



TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Minutes of September 20, 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>
Justin Outling	<i>TAC Member, City of Greensboro</i>	Dan Amstutz	<i>GDOT/MPO</i>
Skip Alston	<i>TAC Member, Guilford County</i>	Lydia McIntyre	<i>GDOT/MPO</i>
Mike Fox	<i>TAC Member, NCDOT BOT</i>	Tram Truong	<i>GDOT/MPO</i>
Mike Mills	<i>NCDOT Division 7</i>	Craig McKinney	<i>GDOT/MPO</i>
Chris Spencer	<i>GDOT</i>	Yuan Zhou	<i>GDOT/MPO</i>
Sheldon Herman	<i>Bikesboro</i>	Adam Fischer	<i>GDOT</i>
Dabney Sanders	<i>Downtown Greenway/Action Greensboro</i>	David Hampsten	<i>Bikesboro</i>
		Taft Wireback	<i>Greensboro News & Record</i>

Marikay Abuzuaiter called the meeting to order at 2:08 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.

3. Public Comments

Sheldon Herman, representing Bikesboro, restated his opinion that Transportation Advisory Committee membership should be expanded to include a representative who regularly bicycles, uses transit, or walks to get around. Abuzuaiter said TAC members are elected officials and are always open to discuss issues relating

Planning for the transportation future

to bicycling, walking, and transit, in order to make fully-informed decisions about those transportation modes.

David Hampsten, representing Bikesboro, thanked GDOT staff for responding to his inquiry about city policies on crosswalks. He noted that he has observed drivers yielding more frequently at the red, stamped asphalt crosswalks installed on Gate City Boulevard, and requested that more crosswalks in the city be designed this way. Adam Fischer explained that those crosswalks were part of the Gate City Boulevard Streetscape project and are typically installed with streetscape projects, but are not a standard treatment. Chris Spencer added that high-visibility “ladder” style crosswalks are used in areas where there are pedestrian safety concerns, and must be prioritized because the high-visibility crosswalks are significantly more expensive to install than the standard crosswalks. Fischer noted that there needs to be documented safety issues if Hampsten or others would like to have GDOT install more high-visibility crosswalks at certain locations. Hampsten thanked staff for putting bicycle lanes on Hill Street. He asked if there could be a public comment period in the middle of the TAC meeting as well as the beginning. Abuzuaiter said that could be considered but there is not one at this time, and thanked Hampsten for his comments.

Action Items

1. Approve Minutes of August 16, 2017

Mike Fox moved to approve the minutes of the August 16, 2017 meeting. Skip Alston seconded the motion. The TAC voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the August 16, 2017 meeting.

2. Amend FY 2016-2025 MTIP & FY 2018-2027 MTIP: Ballinger Road Bridge Replacement (B-5553)

Tyler Meyer presented the MTIP Amendment:

- NCDOT agreed to reimburse the City 80% of the costs of replacing this city-owned bridge in the P3.0 funding cycle.
- This bridge had a sufficiency rating lower than the lowest unfunded state system bridge, which was a requirement for it to receive NCDOT funding.
- Under the amendment, right-of-way and construction will be pushed back by a year and the funding source will be changed to *Surface Transportation Program Bridge – (On System Bridge)*.
- Right-of-way will be moved from FY 2017 to FY 2018, and construction will move from FY 2018 to FY 2019.
- Ballinger Road will be modernized, including bicycle and pedestrian facilities, between this bridge and the recently replaced bridge over Horse Pen Creek.

Mike Fox moved to approve the FY 2016-2025 MTIP & FY 2018-2027 MTIP Amendment: Ballinger Road Bridge Replacement (B-5553). Justin Outling seconded the motion. The TAC voted unanimously to approve the FY 2016-2025 MTIP & FY 2018-2027 MTIP Amendment: Ballinger Road Bridge Replacement (B-5553).

