Introductory Items**

**1. Conflict of Interest Policy Statement**

Marikay Abuzuaiter read the Conflict of Interest Policy Statement required by the State Ethics Act: it is the responsibility of each committee member to avoid conflicts of interest and if there are any to identify them now.

Skip Alston stated he represented GTA Contractor Transdev in various matters and would recuse himself on the action item regarding the GTA application for the Low- or No-Emission Vehicle Grant. He noted that Mike Fox had recused himself from transit funding action items at past meetings for the same reason. Abuzuaiter noted that the action item regards MPO endorsement of a GTA application for a discretionary FTA grant and is not related to the contractor, but said it makes sense for Alston to recuse himself on the item today while staff seeks guidance from the State Ethics Commission. Tyler Meyer said staff will ask the State Ethics Commission for guidance on the question.

**Planning for the transportation future**

## 2. Reports, Concerns, and Discussion from MPO Area Towns

*There were none.*

## 3. Public Comments

David Hampsten, representing Bikesboro, noted his appreciation for new sidewalks being constructed in Greensboro. He observed the newly constructed sidewalks on East Wendover Avenue had very few crosswalks. He noted other major thoroughfares such as Gate City Boulevard and Battleground Avenue tend to lack needed pedestrian crossing accommodations. He requested information about how the city and the state evaluate pedestrian crossing improvements and what standards are in place for their installation. Tyler Meyer said that staff will review and put together a written response to his inquiry because the answer is complicated. Marikay Abuzuaiter noted that crossings are often reviewed after a resident has made a request. Meyer added that there is a current project to install pedestrian signals and improve crossings but that progress was slow and he will review with GDOT Engineering and will coordinate a response to Hampsten's question.

## Action Items

### 1. Approve Minutes of May 17, 2017

Skip Alston moved to approve the minutes of the May 17, 2017 meeting. Alan Branson seconded the motion. The TAC voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the May 17, 2017 meeting.

### 2. 2017 Program of Projects

Tyler Meyer gave an overview of the 2017 Program of Projects:

- The 2017 Program of Projects accounts for FY 2017 transit grants programmed for GTA, PART, and TAMS from Federal and State sources including formula programs, discretionary funding, and funds directed by the MPO such as CMAQ.
- A public review period on the document ran from May 19 to June 19. No public comments were received.
- A public hearing will be convened at this meeting, after Meyer's overview, for anyone who wishes to share their thoughts on the document.
- Meyer commented that this document is routine and covers projects that are already planned and programmed, so there is little opportunity to change them at this point in the process. This is part of why there were no comments on the document.
- Marikay Abuzuaiter opened the public hearing and asked if there were any members of the public who wished to make a comment. There were none. Skip Alston moved to close the public hearing. Carla Strickland seconded the motion. The TAC voted unanimously to close the Program of Projects public hearing.

*Carla Strickland moved to approve the FY 2017 Program of Projects. Alan Branson seconded the motion. The TAC voted unanimously to approve the FY 2017 Program of Projects.*

### 3. Endorsement of GTA Application for Low- or No-Emission Vehicle Grant

Tyler Meyer presented on the Endorsement of the GTA grant application:

- GTA is applying for bus replacement funding from the FY 2017 FTA Section 5339(c) Low or No Emission Vehicle Program, a competitive discretionary funding program.
- GTA has about 35 buses that are due for replacement between now and 2020.
- The MPO has directed all available CMAQ funding to GTA bus replacement but more funding is needed; about 16 buses are currently scheduled for replacement in this manner.

- The application requests funding for six electric zero emission replacement buses, but it can be scaled back to two buses if not all funding requested is awarded.
- GTA has received a \$450,000 grant from Duke Energy for the fast-charging infrastructure needed for the buses.
- The bus batteries will be purchased separately and the costs will be amortized over the life of the vehicle with operating rather than capital expenditures; the batteries generally make up half the cost of the electric vehicles.
- The City has also committed substantial local funds in order to replace the buses with electric zero emission vehicles.
- Therefore the federal funding will be leveraging many other funding sources.
- The City Manager's Office will also write a letter of support for this application.
- Marikay Abuzuaiter said she was excited about the prospect of acquiring the electric buses for their quiet, smooth ride and low maintenance costs. Nancy Vaughan asked about how fast the buses are charged. Meyer said the quick-charging infrastructure can charge a bus in about five minutes.

