



TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Minutes of August 16, 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>
Yvonne Johnson	<i>TAC Member, City of Greensboro</i>	Lydia McIntyre	<i>GDOT/MPO</i>
Justin Outling	<i>TAC Member, City of Greensboro</i>	Tram Truong	<i>GDOT/MPO</i>
Alan Branson	<i>TAC Member, Guilford County</i>	Adam Fischer	<i>GDOT</i>
Skip Alston	<i>TAC Member, Guilford County</i>	Mike Mills	<i>NCDOT Division 7</i>
Dena Barnes	<i>TAC Member, Town of Summerfield</i>	Joe Geigle	<i>FHWA</i>
Mike Fox	<i>TAC Member, NCDOT BOT</i>	Chris Spencer	<i>GDOT</i>
Kyle Laird	<i>PART</i>	Mike Abuya	<i>NCDOT TPB</i>
Sheldon Herman	<i>Bikesboro</i>	Tracy Anderson	<i>ITRE</i>
Dabney Sanders	<i>Downtown Greenway/Action Greensboro</i>	David Ortega	<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. No conflicts were raised by members.

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

There were none.

Planning for the transportation future

3. Public Comments

Sarah Luffman, 5310 Ashworth Road, noted difficulties when turning left off of Eckerson Road to Hicone Road, and requested a traffic signal at this intersection. There is too much traffic to make the turn on Hicone Road, especially during school times. She has called and asked for a traffic signal at this intersection numerous times, but has not received a response to her request. Sight distance is also a problem at this intersection. Adam Fischer noted that this state maintained intersection is outside of city limits. Mike Mills noted that it must not have met traffic signal warrants in the past. Mike Fox said staff will review this intersection again and provide her an official response regarding the potential of a traffic signal.

Sheldon Herman said he represented Bikesboro and commented that good bicycling and pedestrian infrastructure leads to city prosperity. He also stated his opinion that Transportation Advisory Committee membership should expand to include a representative who regularly bicycles and uses transit and walking to get around.

Action Items

1. Approve Minutes of June 21, 2017

Nancy Vaughan moved to approve the minutes of the June 21, 2017 meeting. Alan Branson seconded the motion. The TAC voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the June 21, 2017 meeting.

2. MPO Endorsement of Bicycle Friendly Community Designation Renewal

Daniel Amstutz presented on the MPO Endorsement of the City of Greensboro's Bicycle Friendly Community Designation Renewal:

- The City of Greensboro is reapplying for Bicycle Friendly Community status from the League of American Bicyclists.
- The City received Bronze Bicycle Friendly Community status in 2009 and 2013, and the current status expires October 2017.
- The application is lengthy and detailed, and requires a review of how the community is improving bicycling conditions through engineering, education, encouragement, enforcement and safety, and evaluation and planning.
- Redesignation is an important recognition of local efforts in improving bicycling transportation.
- The application is due to the League of American Bicyclists on August 17. City Council & other organizations have endorsed the redesignation and the request is for endorsement of the redesignation by the Greensboro MPO.
- Alan Branson noted that Creek Ridge Road is being repaved to include fewer travel lanes and bike lanes and said he was concerned about reducing travel lanes and mixing bicycle traffic with truck traffic. He also had concerns about reducing travel lanes near the UPS facility which is going through an expansion. Adam Fischer said the locations where bike lanes are installed have been closely reviewed by staff to ensure traffic capacity will not be negatively impacted. [Editor's Note: bike lanes are being installed on Creek Ridge Road between Randleman Road and Elm-Eugene Street. The UPS facility is to the east of Elm-Eugene Street on Industrial Avenue and is not getting bike lanes at this time.]

Yvonne Johnson moved to endorse the Bicycle Friendly Community Designation Renewal. Skip Alston seconded the motion. The TAC voted unanimously to endorse the Bicycle Friendly Community Designation Renewal.

3. Amend FY 2016-2025 MTIP & FY 2018-2027 MTIP: Metropolitan Planning

Tyler Meyer presented on the MTIP Amendment:

- The FY 2017-2018 UPWP provides for \$50,000 in STBGDA in FY 2018 for planning.
- MPO planning is more important than ever due to federal requirements for performance measures & the NCDOT prioritization.
- The Section 104(f) PL budget is insufficient for MPO planning needs and a modest funding supplement from STBGDA funds is needed.
- This Amendment will add \$100,000 per year to project M-433 for future years in the UPWP, which is the estimated need.
- Budgeting now is important to ensure funding availability in the future.