3. Amend FY 2016-2025 MTIP & 2018-2027 MTIP: I-40 at Elm-Eugene Street Safety Improvements (I-5964)

Tyler Meyer presented the MTIP Amendment:

- Free flow right turns at slip lanes have led to a significant vehicular and pedestrian crash pattern on the northern half of the I-40 / Elm-Eugene Street interchange.
- This project was submitted for funding under Prioritization 4.0 and was originally funded in FY 2025 with the I-40 widening and reconstruction project (I-5965) inside Greensboro.
- Since this is a low cost safety project intended to correct a current problem, MPO staff sought to

accelerate the project through negotiations with NCDOT and by providing the department documentation of the problem.

- NCDOT has now agreed to accelerate project funding to 2018 for right-of-way and construction; this project will improve safety for motorists and pedestrians by eliminating the free flow right turns. If possible, similar improvements to the southern half of the interchange will also be included under this project.
- Marikay Abuzuaiter asked if there will be a prohibition on right turns on red at the off ramps due to bad sight distance. Chris Spencer said that has not been fully reviewed yet and the design is still in progress. Abuzuaiter said she would like to know about that as the design progresses because she is very familiar with the area and drives it frequently.

Skip Alston moved to approve the FY 2016-2025 MTIP & FY 2018-2027 MTIP Amendment: I-40 at Elm-Eugene Street Safety Improvements (I-5964). Justin Outling seconded the motion. The TAC voted unanimously to approve the FY 2016-2025 MTIP & FY 2018-2027 MTIP Amendment: I-40 at Elm-Eugene Street Safety Improvements (I-5964).

4. Approve MPO Projects for Submittal for P5.0

Lydia McIntyre presented the MPO Projects for submittal for P5.0:

- Over the last year MPO staff and member agencies have worked to identify and evaluate potential Prioritization 5.0 project submittals. Now is the time to finalize the list and submit it to NCDOT for scoring and funding consideration for the FY 2020-2029 Transportation Improvement Program.
- Agencies participating in the candidate project identification and evaluation process included the City of Greensboro, Oak Ridge, Pleasant Garden, Sedalia, NCDOT Division 7, NCDOT Rail Division, and PTI.
- The final list of projects to submit includes 20 Roadway, 9 Rail, 23 Bicycle & Pedestrian, and 4 Aviation projects.
- No transit projects were identified by the transit agencies for funding for this round of Prioritization.
 - Adam Fischer explained that the Mobility Greensboro 2040 Public Transportation Plan currently under development will identify future service reconfigurations and expansions. Expansion buses and facilities needed for to support such services will be eligible to compete for STI funding. Fischer stated that GTA's substantial bus replacement needs do not qualify for STI funding. Non-STI sources are being used to replace buses for existing service including CMAQ and Section 5339 funds. McIntyre said the situation is similar for PART where replacement buses are the current need rather than expansion buses. Tyler Meyer stated that some of GTA's bus replacement needs are already covered by CMAQ and Section 5339 funds, but that additional funds will need to be lined up to fully cover these bus replacement costs.
 - Justin Outling asked what the local match is for transit projects. Meyer noted it is generally 20%, although for STI candidates it is possible to apply for a higher level of state funding. Mike Fox asked for examples of projects that could be funded through STI. Meyer noted that STI only covers expansion vehicles and services as well as facilities. Replacement vehicles are not eligible, and state participation in such projects comes out of the Highway Fund rather than Strategic Transportation Investments funding. In the last round of STI, Depot renovations were selected for funding; buses purchased for new service are also eligible.
 - Outling noted it is important to get the Mobility Greensboro 2040 plan done and in place to enable GTA to compete for available funds and not forgo funding opportunities. Fox noted public transportation competes at the Division Tier, which is highly constrained and competitive which may limit the overall role STI funding can play in meeting these needs. Fischer said the Mobility Greensboro 2040 Plan will identify a comprehensive funding strategy and that the buy-in of the GTA Board, City Council, and the MPO will be necessary to achieve full implementation of the plan over time.
- McIntyre then turned back to the project list, highlighting the following projects:

- US 158 – this is a carryover project as it was funded in the last five years of the most recent STIP. The part of this project that is R-2580A has been transferred over to the Piedmont Triad RPO because it is mostly in Rockingham County.
- Although the Urban Loop is fully funded, two additional interchanges, one at Lewiston Road and Fleming Road as well as one at Hines Chapel Road, are being submitted for funding.
- US 29 upgrade to freeway standards (I-785) – a version of this project covering Guilford and a portion of Rockingham Counties was submitted for P4.0 in coordination with the Piedmont Triad RPO, but was not funded. NCDOT now has a feasibility study underway from Greensboro to the Virginia state line. The project on the MPO P5.0 list is for Hicone Road up to the Guilford County line.
- NC 68 - Oak Ridge identified another project for NC 68, which will include safety improvements and access management from Fogleman Road to Alcorn Road.
- Battleground Avenue (US 220) at Lawndale Drive – consultants to the MPO completed a study several years back of potential options for a road reconfiguration. This is the basis for the conceptual redesign being submitted to NCDOT. The limits of this project have been extended south to Wendover Avenue to address how the roadway network functions more comprehensively.
- US 29 Safety Improvements – includes access management and potentially ramp closures within the City of Greensboro.
 - Fox noted that the right-of-way is very constrained here and the design is outdated. Meyer added that this project and the reconfiguration with US 29 and Summit Avenue/Phillips Avenue should be competitive projects and will be highly beneficial. This project is mainly looking at closing ramps and making the roadway safer, but does not include heavy duty beautification and landscaping. Mike Mills noted that some ramp accesses to US 29 have been already closed; NCDOT has also worked with NC A&T to clean up areas around US 29 near the university. Fox asked if staff could look into the cost of including landscaping with the project. Meyer said it will be included in the description. Mills said he will ask Division 7 staff to look at this corridor and determine what could be accomplished within the existing right-of-way.
- Improve NC 68 between Gallimore Dairy Road to Triad Center Drive to a superstreet - will tie into the widening north of Triad Center Drive.
 - Marikay Abuzuaiter asked for a definition of superstreet. Chris Spencer explained that it is a combination of access management and signal timing improvements that separates turning movements. Wilmington has some examples of superstreets. Meyer added another example is 15-501 at Europa Drive in Chapel Hill. Fox said there was a presentation to the BOT Highway Committee recently on superstreets which is available on the BOT website.
- McConnell Road - a proposed roundabout project at Gorrell Street and Willow Hope Street will be submitted.
- Gate City Boulevard Smart City Improvements – the project would install smart city and autonomous vehicle technology through the corridor between Elm Street and I-40.
 - Outling asked what improvements would be involved with this project. Fischer said they would install electronic devices at traffic signals to communicate with autonomous vehicles. GDOT applied for the Smart Cities Grant a couple of years ago that would have provided \$50 million to install and test various autonomous vehicle technologies and devices, but the City did not receive the grant. However, GDOT is still pursuing improvements to test these technologies and Gate City Boulevard from the Koury Convention Center to downtown has been identified as the corridor to do this. There has also been discussion of a transit circulator that could be run on autonomous vehicle technology. Fox noted the downtown transit circulator in Raleigh as a local example.

Fischer added that the recently completed Gate City Boulevard streetscape replaced the street lights with LEDs that could easily be converted into communications infrastructure for autonomous vehicles. Outling asked if other MPOs are planning on submitting similar projects. McIntyre said CAMPO has discussed it but she's not sure they are submitting a project. Meyer added that automated pedestrian detection would be a part of this project in order to help address the increased pedestrian and bicycle activity as a result of the expansion of UNC-G campus along Gate City Boulevard.

- Summit Avenue – bicycle & pedestrian and various safety improvements, including buffered bike lanes, between Sullivan Street and 4th Street.
- Gate City Boulevard bike/ped improvements – there are actually two projects, one for pedestrian improvements and one for bicycling improvements. This is an extension of the Gate City Boulevard streetscape project to the west but will have different components to it.
- McIntyre noted that new projects include the rail spur over to the Piedmont Triad Airport and the Yanceyville Street grade separation.
- Meyer noted the NC 150 at Browns Summit project will likely be a grade separation project and the description will be updated to reflect that. Fox said doing a grade separation would be difficult to do. Meyer responded that it will need to be further reviewed to determine its feasibility, but there may be other improvements that can be made short of a grade separation to improve safety at this location.
- Public review lasted from August 16 to September 14, and a total of 12 comments were received.
- The comments mainly focused on the project list and on bicycle and pedestrian accommodations.