*Nancy Vaughan moved to endorse the GTA Application for Low- or No-Emission Vehicle Grant. Carla Strickland seconded the motion. The TAC voted to endorse the GTA Application for Low- or No-Emission Vehicle Grant with four in favor and Skip Alston abstaining.*

#### **4. MTIP Amendment: I-5852 A & B Pavement Rehabilitation Projects**

Tyler Meyer presented on the MTIP Amendment:

- Project I-5852, pavement rehabilitation on I-73, will be broken into two parts, A and B, at the request of Division 7 for to get the timing right for this roadway section.
- Section A is I-73 from I-85 to I-40, and Section B is I-73 from I-40 to Bryan Boulevard.
- Pavement conditions are such that rehabilitation on Section A should be delayed until FY 2020 while Section B is in need of pavement rehabilitation in FY 2017 as currently scheduled.
- NCDOT has many pavement maintenance projects underway in the region and is working to refine schedules to get the most needed sections completed first even while using available funds more quickly.

*Alan Branson moved to approve the MTIP Amendment: I-5852 A & B Pavement Rehabilitation Projects. Skip Alston seconded the motion. The TAC voted unanimously to approve the MTIP Amendment: I-5852 A & B Pavement Rehabilitation Projects.*

#### **5. Congestion Management Process Adoption**

Lydia McIntyre presented on the Congestion Management Process:

- The CMP is federally required for MPOs with populations greater than 200,000.
- The document identifies system and corridor level congestion, and identifies performance measures and strategies to address congestion; it now also includes a multi-modal evaluation.
- It is typically completed before working on an update to the Metropolitan Transportation Plan.
- FHWA recommended adding travel time data to the document, which required the use of a consultant and necessitated additional time to work on the document.
- The CMP was originally a program, but it is now meant to be a continuous process with frequent updates.
- Capacity and non-capacity strategies are included – such as increasing usage of alternative transportation modes to reduce congestion.
- The goals of the CMP are set at the national level, while the local measures are set by the MPO.
- Mobility is one of the national goals and the local objective for roadways is to reduce the percentage of centerline miles experiencing congestion by 25% by 2025.

- Congestion is defined in the document in three ways:
  - Intersections with recurring bottlenecks with Adjusted Impact Factors which rank as the top 20 highest for years 2011 through 2015.
  - Corridors with percent below free flow speed of 20% or more for years 2011 through 2015.
  - Corridors with vehicle hours of delay categorized as light to heavy for years 2011 through 2015.
- Data on intersection bottlenecks was collected from the I-95 Corridor Coalition, which the MPO has access to.
- Adjusted Impact Factors is calculated based on number of occurrences, average duration, and average length, and has been weighted accordingly.
- These data validated some projects already under construction or planned, such as intersection improvements for NC 68 and NC 150 in Oak Ridge, and interchange improvements at I-40 and US 29.
- Several corridors were identified as being below free flow speeds, such as Wendover Avenue, Westridge Road, and US 220.
- On roads such as Wendover that cannot easily be widened, alternative strategies need to be considered.
- Data for the vehicle hours of delay was not as robust as the other datasets.
- Another national goal is Safety, and a local objective for bicycle and pedestrian modes is to reduce the percentage of bicycle and pedestrian crashes on roadways by 2% by 2020.
- Between 2007-2014, there were seven bicycle fatalities; for the same period, there were 48 pedestrian fatalities; this information came from NCDOT.
- A mobility objective for public transportation is to increase ridership by 15% by 2020.
- Information from the CMP will be fed into the MTP and can help with selecting and providing evidence of need for Prioritization projects
- Marikay Abuzuaiter asked about the intersection improvement project for Westridge Road and Battleground Avenue/US 220. Craig McKinney noted that this project is expected to go out for contract later this summer. Abuzuaiter asked if there will be an assessment to determine whether the improvements have reduced the congestion in the area. McIntyre said that the CMP and performance measurement process would indeed enable the MPO to see overtime what difference these improvements make and to identify and validate any other improvements that may be needed.