Skip Alston moved to approve the FY 2016-2025 MTIP & FY 2018-2027 MTIP Amendment: Metropolitan Planning. Nancy Vaughan seconded the motion. The TAC voted unanimously to approve the FY 2016-2025 MTIP & FY 2018-2027 MTIP Amendment: Metropolitan Planning.

4. Amend FY 2016-2025 MTIP & FY 2018-2027 MTIP Transit Listings

Tyler Meyer presented on the MTIP Amendment:

- Meyer noted that this action affects the current FY 2016-2025 MTIP as well as the future FY 2018-2027 MTIP, and a request will be sent to NCDOT in December once the new STIP comes into effect.
- This action updates the FY 2017 funding & future year funding levels for the transit listings, which have just been set by Congress.
- Additionally, this action will move GTA's FTA FY 2017 funds to FY 2018 in case FTA is unable to process the funds before the new fiscal year.
- This Amendment will update the listings to reflect the *MPO Transit Resource Allocation Plan* and update the CMAQ and discretionary FTA grant details, including the 5339 (b) grant received by GTA for the Galyon Depot renovations.
- Mike Fox noted that his firm represents the contractor that operates GTA services. Although this action may not directly have any impact on his firm's client, he asked the TAC to recuse him from action item #4 to avoid any impression of conflict of interest. Yvonne Johnson moved to recuse Mike Fox from this item. Alan Branson seconded the motion. The TAC voted to recuse Mike Fox from action item #4.
- Skip Alston noted that his firm consults for a contractor for GTA and also asked to be recused from action item #4 to avoid any impression of conflict of interest. Yvonne Johnson moved to recuse Skip Alston from this item. Alan Branson seconded the motion. The TAC voted to recuse Skip Alston from action item #4.

Yvonne Johnson moved to approve the FY 2016-2025 & FY 2018-2027 MTIP Amendment: Transit Listings. Nancy Vaughan seconded the motion. The TAC voted to approve the FY 2016-2025 & FY 2018-2027 MTIP Amendment: Transit Listings with six in favor and two recusals.

5. Program of Projects Administrative Modification

Tyler Meyer presented on the Administrative Modification:

- The Program of Projects accounts for various transit grants received in the MPO by GTA, TAMS, and PART, including federal and state grants.
- This modification is necessary in order to update the final grant amounts (as noted in the previous action item) and make some minor corrections to typos in the document.
- The endorsement by the TAC is to keep them in the loop rather than to comply with a requirement since administrative action is all that is necessary in this instance.
- Mike Fox clarified that this modification is simply to correct numbers and typos in the document and is not a request for additional funds. Meyer said this is correct.

- Adam Fischer noted that GDOT is about to issue a purchase order for five electric buses for GTA, which will take about 12 months to construct. Greensboro will have the first transit system with electric buses in the state. Marikay Abuzuaiter noted that the electric bus demonstration from the past year was very smooth and quiet. Fischer said there are many environmental and maintenance cost saving benefits of the electric buses. Alan Branson asked about the life expectancy of the new vehicles. Fisher said they should last at least as long as traditional buses, 10-15 years or 500,000 miles; however it is possible they may last longer than expected.

Nancy Vaughan moved to endorse the Program of Projects Administrative Modification. Skip Alston seconded the motion. The TAC voted unanimously to endorse the Program of Projects Administrative Modification.

6. MTIP Amendment: EL-5101 and U-5532 Sidewalk Projects

Tyler Meyer presented on the MTIP Amendment:

- The project numbers EL-5101 & U-5532 are grouped bicycle & pedestrian projects; EL-5101 is being phased out once the final projects are complete and U-5532 is the new project number.
- EL-5101 has several key projects underway which include:
 - EL-5101 DO: Downtown Greenway Phase 3
 - EL-5101 DM: Holts Chapel Road and Lowdermilk Street
 - EL-5101 DJ: Downtown Greenway Phase 2 (expected start FY 2018)
 - EL-5101 DL: Transit Oriented Sidewalks - 15.5 miles (expected start FY 2019)
- The recently adopted FY 2018-2027 STIP is inconsistent with current plans for these projects, and an Amendment is necessary to bring the MTIP & STIP into consistency.
- Specific changes of this Amendment are to shift funding for Downtown Greenway Phase 2 to FY 2018 and EL-5101 DL to FY 2019.