Justin Outling moved to approve the MPO Projects for Submittal for P5.0. Mike Fox seconded the motion. The TAC voted unanimously to approve the MPO Projects for Submittal for P5.0.

5. Approve MPO Prioritization 5.0 Methodology

Lydia McIntyre presented the MPO Prioritization 5.0 Methodology:

- STI requires the MPO to have a methodology in place for assigning local points to Regional and Division Needs projects after they receive a quantitative score by NCDOT. Approval of this process is recommended at this meeting.
- The methodology is based on a quantitative and qualitative assessment and comparison of the projects. The results largely determine how to distribute the 1800 points available at both the Regional and the Division tiers. The points allocations may be used for any mode, with a maximum of 100 points per project, with points being assigned across all modes.
- The point assignment process starts in spring 2018 following release of the initial Prioritization 5.0 scores for all projects submitted in the state.
- The quantitative/qualitative assessment is based on six factors:

○ 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 2020-2029:	15%
○ Impact to local budget:	10%
○ Impact to economic development:	10%
- The majority of the public comments on the methodology were neutral. A few comments disagreed with the methodology. Opinions expressed in those comments included that the methodology is too vague, that East Greensboro is not sufficiently represented, that town needs aren't adequately considered, and that project delays were not considered.
- Mike Fox asked about how the first criterion (NCDOT score) and the fourth criterion (feasibility of funding and construction) were different. McIntyre explained that the fourth criterion relates to project development and how far along the project is in the process to be constructed.

- Fox clarified that the methodology and the percentage weight on the factors was already brought to the MPO for review. Tyler Meyer confirmed this and noted the methodology was very similar to what was approved for P4.0 – these factors and percentage weights were not changed from P4.0 to P5.0.

Skip Alston moved to approve the MPO Prioritization 5.0 Methodology. Mike Fox seconded the motion. The TAC voted unanimously to approve the MPO Prioritization 5.0 Methodology.

6. Decide on Prioritization 5.0 Alternative Weights

- NCDOT allows an option to modify the criteria weights at the Division Tier.
- Division 7 approached the MPOs and RPOs about modifying the scoring weights of the highway criteria, which are currently weighted as follows:
 - Congestion: 15%
 - Benefit/Cost: 15%
 - Safety: 10%
 - Freight: 5%
 - Accessibility/Connectivity: 5%
- The proposed modification, which has been approved by the other MPOs and RPOs in the Division, as well as Division 7 itself, is to move the weight from the freight criteria to the safety criteria, increasing the safety criteria weight to 15% and dropping the freight criteria weight to zero.
- Consensus from all the MPOs and RPOs is necessary for this change to go into effect for the Division Tier within Division 7.
- Based on TAC concerns about this change at the last meeting, MPO staff sent a report to the TAC to explain why this modification is beneficial.
- Reasons for the modification are: 1) freight data is limited for many Division Tier roadways, and NCDOT does not collect freight data on all Division Tier roadways, thus most Division Tier roadways do not receive credit in the freight criterion; 2) freight criterion points are usually awarded to major roadways (NC or US routes) which may cascade down to the Division Tier from the Regional and Statewide Tiers; and 3) MPO analysis shows that increasing the safety criteria weighting increases the roadway projects' average overall score by 2%.

Skip Alston moved to approve the Prioritization 5.0 Alternative Weights Modification. Mike Fox seconded the motion. The TAC voted unanimously to approve the Prioritization 5.0 Alternative Weights Modification.

Business Items

1. Division Engineer Updates

Mike Mills said the Western Loop from Bryan to Battleground and the Eastern Loop from US 70 to US 29 should be open this fall. As part of the Urban Loop construction between Battleground and Lawndale, part of Cotswold Avenue has been closed and Old Battleground has been severed in the middle. Cotswold is being connected to Lake Brandt Road and a temporary connection between Cotswold Terrace and Old Battleground has been installed. Right-of-way acquisition is in process for the section from Lawndale to US 29 with a let date set for March 2018. Interstate maintenance on I-40 has required its closure on certain sections for short periods.