*Skip Alston moved to adopt the Congestion Management Process. Alan Branson seconded the motion. The TAC voted unanimously to adopt the Congestion Management Process.*

## **Business Items**

### **1. Presentation of PART Express System Changes**

Mark Kirstner presented on changes to the PART Express System:

- Considerations that people think about when deciding on which mode of transportation to use include cost, convenience, directness, ease of use, timeliness, and comfort.
- It's all about freedom – does transit provide the freedom to get people where they need to go, when they need it, as fast as they need to get there, at a reasonable cost, with respect for the user, reliably and predictably, and easy and simple enough to use?
- PART is different from GTA or other fixed route systems in that many people access it through park and ride lots.
- The urban regional express routes typically transport people from transit hubs and terminals in different cities or areas.
- It has become increasingly difficult to run the urban routes from the PART hub to the major downtowns on schedule which is another reason why the route revisions needed to be made.
- The rural express routes tend to be longer routes stopping at major employers or primary terminals.

- First and last mile shuttle service is provided around the PTI Airport area.
- PART also operates an urban circulator in High Point in the Palladium area.
- Public engagement on the system changes included on-board surveys, ongoing public input, and leveraging staff expertise.
- There was lots of data to draw from – they were able to pinpoint where people were actually going on their trips and could use new tools like TBEST in order to analyze routes.
- Route 1 runs from the WSTA Terminal to the PART hub.
  - This route no longer stops in Kernersville as that was adding too much time to the route.
  - A stop will be removed in downtown Winston-Salem that is a couple of blocks from the main stop; this is a controversial change but the walking distance to the main stop is reasonable, and it will eliminate delays in navigating downtown traffic.
  - Stops will be added at the Innovation Quarter.
  - Service will be extended to 9:30 pm.
- Route 2 runs from the Greensboro Depot to the PART hub and will have increased service hours.
- Route 3, the High Point Express, will have its service hours increased and number of stops removed because the frequent stopping was impacting the length of time of the route.
- For routes 1, 2, and 3, PART Express and Airport Area Shuttle service will be extended to 9:30 pm on July 3<sup>rd</sup>, and Saturday service for these routes is proposed to start September 30<sup>th</sup>.
- Route 4, the Alamance Burlington Express, has seen trip increases from 300 per month to more than 3,000 per month; this is partly because UNC Hospital provides free transit passes to their employees.
  - There will be one additional AM roundtrip service with the changes.
  - A stop in Whitsett will be eliminated.
  - The additional service is made possible in part because Alamance County passed a vehicle registration fee that will help fund PART's service.
- Route 5 is the Amtrak Connector, connecting Winston-Salem to Amtrak, and the times are set to match up with the Amtrak schedules; no changes are planned for this route.
- Route 6, the Surry County Express, is one of the best-used rural routes; Route 12, North Forsyth, which is a companion route, will be discontinued but the existing stop at King and service frequency will be added to Route 6.
- Route 8 in Davidson County was the least-used route and will be discontinued.
- Route 9, also in Davidson County, recently had its route revised and will not be changed at this time.
- Route 10, the Randolph County Express, is a popular route and will have additional runs but with reduced mileage and stops in Greensboro to improve its efficiency; it will be reviewed again in 6 months.
- Route 13 in Yadkin County and Route 14 in Davie County will both be discontinued.
- Route 17, the Kernersville/Winston-Salem Shuttle, will provide service to the VA Medical Center in Kernersville, and will have two additional runs put into service.
- Route 19, the Palladium Circulator in High Point, will have a different transfer point, and more direct marketing will be employed to try and boost ridership.
- Extended hours will be added to the Airport Area Shuttles, as well as proposed Saturday service to begin September 30<sup>th</sup>.
- The new system will be a bit leaner but also more efficient and will focus on the historically productive routes.
- The fares will be equalized and restructured so that all fares will be the same, whether urban or rural; they will also add a 10-ride pass option.
- Public outreach was an important part of the process for the system changes; more than 170 comments were received.
- The week of July 3-7 will be a fare free week on all PART Express routes to promote the new system.

