



**TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**Minutes of May 17, 2017**  
**2:00 p.m., Greensboro, NC**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, City Council Chamber**  
**Melvin Municipal Office Building**

**ATTENDANCE**

Marikay Abuzuaiter	<i>TAC Chair</i>	Adam Fischer	<i>GDOT</i>
Dena Barnes	<i>TAC Member, Town of Summerfield</i>	Tyler Meyer	<i>GDOT/MPO</i>
Nancy Vaughan	<i>TAC Member, City of Greensboro</i>	Dan Amstutz	<i>GDOT/MPO</i>
Yvonne Johnson	<i>TAC Member, City of Greensboro</i>	Craig McKinney	<i>GDOT/MPO</i>
Justin Outling	<i>TAC Member, City of Greensboro</i>	Lydia McIntyre	<i>GDOT/MPO</i>
Alan Branson	<i>TAC Member, Guilford County</i>	Tram Truong	<i>GDOT/MPO</i>
Mike Fox	<i>TAC Member, NCDOT BOT</i>	Mike Mills	<i>NCDOT Division 7</i>
Jim Trogdon	<i>NCDOT</i>	Miracle King	<i>NCDOT Public Affairs</i>
Ophelia Jones	<i>Town of Sedalia</i>	Joe Geigle	<i>FHWA</i>
Scott Rhine	<i>PART</i>	Chris Spencer	<i>GDOT</i>
Michael Abuya	<i>NCDOT TPB</i>	David Hampsten	<i>Bikesboro</i>
Carey Barr	<i>AECOM</i>	Tamara Makhoulouf	<i>Volkert</i>
Marlene Sanford	<i>TREBIC/Greensboro Chamber</i>	Cheryl McQueary	<i>(none)</i>
		Chris Jasper	<i>(none)</i>

*Marikay Abuzuaiter called the meeting to order at 2:04 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

**Planning for the transportation future**

the responsibility of each committee member to avoid conflicts of interest and if there are any to identify them now.

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

*There were none.*

## **3. Public Comments**

*There were none.*

## **Action Items**

### **1. Approve Minutes of April 19, 2017**

Nancy Vaughan moved to approve the minutes of the April 19, 2017 meeting. Yvonne Johnson seconded the motion. The TAC voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the April 19, 2017 meeting.

### **2. Section 5310 *Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program* Project Selection**

Tyler Meyer presented on the Section 5310 project selection:

- Section 5310 supports projects that serve the transportation needs of the elderly and disabled. The MPO directs Section 5310 funding per the Coordinated Plan via a competitive process.
- GTA, PART, TAMS, and non-profits are eligible agencies to apply and receive Section 5310 funds.
- \$221,087 is available in FY 2017 for eligible projects.
- A call for projects ran from April 5 – May 5, 2017.
- Funding requests were received from Guilford County TAMS and GTA; Section 5310 funds will be awarded to these agencies.
- Guilford County TAMS requested \$50,000 for operating expenses for the following project:
  - Continue to support transportation services for elderly and disabled persons for employment, education, senior services, and medical trips.
- GTA requested \$204,241 for capital expenses for the following project:
  - Continue to operate SCAT early morning service to serve medical trip needs before regular SCAT and fixed route service hours.
- Projects were evaluated based on the following criteria:
  - Maximizing the benefit to cost (number of people expected to be served divided by total dollar amount requested).
  - Number of users served or expected to be served.
  - Demonstrated ability to deliver services and meet federal grant requirements.
  - Enhancing coordination between human service transportation providers.
- Greensboro & Winston-Salem MPO staff reviewed and scored the applications under a reciprocal arrangement.
- Average Project Scores: TAMS: 35; & GTA: 16.
- The recommended awards are: \$50,000 for TAMS and \$171,087 for GTA.
- Mike Fox asked that he be excused from voting on this action item because his law firm represents a vendor for GTA. Yvonne Johnson moved to excuse Fox from voting on the item. Justin Outling seconded the motion. The TAC voted unanimously to excuse Fox from voting on the action item.
- Adam Fischer noted that the GTA SCAT early morning service that they applied for is primarily for dialysis patients that need to access medical services. It is a continuation of services that they have been providing for several years.

*Yvonne Johnson moved to approve the Section 5310 Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program Project Selection. Dena Barnes seconded the motion. The TAC voted unanimously to approve the Section 5310 Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program Project Selection.*

### **3. MTIP Modification: C-5555 E College Road/New Garden Road Sidewalks**

Tyler Meyer presented on the MTIP Modification:

- This is a highly needed project to fill in sidewalk gaps along College Road and New Garden Road.
- Right-of-way funding will be shifted from FY 2016 to FY 2017, and construction funding will be shifted from FY 2017 to FY 2018.
- Right-of-way acquisition is starting shortly, and is likely to take six months.
- Construction is expected to begin mid-2018 based on this timeframe.
- The funding amount is also being increased by this action, by shifting leftover CMAQ funding from the Florida and Randolph Street intersection improvement project.
- \$67,354 is provided for right-of-way and \$254,150 for construction.