Alan Branson moved to approve the MTIP Amendment: EL-5101 and U-5532 Sidewalk Projects. Yvonne Johnson seconded the motion. The TAC voted unanimously to approve the MTIP Amendment: EL-5101 and U-5532 Sidewalk Projects.

Business Items

1. Prioritization 5.0 Decision Point: Alternative Weights

Lydia McIntyre noted that the P4.0 officially closed out with the adoption of the FY 2018-2027 STIP in August. The P5.0 window is now open. She then presented on the P5.0 Alternative Criteria Weighting Options:

- STI identifies nine criteria that can be used to prioritize roadway projects. Deciding how to measure the criteria is the responsibility of the STI Workgroup, subject to NCDOT approval.
- The STI workgroup determines which of the nine criteria to use, how to measure them, and what the standard weighting will be across the state at the Statewide, Regional, and Division needs. The Division has the option of varying the weights between the criteria if the Division Engineer and all affected MPOs and RPOs agree.
- At the NCAMPO conference, NCDOT Secretary Trogon encouraged the Divisions, MPOs, and RPOs to get together to determine whether to alter the weights or substitute in or out any of the nine STI criteria if it would be a better fit for them than the standard weights and measures.
- Division 7 met with its MPOs and RPOs and discussed alternative criteria weights options.
- Two options were presented:
 - Option 1 (Current): Congestion – 15%, Benefit/Cost – 15%, Safety – 10%, Freight – 5%, and Accessibility/Connectivity – 5%

- Option 2 (Proposed/Recommended by staff): Congestion – 15%, Benefit/Cost – 15%, Safety – 15%, Freight – 0%, and Accessibility/Connectivity – 5%
- Option 2 is recommended because NCDOT does not have truck volume data on many of the roadways classified as Division roads. They do not apply freight data or points to any of these roadways. The Department does have consistent truck count data on the US and NC routes that comprise the Statewide and Regional roadways. They do apply freight data and points to these roadways when they cascade down to the Division needs competition. Thus, only regional tier roadways cascading down to the Division tier get any freight criteria credit in the scoring. In contrast, safety is calculated for all projects and is an important consideration in all situations. Also staff have analyzed the impact of this change and have found that 73% more projects are likely to see score increases under Option 2 compared to Option 1.
- McIntyre added that the change to the criteria weights under discussion is just for P 5.0. Tyler Meyer noted that the reason to take this action is because of methodological limitations at the Division Needs tier. The MPO will continue to advocate that NCDOT refine its data collection and methodology so that freight scores can be generated for all Division needs roadways in future prioritization rounds. This item is only for discussion at this meeting and action will be sought at the September meeting.
- Alan Branson noted the critical importance of freight, especially given the prominence of the Triad as a freight and logistics hub. He emphasized that the industry pays their way for needed improvements through taxes and fees. Meyer said it is ultimately the TAC's decision about whether to agree to the alternative weights for the criteria and that good arguments can be made for either side. In order for the changes to go into effect, all MPOs and RPOs in the Division need to agree to them, so if TAC does not agree the change will not occur. Mike Fox noted that there is a statewide freight plan in place and NCDOT treats freight very seriously. This change would only affect projects competing at the Division Tier. Adam Fischer said that many of the other criteria being used, such as congestion, safety, and accessibility/connectivity will improve many routes used by freight. Branson commented that the public perception is often biased against the trucking industry when it comes to routing and in crashes. Marikay Abuzuaiter asked staff to circulate a memo detailing the situation and the pros and cons of the options. Meyer said staff will do so and added that at the Statewide tier freight has been boosted to 25% of the total score, up from the 15% used under Prioritization 4.0. At the Regional level, freight criteria count for 10% of the project score. This shows that freight is still a highly prominent factor in project selection at those tiers. Lydia McIntyre added that the next phase of the Triad Freight Study will be underway soon, and staff will be contacting freight companies to get better information on which routes they use in order to improve local data and that staff would get with Commissioner Branson to seek any advice on enhancing the response rate. Justin Outling asked if staff can also compare the benefits between the different options in their report to the TAC. McIntyre noted that staff will include this in the report but noted that approximately 73% of the MPO Division needs projects would see score increases. Fox said he trusted Meyer's judgment on this issue, given his longstanding involvement with the STI workgroup and deep knowledge of the subject, and suggested that staff provide examples of projects that are expected to see score increases with this change.