- Marikay Abuzuaiter noted that she is on the PART Board and said that staff are stepping up to help people losing service due to the discontinuation of Routes 8, 13, and 14 by setting up vanpools for these areas. She thanked Kirstner for his presentation.

## 2. Division Engineer Updates

Pat Wilson said that Stage Coach Trail near the airport has been reopened. The trail crossing safety improvements on N. Church Street have been completed. The ribbon cutting at I-73 and the Taxiway Bridge was on June 9. The new section of I-73 is expected to be open at the end of June or early in July. The Urban Loop between US 29 and Wendover Avenue is expected to open this fall.

## 3. Project Updates

Tyler Meyer presented on the following project updates:

- Meyer noted that the I-73/Piedmont Triad International Airport Taxiway Bridge ribbon cutting was a terrific and very well organized event. Attendees included the Governor, Senate President Pro Tempore Phil Berger, NCDOT Secretary Jim Trogdon, and other local officials.
- The Lowdermilk and Holts Chapel sidewalk and roadway modernization project is expected to receive construction authorization soon.
- An agreement with the NCCR and NCDOT on the project to realign Lowdermilk Street and Sykes Avenue at Market Street and construct a grade separation with the railroad will be an agenda item for approval at the July 18 City Council meeting. The Pine Street at-grade crossing will be closed and sidewalks will be included throughout the project. Marikay Abuzuaiter noted that this is an important project that has been underway for a while and she is glad to see it coming to construction.
- NCDOT has begun work planning the Franklin Boulevard Grade Separation project. Right of way is scheduled for 2021 and construction for 2023. MPO and City staff gave comments to NCDOT about the demographics and socio-economic characteristics of the area, as well as the need for adequate bicycle and pedestrian facilities through the project. Staff also emphasized the need for NCDOT to take proactive and concrete steps to deter railroad trespassing in the vicinity. Railroad trespassing is a real problem that has led to eleven fatalities in Guilford County between 2011 and 2017 so far. Staff requested NCDOT evaluate and install railway fencing to keep people off the tracks in those areas that have a pattern or regular trail trespassing activities in the form of people walking along the tracks or crossing the tracks at locations other than roadway intersections. Abuzuaiter noted that GPD and its partners have been doing rail safety education lately for drivers and pedestrians because there have been four fatalities so far this year – at least one vehicle collision and two or three pedestrian crashes. Meyer noted that it is good that GPD is making this effort but education is most effective as a part of a comprehensive strategy including physical infrastructure changes such as fencing.

## 4. Strategic Reports

Tyler Meyer presented on the following strategic reports:

- Under the STI law, NCDOT convenes a workgroup to update the prioritization weights and measures prior to each round of prioritization. The Prioritization 5.0 Workgroup recently completed its work. This round included 18 workgroup meetings. Meyer said it had been his pleasure to continue as an NCAMPO representative on the P5.0 workgroup. He is generally pleased at what the group accomplished in this round. The process was sometimes challenging but he was able to make significant contributions that led to improved outcomes. Also, the knowledge gained from participating in the workgroup process is very beneficial. The Greensboro MPO's next steps for Prioritization are to identify and assess candidate projects and then make project selections for submittal by September 30.

- LimeBike began its bike share pilot at UNCG on June 5. The program has been very well received. UNC-G plans to retain and expand the service heading into the Fall semester. The City is working with LimeBike to expand the program into the rest of the community. An agreement between the City and LimeBike will be considered and acted on by City Council for approval at their July 18 meeting. LimeBike services will be at no cost to the city and there is a considerable amount of community support for the program. The city program is planned to be launched on August 4<sup>th</sup>, First Friday. Marikay Abuzuaiter asked if there will be specific locations for people to return the bikes. Meyer noted that some locations for downtown have already been identified and staff will continue working closely with the company to ensure the orderly roll-out of the program.

## **Other Items**

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

*There was none.*

### **2. Regional Updates**

Marikay Abuzuaiter thanked Skip Alston for becoming a member of the TAC. Alston noted that he is interested in the work of the group and is glad to be a part of it.

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

*The meeting was adjourned by Marikay Abuzuaiter at 2:52 pm.*