*Mike Fox moved to approve the MTIP Modification: C-5555 E College Road/New Garden Road Sidewalks. Nancy Vaughan seconded the motion. The TAC voted unanimously to approve the MTIP Modification: C-5555 E College Road/New Garden Road Sidewalks.*

## **Business Items**

### **1. USDOT Certification Findings**

Joe Geigle, Congestion Management Engineer with FHWA, presented the USDOT Certification Findings for the Greensboro MPO Quadrennial Certification Review:

- The Certification Review for the Greensboro MPO was held in March in one day, as opposed to two and a half days as in years past.
- No corrective actions were identified in this review.
- The previous Certification Review produced thirteen recommendations for the MPO, which have all been satisfied; this review produced five recommendations for the MPO.
- The recommendations are:
  - Incorporate the two newest planning factors from the FAST Act into the next MTP update (resiliency and environmental mitigation – specifically stormwater runoff).
  - Develop plans and a timetable for expanding incorporation of performance measures into the overall planning process.
  - Communicate levels of service ratings of facility condition expected for a given funding level to the public.
  - Update the Congestion Management Plan (CMP) prior to the next certification review (this is already underway and will be adopted shortly).
  - Continue to involve the freight community in the planning process.
- The public hearing for the certification review was March 22.
- FHWA found everything in order with the Greensboro MPO and the planning process is certified for four more years.
- Marikay Abuzuaiter thanked Geigle for his work.

### **2. Division Engineer Updates**

Mike Mills noted that a contractor is ready to pipe ditches along Neelley road for residents in Pleasant Garden as the ditches are now too deep to maintain due to roadway changes from the Neelley Road project. Division 7 is discussing landscaping for the US 220 project with Town of Summerfield. There are several

interstate maintenance projects that are underway around the region, on I-40 and I-85, which will be a lot of night work.

### **3. Project Updates**

- Daniel Amstutz noted that both UNC-Greensboro and City staff have been reviewing the potential of starting a bike share program. Recently, UNC-G was approached by a newly established dockless bike share company called LimeBike that would provide all the equipment and operations of a bike share program to the university free of charge. UNC-G is planning on piloting the bike share program over the summer, starting with 125 bikes on campus, with plans to expand the program in the fall semester if it is successful. Although bond funding in the approved 2016 bonds was identified for bike share, it will not need to be used for a program with LimeBike. The pilot will start on UNC-G campus on June 5. Marikay Abuzuaiter took a moment to note that May is Bike Month and the Ride of Silence is that evening starting at 6 pm on Lewis Street in downtown Greensboro. Adam Fischer explained that typically cities will fund the start-up costs of a bike share program and subsidize its ongoing operation. In this case, LimeBike is bringing all the equipment and will operate the system at its own cost. Staff are working with the company to get locations for bikes to be parked in downtown and other areas where people want to go. Justin Outling asked if the city makes up the difference between the revenue generated by the program and the cost to run the program, in a typical scenario. Amstutz explained that LimeBike has received a significant amount of venture capital funding for their start-up, and the cost of the equipment is likely less than in a traditional docked model. Thus they are able to run the program at a lower cost in order to make a profit. They see a market for the program at UNC-G, and have discussed starting programs with other universities. Outling asked if Greensboro is essentially a test market for LimeBike. Amstutz noted that Greensboro is one of several test markets they are pursuing. The company is about six months old and they are pursuing markets in several other cities and particularly at universities.

### **4. Strategic Reports**

- Tyler Meyer noted that all TAC members have completed their ethics forms on time and completely.
- Daniel Amstutz noted the last Bike Month events are:
  - The Ride of Silence, May 17, leaving from the Forge on Lewis Street at 6 pm
  - Celebrate New Bikeways Ride, May 19, leaving from Deep Roots at 4 pm

## **Other Items**

### **1. Regional Updates**

Marikay Abuzuaiter said the ribbon cutting for the new Coble Intermodal Passenger Facility that morning was a great success. Scott Rhine thanked TAC members that were able to attend the ribbon cutting. The facility will open for public use on July 3, after construction equipment for the associated maintenance facility can be moved off site. PART will be requesting public comment on planned changes to PART routes, including removing underperforming rural routes, extending express route hours into 9 pm in the evening, and starting Saturday service for PART Express routes 1, 2, and 3. Rhine noted that the expansion of service is directly attributable to additional funding received from their ridership reporting to the FTA.

