



Technical Coordinating Committee

Meeting Minutes of March 9, 2021

2:00 p.m., Greensboro, NC

WebEx Online Virtual Meeting

Attendance

Tyler Meyer	<i>TCC Chair</i>	Michael Abuya	<i>NCDOT TPB</i>
Craig McKinney	<i>MPO Staff</i>	Oliver Bass	<i>Guilford County Planning</i>
Lydia McIntyre	<i>MPO Staff</i>	Scott Whitaker	<i>Town of Summerfield</i>
Gray Johnston	<i>MPO Staff</i>	Sean Taylor	<i>Town of Oak Ridge</i>
Tram Truong	<i>MPO Staff</i>	Suzanne Akkoush	<i>Airport Authority</i>
Yuan Zhou	<i>MPO Staff</i>	Susette Morales	<i>FHWA</i>
Hanna Cockburn	<i>GDOT Director</i>	Tamara Njegovan	<i>NCDOT Div. 7</i>
Alex Rosser	<i>Airport Authority</i>	Deniece Conway	<i>GDOT/Engineering</i>
Chris Spencer	<i>GDOT/Engineering</i>	Elizabeth Jernigan	<i>GSO Parks & Rec</i>
George Linney	<i>GTA</i>		
Mark Kirstner	<i>PART</i>		

Lydia McIntyre called the meeting to order at approximately 2:00 PM.

Introductory Items

1. Orientation to WebEx Software

Lydia welcomed everyone to the March virtual meeting. Virtual meetings are required during the COVID-19 pandemic, and the MPO anticipates holding virtual meetings until the state deems in-person meetings safe.

Lydia McIntyre went through the WebEx Software and how to use it.

2. Opening Remarks and Roll Call

Lydia McIntyre took a roll call of everyone in the meeting for the public record.

Lead Planning Agency: City of Greensboro Department of Transportation



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Action Items

1. January 27, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Mark Kirstner moved to approve the minutes of January 27, 2021. Hannah Cockburn seconded. The TCC voted unanimously to approve.

2. MTIP Amendment: Statewide Transit Projects

Tyler Meyer stated the amendment adds a total of \$47.5 million to thirteen statewide transit projects supporting capital, operating, and administrative expenses of rural and small urban transit systems for fiscal year 2022. The funding total includes \$21.8 million for capital costs, \$7.1 million for operational expenses, and \$18.6 million for NCDOT administrative expenses. These totals include state match and local matching funds where applicable. The purpose of this amendment is to maintain MTIP/STIP consistency and to ensure local area transit agency eligibility, which is important in this case since Guilford County Transportation and Mobility Services typically receives funding under these programs.

Mark Kirstner moved to approve recommendation to TAC. Michael Abuya seconded. The TCC voted unanimously to approve.

3. MTIP Modification: MPO Area Roadway Projects

Tyler Meyer presented modifications for two MPO area roadway projects. NCDOT has asked to adjust schedules for two MPO projects submitted for funding consideration under previous STI prioritization process.

I-5964 is an interchange improvement project at I-40 at Elm-Eugene Street. The primary purpose of this project to improve safety and traffic operations by removing slip lanes to realign the intersection to reduce safety conflicts and increase visibility. The modification accelerates construction from 2023 up to 2021 based on need and project readiness.

R-5725 is for operational safety and access management improvements on NC 68 between NC 150 and Fogleman Road in the Oak Ridge area. The modification shifts the right-of-way from 2021 to 2022, and also shifts the construction from 2021 to 2023 to allow for additional time needed to finish design work.

Chris Spencer moved to approve recommendation to TAC. Hanna Cockburn seconded. The TCC voted unanimously to approve.

4. MTIP Amendment: A&Y Greenway / Downtown Greenway Phase 4

Tyler Meyer stated that EB-6037C A&Y Greenway was added to the TIP in 2019 with \$4.4 million in federal funds and a \$1.1 million local match after being selected for funding under a special NCDOT call for railbanking projects. In 2020 NCDOT agreed and TIP actions were taken to shift the funding to the construction phase because circumstances had required the City of Greensboro to proceed with the railbanking transaction prior to the federal funds availability. At this time, Meyer stated, it is recommended to increase the federal funding share to cover 80% of estimated costs using BGANY funds made available through a swap of prior year funding allocation with NCDOT.

