



Technical Coordinating Committee

Meeting Minutes of May 10, 2022

2:00 PM, Greensboro, NC

Zoom Online Virtual Meeting

Attendance

| | | | |
|----------------|-------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| Tyler Meyer | <i>TCC Chair</i> | George Linney | <i>GTA</i> |
| Lydia McIntyre | <i>MPO Staff</i> | David Pegg | <i>GTA</i> |
| Gray Johnston | <i>MPO Staff</i> | Elizabeth Jernigan | <i>GSO P&R</i> |
| Yuan Zhou | <i>MPO Staff</i> | Scott Whitaker | <i>Summerfield</i> |
| Tram Truong | <i>MPO Staff</i> | Sean Taylor | <i>Oak Ridge</i> |
| Chandler Hagen | <i>MPO Staff</i> | Stephen Robinson | <i>NCDOT Div. 7</i> |
| Craig McKinney | <i>MPO Staff</i> | Tamara Njegovan | <i>NCDOT Div. 7</i> |
| Hanna Cockburn | <i>GDOT Director</i> | Michael Abuya | <i>NCDOT TPB</i> |
| Chris Spencer | <i>GDOT/Engineering</i> | Kelly Larkins | <i>PTRC</i> |
| Deniece Conway | <i>GDOT/Engineering</i> | Suzette Morales | <i>FHWA</i> |
| Jason Geary | <i>GSO E&I</i> | Alex Rotenberry | <i>NCDOT IMD</i> |

Tyler Meyer called the meeting to order at approximately 2:00 PM.

Introductory Items

1. Orientation to Zoom Software

Lydia McIntire welcomed everyone to the March virtual meeting and reviewed how to use the Zoom software.

2. Opening Remarks and Roll Call

Lydia McIntyre took roll call for the public record. TCC members and others identified themselves.

Action Items:

1. February 7, 2022 Meeting Minutes

Tyler Meyer asked if any changes were needed to the minutes. No changes were identified.

Lead Planning Agency: City of Greensboro Department of Transportation



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Stephen Robinson moved to approve. Chris Spencer seconded. The TCC voted unanimously to approve.

2. MTIP Amendment: TA-6714 Electric Buses & Charging Infrastructure

Tyler Meyer said this MTIP amendment accounts for an FTA discretionary grant under the Bus and Bus Facilities Program awarded to the City of Greensboro earlier this year. This grant provides \$3.08 million in federal funds with a \$531,000 local match. This funding allocation will support the purchase of three electric buses, three overnight chargers, and one fast charger. These buses would be similar to the New Flyer electric bus model shown on the slide. The funds would be programmed under existing project TA-6714, the same project number used to acquire GTA's current fleet of electric buses and charging infrastructure. Once the MTIP amendment is approved, the MPO will request NCDOT add the project to the State Transportation Improvement Program at the next available meeting.

Meyer recognized Gray Johnston, MPO Transit Planner, for his work drafting the discretionary grant application, and noted Representative Kathy Manning's role in championing the project in Washington. Meyer then noted that GTA is preparing to develop a Zero Emissions Fleet Transition Plan, and will defer purchase under this project until that is complete in early 2023. This is a new FTA requirement for grantees seeking to purchase zero emissions buses using federal funds. It is also an opportunity for the city to think through the ramifications of transitioning the fleet over the long term. Maintenance requirements, charging requirements, power supplies at existing facilities, and future electrical service needs are all complicated enough to require comprehensive advance planning efforts.

Chris Spencer asked if the new charging equipment will replace the current charging equipment and Scott Whitaker asked for clarification on if the current overhead charging system will work for the new buses. Meyer explained that GTA's current Proterra fleet are first generation buses using a proprietary style of charger that is now obsolete. Current and future buses will comply with new FTA standards for interoperable charging infrastructure for all bus manufacturers, and will not work with the old Proterra chargers. The existing Proterra buses will continue to use their existing chargers and then future buses will use the new standard. Gray Johnson alluded to Tesla's use of proprietary charging technology, and that FTA was trying to avoid that in the bus industry in the future.

Stephen Robinson asked for more information. Tyler Meyer explained that there are many complicated aspects of transitioning the fleet. The Zero Emissions Fleet Transition Plan will sort through and assess these aspects, including whether the electrical infrastructure at the facilities is adequate or needs upgrades. The plan will further address generator capacity required to keep the fleet running through sustained power outages. Lastly, the plan will address training, equipment, mechanic, and other needs associated with the fleet transition.