The General Assembly has created a high impact, low cost project program where each Division will receive about \$1.7 million in additional funds for smaller projects. Division 7 is drafting criteria for this program in order to select appropriate projects. At least seven criteria must be included. Projects must be under construction 12 months from the date the Board of Transportation approves them, so these are projects that must be ready to go to contract. There is also a cost cap. Although it already received full

funding under STI, the Elm-Eugene Street project at I-40 to remove slip lanes exemplifies an ideal type of project for this funding, because relatively little right-of-way or utility relocation is needed, it is low-cost, and will address a known safety problem. Mills will send the criteria list to all the MPOs and RPOs in the Division to discuss the project criteria and reach concurrence on it. Potential criteria include traffic volumes, crash history, multi-modal improvements, and leveraging other funding sources.

2. Project Updates

Craig McKinney presented on the following project updates:

- A pre-merger scoping meeting for the R-4707 project (Reedy Fork Parkway) will take place on September 21.
- September 28 there will be a scoping/kick-off meeting for the Hilltop Road Grade Separation project.
- October 12 is the planned bid opening for the Horse Pen Creek Road widening project.
- On October 26 there will be public meetings at Stokesdale Town Hall about R-2577 (US 158 Widening & Relocation) to look at different project alternatives. There will be a meeting for local officials from 1:00-2:00 pm and a meeting for the public from 4:00-7:00 pm. A public hearing about the preferred alternative, in consideration of public feedback, is expected to take place mid-2018.

3. Strategic Reports

- Tyler Meyer introduced Yuan Zhou, a highly trained transportation engineer and new Planning Division staff member. Yuan will work on performance measures, smart cities, Vision Zero, the strategic prioritization process, and other duties.
- Meyer noted that new bus shelters have been installed on Gate City Boulevard. The design of these shelters is an update to the design of typical GTA bus shelters. Marikay Abuzuaiter asked if the glass on the new shelters was normal glass or a plexiglass. Chris Spencer said it is an impact-resistant glass.
- Meyer said the new MTIP document is under development and will be brought for approval at the November MPO meeting. There will be public involvement underway in October on the MTIP.
- Daniel Amstutz noted that Collaborative Cottage Grove, a partnership between the Cottage Grove neighborhood community in Greensboro and several partners including Cone Health and local universities and colleges, has received an award for the national BUILD Health Challenge grant. BUILD stands for Bold, Upstream, Integrated, Local, and Data-driven, and is aimed at improving the long-term health of residents in communities through a variety of systemic changes. The BUILD grant provides \$250,000 in funding for the neighborhood collaboration to reduce incidences of asthma and diabetes in the neighborhood. GDOT became involved with the Collaborative early in 2017 in order to help with efforts to improve active transportation opportunities and access. Skip Alston asked about the local match for the \$250,000 from Cone Health. Amstutz said he did not know how much cash or in-kind support Cone Health was providing as match but would get that information for him. Meyer added that the City of Greensboro has a sidewalk project to fill in sidewalk gaps on both sides of English Street in the Cottage Grove neighborhood. Spencer said bike lanes are also being installed on English Street as part of the resurfacing of the street.

Other Items

1. Board Member Update

Mike Fox noted he has been working with Division 7 to accelerate the construction of the final sections of the Urban Loop.

He asked if there was going to be an interchange at Cone Boulevard with the Urban Loop. Tyler Meyer

explained that the funding is being sought for that interchange at the existing Hines Chapel Road grade separation, but that it was being decoupled from the long planned Cone Boulevard Extension due to environmental constraints and funding challenges. Whether Cone Boulevard is to get extended and if so when should be determined and pursued separately, so as to not delay or compromise the planned interchange project.

Fox noted he is working with NCDOT on getting better information to the public about road closings and asked what was available locally for finding out road closing information. It should include not only transportation-related closings, but also water and sewer work. Adam Fischer noted that daily construction activities are being uploaded to Waze for their mobile application. Meyer said the city may need to do more promote the availability of the Waze mobile app for this purpose. Marikay Abuzuaiter noted that there are news releases about 5K races and other special event street closures but these should also be fed into the Waze app.

2. Regional Updates

There were none.

3. Wrap-Up

The meeting was adjourned by Marikay Abuzuaiter at 3:27 pm.