The amendment would add \$2,748,595 in federal funds, and the required \$687,149 local match. *Scott Whitaker moved to approve recommendation to TAC. Mark Kirstner seconded. The TCC voted unanimously to approve.*

5. MTIP Amendment: FY 2021 CMAQ Shovel Ready Transit Projects

Tyler Meyer presented an amendment for FY 2021 Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funds awarded by NCDOT to MPO area projects. CMAQ is a federal highway program restricted to projects with a demonstrable air quality benefit. Eligible projects include transit projects, such as new service, replacement or expansion vehicles, transit-oriented sidewalks and greenways, and also potentially eligible are roadway operational improvements. Roadway projects that increase capacity, such as widening projects, are ineligible.

NCDOT had excess CMAQ funds which had gone unused for too long by other MPOs and RPOs so they issued a call for shovel ready projects in late December 2020. Meyer submitted a prioritized list of eligible projects to NCDOT on behalf of the MPO in January. The top two projects were selected: TA-4771 and TL-0012.

TA-4771 is a clean fuel replacement bus project. This project will replace three HEAT buses and one 2009 Gillig bus with four new clean diesel buses. Adds CMAQ funds for \$1,900,000 (Federal) and \$475,000 (Local) to FY 2021.

TL-0012 is a new transit service project to enable GTA to substantially improve Sunday service. GTA Sunday service currently operates on a reduced seven route system between 6am and 6pm. With the support of TL-0012, GTA will run its full 17 route system on an hourly basis on Sundays between 6am and 11pm, matching service levels provided on Saturdays. This will greatly improve the usability and reliability of transit service on Sundays and will meet a long standing transit priority need. The funding award provides for 80% of operating costs for the first three years of the new service. Adds CMAQ funds for \$2,164,190 (Federal) and \$541,048 (Local) to FY 2021.

Mark Kirstner moved to approve recommendation to TAC. George Linney seconded. The TCC voted unanimously to approve.

6. MTIP Amendment: FY 2022 CMAQ Transit Project

Tyler Meyer presented the amendment for a FY 2022 CMAQ transit project. NCDOT is making \$1,763,000 in CMAQ funds available to the MPO to direct to support priority needs, which will be matched by \$441,000 in local funding. He noted that CMAQ project eligibility is restricted to air quality beneficial projects and are also subject to the new NCDOT requirement to guarantee that the funds be obligated in the year in which they're programmed. If the MPO does not use the funds in 2022, they would be retracted and reallocated to future year funding competition in 2023. This makes project readiness and ability to draw down the funds in FY 2022 an essential consideration. The candidate projects that met both the eligibility and timing requirements were reviewed and identified.

U-5532 for transit-oriented sidewalks is ready for FY 2021/2022 construction but these projects already have MPO DA funding committed.

TA-4771, a GTA replacement bus project, would replace four outdated buses that are an increasing burden on operation and maintenance costs. CMAQ is the primary available federal funding source for replacement buses. Without FY 2022 CMAQ funding these buses could not be replaced until FY 2023 or later. Based on these factors, GTA replacement buses are recommended for a FY 2022 CMAQ award.

Michael Abuya moved to approve recommendation to TAC. Mark Kirstner seconded. The TCC voted unanimously to approve.

7. MTIP Amendment: MPO DA Pedestrian Projects

Tyler Meyer presented the amendment for U-5532 MPO DA Pedestrian Improvements, which is an umbrella project provides for multiple-subprojects in the area over a multiyear period. Some of the projects previously expected to gain construction authorization in 2021 need to be moved to fiscal year 2022 to provide additional time to complete the right-of-way phase and to provide the city time to develop designs for pedestrian signals for inclusion in the construction contracts. The amendment also provides for addition of a utility phase where needed. Meyer noted that the primary funding source is BGDA funds but Transportation Alternatives DA funds are included, as well as an allocation of TAANY funds that were made available to the Bridford Parkway project through a prior round of prioritization.

Scott Whitaker moved to approve recommendation to TAC. Chris Spencer seconded. The TCC voted unanimously to approve.