Lydia McIntyre asked about whether CMAQ funds should augment these Section 5339 funds to help with funding the electric buses. Meyer stated that FY 2023 CMAQ is slated for clean diesel bus purchases due to the high expense with electric buses and the need to replace GTA's aging bus fleet in a timely fashion.

Chris Spencer moved to approve. Michael Abuya seconded. The TCC voted unanimously to approve.

3. FY 2022 Section 5310 Grant Awards & MTIP Modification

Tram Truong presented an item to direct the MPO's appointment of fiscal year 2022 Section 5310 Elderly and Disabled funds, and to revise the MTIP to reflect this funding action. Section 5310 is a formula funding program administered by the Federal Transit Administration and is designed to support human service transportation needs in the community.

Truong explained that the MPO has a process for awarding these funds under a methodology established in the adopted Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan that is currently in effect. A call for projects was advertised between March 14th and April 13th and it was open to area transit agencies as well as nonprofits.

Two applications were received, one from Guilford County TAMs and one from GTA. The applications were reviewed by a scoring team consisting of Greensboro MPO staff and Winston Salem MPO staff. Both projects were found to merit funding at this time. Guilford County TAMs requested \$17,500 to help offset the cost of their elderly and disabled transit services that they are administering this year. GTA asked for \$347,704 to continue supporting Access GSO early morning hours, this service is primarily transporting dialysis patients in a timely fashion. The combined requests for funding equals the amount available for award.

The recommendation was to make the awards as presented, and to modify the Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program lines accordingly.

Craig McKinney inquired about the available funds and what portion is used for administration. Truong said the total amount of funding was a little over \$400,000 and after the 10% for administration the amount available for award is \$365,000.

Stephen Robinson moved to approve. Michael Abuya seconded. The TCC voted unanimously to approve.

4. MTIP Modification: Statewide Transit Projects

Tyler Meyer presented an administrative action requested by NCDOT to modify the MTIP schedules and funding amounts for eight transit projects programmed at the statewide level. The first seven projects provide funding for transit facility projects around the state using Section 5339 discretionary funds that were received by the NCDOT from FTA. The programming of these funds as statewide projects gives NCDOT the flexibility to award them to systems around the state.

The awards are well underway and schedules are being adjusted. Funds are being moved from 2021 to 2022, and funding amounts are being adjusted. This action is to add a total of \$8.9 million, which increased the total value of these projects from \$14.5 to \$23.4 million. The eighth project is an action to adjust the accounting for MPO Transit Planning Funds received from FTA by NCDOT. NCDOT distributes these funds to the MPOs around the state, including the Greensboro Urban Area MPO. This project is indicative of the increase in transit funds under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill. The total funding for North Carolina in fiscal 2023 for Section 5303 Transit Planning Funds has increased from \$3.4 million to \$6 million. This additional funding will be helpful in planning efforts going forward. The recommendation was to modify the MTIP.

Chris Spencer moved to approve. Stephen Robinson seconded. The TCC voted unanimously to approve.

5. MPO Public Participation Plan

Tram Truong presented an update to the Public Participation Plan. The updated Plan better explains the amendments and administrative modifications process as recommended from the recent Federal

Highway review. The plan also redefines the basis on which online meetings may be held and replaces the term public health emergencies with public health concerns. The plan was out for public review from March 14 to April 28. No comments were received. The recommendation was to approve the plan.

Scott Whitaker moved to approve. Michael Abuya seconded. The TCC voted unanimously to approve.

6. MPO Title VI Plan

Tram Truong presented an update to the MPO Title VI Plan. Title VI is a plan for non-discrimination on the basis of race, color, and national origin in programs in order to comply with the Title VI of the Civil Rights Act. The plan was last updated in 2019 and must be updated every three years, making 2022 the year to update. In this update, a required new provision was added for demographics analysis. The plan was out for public comment from March 14 to April 13 and no comments were received. The requested action is to approve the updated plan.

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

7. GTA Title VI Plan

Tram Truong stated as with the previous item, the GTA has a Title VI Plan to comply with the Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. This plan is required to be updated every three years, with 2022 being the most recent year, and was available for public review and comment from March 29 to April 28 and no comments were received. Tyler Meyer added that the MPO and GTA Title VI documents contain standard language, clauses and assurances. The documents include customized demographic analysis by Tram.