### **2. Board Member Update**

Mike Fox introduced NCDOT Secretary Jim Trogdon and gave some background on the Secretary's personal and career highlights, including his previous work at NCDOT, working as a transportation advisor for the NC General Assembly, and his service in the National Guard.

### **3. Special Presentation: NCDOT Secretary Jim Trogdon**

Secretary Trogdon noted that his presentation will focus on the future of NCDOT and he is looking for feedback from the TAC. He announced that the NC 68 Connector/I-73 will open to traffic at 10 am on

Friday May 19, noting that it was a project that has been under development for many years and has been a priority for the area.

- Secretary Trogdon said that his number one priority is to improve project delivery.
- Over the last five years the department has averaged a 78% rate of project implementation in the year the project was originally programmed, which has generated a large cash balance.
- The NC General Assembly did not agree with the transportation bond in 2016 in part because of this cash balance. Seventeen percent of projects submitted to prioritization are being funded.
- The goal is to cut the cash balance in half in the next 12-18 months.
- The cash balance is currently \$2.3 billion, and the plan is to bring it down to \$750 million, in part by advancing the schedules of funded projects.
- The draft STIP is expected to have around 530 non-bridge highway projects.
- Advancing projects should also grow the STIP from \$1.7 billion to \$2.6 billion per year over five years, with the expectation that the construction industry will be able to keep up.
- There are discussions ongoing with the General Assembly to do a new transportation bond this year.
- If a transportation bond can be passed, an additional 150 projects could be constructed.
- The intention is to accelerate projects in the last five years of the STIP into the first five years of the STIP.
- Another issue that needs to be addressed is the decline of motor fuel taxes revenue, which account for 57% of the budget for transportation projects.
- This needs to be replaced or supplemented because the amount of revenue from that is projected to decline between 2021 and 2025.
- The NCDOT Divisions will be asked to deliver more projects internally; it is expected that they can deliver 70% of the projects in the STIP, specifically the small ones.
- Environmental Impact Statements will still be done from the central office, but they are averaging 170 months to complete (10 years); they hope to compress this timeframe to three years instead.
- NC is the 9<sup>th</sup> most populous state in the nation but is the 5<sup>th</sup> highest in motor vehicle fatalities, with more than 1,300 fatalities per year.
- Partners are needed to address driver behavior for safety, especially factors such as speeding and distracted driving; local governments can be key partners on this.
- Improving mobility is another area of importance, whether for rural areas or urban areas.
- Criteria for selecting transportation projects at the regional and division levels are set to the same default weights and measures across the state, but there is an opportunity for regions and divisions that agree unanimously to do so to vary the weights of the respective criteria and/or to substitute in an approved STI criteria not in use in the default methodology. The Secretary believes that different Divisions and Regions should coordinate to determine whether such changes are warranted in light of the fact that to some extent each area has unique characteristics and issues.
- NCDOT is working with the General Assembly to create a fund for projects under \$2 million outside of the normal prioritization process that would be delivered in two years or less; these are for smaller projects that have big impacts but shouldn't have to wait years for them to be implemented.
- Success should be measured not by getting a project programmed in the STIP, but getting a project open to traffic / public use.
- NCDOT plans to improve the modeling and other analysis tools that transportation agencies have access to, as well as customer service from the Department.
- The condition of the transportation network is also an important focus, particularly the appearance and routine maintenance of the system.
- Additional mowing and vegetation maintenance is one side of this; routine maintenance pavement markings, and other infrastructure maintenance will also receive a renewed focus.