2. Draft MPO Projects for Submittal for P5.0

Lydia McIntyre presented on the Draft MPO Projects for Submittal for P5.0:

- McIntyre noted that today is the first day of public review for the Draft P5.0 MPO Recommended Project List and the Draft P5.0 Project Ranking Methodology, which will run through September 14.
- This round of Prioritization will program projects for funding from FY 2020-2029.
- Proposed projects have been received from the City of Greensboro, Town of Oak Ridge, Town of Pleasant Garden, NCDOT, and PTIA.
- MPO staff have done an extensive analysis of the bicycle and pedestrian projects to determine which ones will be the most competitive.
- Up to 23 projects can be submitted for each mode.

- Some projects were carried over from the Prioritization 4.0, and thus will not count against the overall number of projects that can be submitted per mode.
- McIntyre highlighted several specific projects:
 - US 29 upgrade to freeway standards – this project was submitted last time in coordination with the Piedmont Triad RPO, but was not funded; there is now a feasibility study underway so it may move forward this time around
 - I-73 interchange reconfiguration with I-85 – this was accepted for funding but in the last five years of the previous STIP, so it will be carried over
 - Battleground Ave (US 220)/Lawndale Road – a reconfiguration of this intersection and corridor area was studied many years ago, and is now being submitted as a potential project
- McIntyre noted there are new rail projects but no transit projects. That is because STI only covers facilities and expansion vehicles. Replacement buses and items funded by formula grants are handled off of the STI process.
- The MPO Project Ranking Methodology will be used for the MPO’s qualitative and quantitative assessment of projects in spring 2018; the MPO has 1800 points for the Regional and Division Tiers and they can spend up to 100 points per project.
- The Methodology has not changed since last time around; the six factors and weights are:
 - Relative performance in NCDOT’s quantitative scoring process 40%
 - Support Multi-modalism (bicycle, pedestrian, transit, or freight) 10%
 - Identified on the MPO Priority List 15%
 - Feasibility of obtaining funding and construction of project during fiscal years 2018-2027 15%
 - Impact to local budget 10%
 - Impact to economic development 10%
- The Project List and MPO Methodology will be brought to the MPO for approval at the September 20 MPO meeting. Projects for Prioritization must be submitted to NCDOT by September 29. Draft Statewide projects and scores are expected to be released in March 2018.
- The MPO is using a service called Mindmixer to get feedback at a site called Engage Greensboro.

3. NC Vision Zero Campaign

Tracy Anderson of the Institute of Transportation Research and Education (ITRE) presented on the NC Vision Zero Campaign:

- Vision Zero is a change in thinking and a zero tolerance approach to roadway violence.
- Each year more than 1,400 people in North Carolina leave for a destination and never make it home.
- Vision Zero is a global movement that started in Sweden and now has many programs taking shape in the United States.
- NC is unique in that it has a statewide program to network and partner with local efforts on Vision Zero; most programs in the US are at the city level.
- Anderson showed a video from the primary US traffic safety strategy related to Vision Zero called Towards Zero Deaths.
- The program is a collaborative, data-driven initiative that involves engineers, enforcement, emergency responders, educators, and everyone who drives on the road.
- NC Vision Zero is a statewide clearinghouse of data, research, and resources; they work as a bridge for collaboration and to facilitate communication between traffic safety stakeholders across the state.
- Initiatives include public outreach, providing data, helping Vision Zero communities, and a new teen driver program.
- Outreach resources include a traffic safety video playlist and infographic/safety advertisements which they can tailor to communities.

- They also have a calendar that includes enforcement campaigns, community events, safety training, media events, and school presentations.
- Outreach programs include raising awareness by providing strong visuals of the toll that road fatalities take on communities, and they have used shoes to illustrate deaths at World Remembrance Day and for Mothers Against Drunk Driving; November 19 they plan to put out 1,441 pairs of shoes at the state capitol, to represent the number of people killed on NC roads annually.
- The Vision Zero Safety Dashboard can be used to explore crash data from all modes for different areas and pinpoint issues locally.
- Vision Zero communities are not restricted to cities; neighborhoods and other geographic areas can get involved.
- Current NC Vision Zero communities are Greensboro, Charlotte, Durham, Asheville, and Greenville.
- Anderson showed a video of interviews with community members in NC about the program and the Vision Zero goal.
- Marikay Abuzuaiter said she was surprised to learn that on average only 9% of drivers went unbelted, but that these comprised 42% of total fatalities. Anderson noted getting that final 9% to wear seat belts would significantly lower fatalities. Adam Fischer noted that GDOT is kicking off a project with consultant support to develop a comprehensive Vision Zero Plan for the city and MPO. He also noted that enforcement in the United States is much weaker than in other advanced countries and that is a primary reason those nations have seen a much more pronounced drop in fatalities and serious injuries than in the US. Automated speed enforcement is one example of a highly effective technique in use elsewhere.
- Anderson noted making substantial reductions in fatalities and serious injuries would require a rethinking and a shift in priorities.
- Abuzuaiter thanked Anderson for her presentation.