Business Items / Potential Action Items

1. Draft FY 2021-2022 Unified Planning Work Program

Tyler Meyer presented the draft Unified Planning Work Program which essentially provides the MPO's budget for the coming year, beginning July 1, 2021, and running through June 30, 2022. The document accounts for anticipated federal planning grants and how those are expected to be used. This primarily serves as an accounting document and also provides a general high level summary of what work is anticipated to be completed over the course of the year. The amount of federal highway planning funds provided this year is \$471,928. That's supplemented by BGDA funds, currently set at \$200,000. There's also a transit allocation for after FTA 5303 in the amount of \$195,322. Meyer the talked through the work highlights, referring to the slide, bullet by bullet. One point Meyer made, was that the MPO in cooperation with PART has reapplied for SPR funding for the Household Travel Survey. He said he expects that will be included in the final version. The final version of the UPWP will be brought back for consideration and approval at the May 12th meeting.

2. Division Engineer Updates

Stephen Robinson had no updates.

3. Project Updates

Craig McKinney presented the project update, noting the favorable bid opening B-5553. He said C-5555E College / New Garden sidewalks are now at the stage of advertising for a construction contractor. He noted that U-5532K, Elm Street sidewalks from Cone Boulevard to north of Cornwallis Drive, is expected to receive a construction authorization and permission to advertise in the near future.

4. Strategic Reports

Tyler Meyer started the strategic reports with an update on the MPO certification review, which USDOT is in the process of conducting. A big part of that review was approximately eight hours of interviews that took place on Friday, March 5 and Monday, March 8 with representatives of the Federal Highway and Transit Administration to discuss all aspects of the MPO's work. A public comment period is underway, and those interested may make comments through the MPO website.

The next item was a discussion of express designs, a process NCDOT started using the last few years ago to get a better handle on project scopes and cost estimates. This year they've talked a lot about cost escalation and issues with low cost estimates at the time of TIP programming and then the actual cost being much higher. MPO staff is in process of coordinating with the Department on several such studies, and this is an important area for close coordination.

Meyer then noted that staff has issued the annual Section 5310 call for projects to award FY 2021 FTA Section 5310 FTA elderly and disabled funds. This call for projects is for the purposes of directed Section 5310 funds apportioned to the MPO for direction to eligible area projects under the process established in the MPO Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan updated in 2019. The Coordinated Plan establishes the MPO's process, identifies eligible projects, and establishes criteria for project selection. This is a small funding allocation, expected to be about \$270,000 based on last year's number. Potentially eligible recipients for these funds include GTA, Guilford County TAMS and eligible nonprofits. In recent years only GTA and TAMS have submitted applications and received funding. MPO staff plans to have recommendations ready for TAC consideration and action at the May 12 meeting.

Other Items

1. Member Updates

Mark Kirstner wanted to remind everyone of the North Carolina Public Transportation Association conference. It's free and it's virtual. It's going to be virtual over 3 ½ days, but it's not the entire day. And the individual sessions are only an hour long. Hear from Dr. Taylor from the FTA Region 4, Dr. Randy Cohen, is going to be a speaker on Wednesday morning.

Craig McKinney discussed Piedmont Land Conservancy and their Legacy Trails program summit. It's a statewide summit for looking at trail developments throughout the state of North Carolina. It is occurring as a series of four Fridays, the first the first one, which was last week on funding to the help smaller areas, to acquire funds to construct trails. But the other three are about trail design and public outreach and community connectivity, all kinds that will be discussed in the upcoming three

Fridays and also three opportunities for field trips. They may be full, but Google North Carolina Trails Summit 2021 to find a link and find more information.

George Linney discussed conducting an ADA operation analysis on the paratransit system. They just awarded a contract to AECOM, which is based out of Charlotte, North Carolina, and had a kickoff meeting with them all last week. And so there will be starting this, doing a re-evaluation of the whole ADA paratransit program, which will probably last throughout this year, until the end of the end of the year. It's a phase one and two. So they'll complete phase one and then after that to come up with phase two, that with some implementation recommendations.

Linney said GTA is looking forward to getting prepared for the expansion of the Sunday service, and is currently working with the contractor in preparation for that, getting the additional training of the additional operators that's needed for that service. Currently operating seven routes on Sunday, so it's going to be expanded to all 17 routes, including connected service to operate similarly to on Saturdays from 6:00 a.m. to last trip, leaving at the depot at 10:00.

2. Wrap-Up

Tyler Meyer advised the TAC meeting will be March 10, 2021 at 2:00 p.m. and thanked everyone for attending.

Tyler Meyer adjourned the meeting at 2:59 p.m.