- Future technology also needs to be planned for, in particular unmanned aircraft – there are now 20,000 registered unmanned aircraft in the state.
- Unmanned aerial systems can help in a number of ways, such as emergency management and mapping, but it needs to be managed appropriately.
- Connected and autonomous vehicles also need to be addressed – at the policy level and the infrastructure preparedness level.
- Secretary Trogdon asked for feedback and any questions about his remarks.
- Yvonne Johnson asked if NCDOT has plans to place electric vehicle charging outlets at rest stops. Trogdon noted that some had been implemented that were free of charge and the General Assembly had concerns about this and passed legislation about it. Municipalities are currently doing the most work on this issue. NCDOT is happy to partner with any rest areas about it; in addition, he noted that vehicle manufacturers are expecting to release electric vehicles for sale that have driving ranges of up to 300 miles within the next couple of years. Autonomous vehicles, once they come to market, are expected to be mostly electric, so it is something that needs to be addressed soon.
- Johnson also asked about the wildflower program along state roadways. Trogdon noted that the program has tremendous support and NCDOT wants to keep and expand that program. They have worked with the World War I commission to plant over 70 acres of red poppies to commemorate the war.
- Alan Branson noted that safety is a huge concern of his as a small business owner and truck operator, especially in terms of distracted driving. He noted several instances of distracted driving being a factor in car collisions he is aware of. He also said autonomous vehicles are a concern of his and expressed his interest in speaking further with the Secretary about these issues. Trogdon noted that there needs to be better outreach to the commercial trucking industry and related his own experiences with truck driving as a way to pay for college. As noted before, distracted driving is a large contributing factor to car crashes, and it is a high priority for NCDOT to address this.
- Nancy Vaughan thanked the Secretary for spending time in the region. She asked if any of Greensboro's projects can be accelerated given the large cash balance for projects at NCDOT and the timeframe to do this. Trogdon noted that that is what NCDOT plans to do and is focusing on projects that can be completed in the next two years. Additional bond authority will allow the acceleration of many more projects.
- Justin Outling asked for more information on diversifying the sources of revenue for transportation funding. Trogdon noted that there are no states that have the right mixture of sources right now, although some are worse off than others. They are looking at the right blend of revenue sources for North Carolina, and it will likely not be one or two sources that can replace motor fuel taxes. There is already competition for several potential sources, such as sales taxes, property taxes, and general fund transfers. It is important to start the conversations about it now because it will take several years to phase in a new revenue source.
- Vaughan raised a concern about a potential tax on vehicle miles traveled and noted her opposition to it. Trogdon noted that some states are piloting a VMT tax but he did not see that working in North Carolina at this time.
- Marikay Abuzuaiter noted concerns about railroad safety and recent fatalities in Greensboro from people being struck by trains either crossing at-grade road crossings or trespassing on the tracks. Trogdon noted that it is a common problem and there have been many safety improvements for vehicle crossings. However, pedestrians trespassing on the railroad are still an issue and he suggested that better safety marketing and messaging will be needed. Mike Fox noted that Division 7 has been looking at this closely and especially in conjunction with new rail safety projects. Branson said he had heard from fire safety and emergency response teams concerned about delaying response times due to closed railroad crossings. Fox noted that NCDOT considers these issues during the planning of the railroad safety projects.
- Abuzuaiter opened the meeting to questions from the audience.
- Ophelia Jones, representing the Town of Sedalia, noted that the town recently completed a bicycle and

pedestrian plan with the help of a NCDOT Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning Grant. One of the priorities of the plan is to put sidewalks on US 70. However, the town is very small and they need funding and help from the state in order to implement priorities from their plan. Trogdon noted that the town should seek assistance from Division 7 on getting projects implemented through Prioritization 5.0. He also noted that there are certain funding streams that can be accessed, including funds from the Transportation Alternatives Program. There are restrictions on state funds for standalone bicycle and pedestrian projects, and he noted that funding a sidewalk project on US 70 would depend partly on whether it is a standalone project or tied with a roadway project. He indicated that it may be possible that such projects could be implemented with the new Division level funding stream he mentioned earlier, as no options have been excluded yet.

- David Hampsten of Bikesboro noted the need for better pedestrian crossings, including mid-block crossings, on all roads, but especially in suburban areas. He also noted that vehicles need to be slowed down in order to make crossings safer, and the need for more dedicated railroad crossings for pedestrians. Trogdon noted that railroad crossings need to be discussed with the municipality and the railroad. He noted his Deputy Secretary David Howard has been directed to bring back the NCDOT Complete Streets guidelines and add in new components such as streetscaping and safe routes to schools. He noted the need to include bicycle and pedestrian projects in larger roadway projects as opposed to standalone, because they can be integrated into the larger project more easily. Trogdon noted that there is conflicting data about the safety of mid-block crossings, and have some safety issues mainly due to driver inattention.
- Cheryl McQueary said that the jobs aspect of changes in the transportation system needs to be addressed. She noted that automation and autonomous vehicles may eliminate 75% of transportation jobs, and there needs to be discussion on how to proactively plan for transferring people with those skillsets to other jobs. This is an area where universities and community colleges may help. Trogdon noted the rapid pace of change in all industries and the need for retraining and professional development. This is something that needs to be addressed at the policy level and an educated workforce is a priority of the Governor. Branson added his concerns about package delivery from automated vehicles. There are a lot of hurdles to get over, logistically and legally.
- Abuzuaiter thanked Secretary Trogdon for his remarks.

## **Wrap-Up**

*The meeting was adjourned by Marikay Abuzuaiter at 3:15 pm.*