4. Division Engineer Updates

Mike Mills said that Division staff met with the US 220 contractor and the section of the road between Horse Pen Creek Road and Strawberry Road will be completed and finalized with no more temporary construction signage by August 28. They are working with the contractor to have the rest of the project completed by December 1. The Western Loop from Bryan to Battleground may be completed by this fall. The Eastern Loop from US 70 to US 29 may be open as early as October 1. Right-of-way is being collected for the section from Lawndale to US 29 with the expectation of a June or July 2018 let date; a completion date has not been set, but they are hoping to complete the remainder of the loop by 2021. Interstate maintenance projects are underway with contractors doing night work; I-40 between Gate City Boulevard to the Alamance County line is under contract. This area has one of the highest densities of interstates in North Carolina and they all need to be maintained.

Alan Branson asked about interstate highway access from US 421 to the Guilford-Randolph Megasite. Mike Fox noted that NCDOT is going through the process of requesting that US 421 be upgraded to an interstate designation but it may take another year to complete that. US 421 has been improved in Guilford County recently by upgrading some remaining at-grade crossings to full interchanges, so there are fewer physical barriers to getting this designation.

5. Project Updates

Tyler Meyer presented on the following project updates:

- The Transportation Project Update Newsletter has been updated for summer 2017 and the pedestrian section has been heavily updated. Comments on the newsletter are welcome.
- There was public meeting for the Downtown Greenway on the 50% plans for Phase 4 on August 15. Another public meeting on the Downtown Greenway Phase 1C plans will take place August 22.

Phases 3a/2e and 1b1/1b2 are expected to be completed in the fall, with potentially some landscaping to be completed in the spring.

- The City had a kickoff for the LimeBike bike share on August 4. City Manager Jim Westmoreland spoke, along with representatives from UNCG, NC A&T, and LimeBike. There was a brief bike ride after the remarks. UNCG will have 300 bikes, NC A&T will have 250, and another 400 will be concentrated around downtown Greensboro. Marikay Abuzuaiter noted that it was a great event and encouraged TAC members to try out the program.
- Adam Fischer noted that there will be a ribbon cutting for the Cone-Nealtown Road Connector at 9 am on August 30. Mike Fox requested that staff send an email to the TAC reminding them of the date.

6. Strategic Reports

Tyler Meyer noted that the Board of Transportation met in Greensboro on August 3 at the O’Henry Hotel and local staff presented to the Board about their current work projects.

Other Items

1. Board Member Update

Mike Fox thanked MPO and City of Greensboro staff for their assistance in making the Board of Transportation meeting in Greensboro successful. The four Triad MPOs made presentations, as well as Marikay Abuzuaiter and staff from PART and GDOT. They honored Chief Justice Henry Frye with a bridge naming in his home town. The BOT is planning to travel at least a few times per year to visit different areas of the state. They visited the High Point multimodal station, the High Point Furniture Market, and the Piedmont Triad Airport, and HondaJet. At the meeting the Board approved the new STIP.

Fox noted that communication and coordination by transportation organizations can be made better. He referenced as a good example the interstate maintenance work being done on I-40 that Division 7 scheduled to be completed at about the same time the new section of the Urban Loop is finished. He also referenced the construction work taking place in downtown Greensboro and its effect on downtown traffic as another opportunity to coordinate better between different city departments. There also needs to be better communication to the public about road work with informational signage that includes a description of the project, why it is occurring, and how soon it is expected to be finished. This is true for NCDOT as well as GDOT and the MPO.

He has been working with Mike Mills to find out how to accelerate the construction of the final section of the Urban Loop. Instead of discussing when the project will start, they are discussing when they want to project to be completed and work backwards on the schedule from there. In general, they are trying to improve their processes. Fox shared a story of how the process to remove the southern Alamance Loop from local and state planning maps had been whittled down from a two-year process to around a two-month process.

2. Regional Updates

There were none.

3. Wrap-Up

Dena Barnes thanked Division 7 staff for their work on improving the road network in the area.

The meeting was adjourned by Marikay Abuzuaiter at 3:26 pm.