George Linney moved to approve. Elizabeth Jernigan seconded. The TCC voted unanimously to approve.

Business Items / Potential Action Item(s):

1. Division Engineer Updates

Stephen Robinson provided a review of recent drone photos of the Urban Loop construction between Elm Street and US 29. Many of the bridges are at various stages of completion. Initial grading appears to be complete and soil stabilization is underway in preparing for base layer paving. Concrete paving is beginning near US 29 going west towards Summit Avenue. Division 7 is planning for another tour of the construction in the next few months. Dates and times will be sent out to MPO staff and TAC members once they are determined. The current opening date for the last section of the Urban Loop is December 31, 2022.

Robinson then presented drawings of a conceptual roadway to serve the Boom Supersonic site at Piedmont Triad International Airport. The roadway from Pleasant Ridge Road was shown to be 3 lanes with 10' shoulders for future sidewalks if needed and two bridges, one over a stream and one over I-73. Regional Road south of I-73 will be extended to the building site and connect to the service road via the bridge over I-73. NCDOT will begin taking bids for a Construction General Management Contract beginning June 20, 2022. The project is to be completed by January 31, 2024.

U-5754, US 29 exit from eastbound I-40, is underway to add an additional exit lane on to northbound US 29. Craig McKinney asked about the bid status for Lake Brandt Road and Air Harbor Road intersection project. Robinson stated the project received two bids, one at 44% and

the other 60% over the engineer's estimate. He further said that recent bids have been coming in 20% and over where before it was 10% and over.

2. Project Updates

Jason Geary provided information on locally managed projects. He followed up on his report on Downtown Greenway Phase 4 from the last month's meeting. Due to the bid on the project being too high, staff have reviewed the plans and selected items to remove in an attempt to re-advertise for bids. The aim is for bids results to be within budget for the project. Items to be removed are eligible for later construction.

The Greene Street Streetscape and two-way conversion had a successful bid opening and City Council will be asked to award the contract at their May Council Meeting. Work is to begin with water and sewer line work. The construction start date is pending due to delivery delays for water and sewer materials.

Alamance Church Road is progressing with completion expected by spring 2023. Ballinger Road Bridge is underway and the contractor is nearly finished with demolition of the existing bridge. All utility work is complete and materials for the new bridge are on site. The new bridge and roadway improvements are expected to be complete by year's end.

Eugene-Bellemeade Streetscape work has stopped and will resume after baseball season with completion expected before the 2023 baseball session. Horse Pen Creek Road is in the later stage of construction involving islands and pavement with completion by August. Summit Avenue Streetscape is progressing even with storm sewer material delays.

Approximately 1/3 of C-5555 E College Road / New Garden Road sidewalk is complete and going well. U-5532 K North Elm Street sidewalk contractor has been given the notice to proceed and work should begin next week and to be completed within six months.

Scott Whitaker inquired about when the engineer's estimate was done for the Downtown Greenway Phase 4. Geary stated the estimate was done in the last 18 months. He explained that some of the price increase was due to inflation, also there were many items that were unreasonably high, for example, retaining walls and similar items. The plan is to reevaluate and trim the expensive items for separate later construction. The goal is to complete the greenway. Whitaker thought the estimate were older than 18 months. Geary reiterated that some high construction prices are due to the cost of fuel and material costs.

3. Strategic Reports

Tyler Meyer reviewed the FY 2022 Federal Transit Formula Funding outlook. Nationally, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act increased funding in these programs by 35% in fiscal year 2022 compared to 2021 levels. In the Greensboro area the increase was 43%. Meyer then described the formula programs and funding levels, noting Section 5307 is the primary funding program, supporting operations costs, preventative maintenance, and a range of other activities. Section 5339 supports bus and bus facilities grants. The final source is Section 5310, this supports specialized transit programs for the elderly and disabled transit riders in the community.

Meyer then noted that the MPO's FY 2020-2022 Transit Resource Allocation Plan methodology was applied as the first step in determining the share of funds between MPO area transit agencies. The

second step was to consult and negotiate with the transit agencies on their FY 2022 needs and to adjust the funding distribution accordingly. As shown on the slide, the funding distribution between the systems came to \$7.27 million for GTA, \$560,000 for PART, and \$18,000 for TAMs. TAMs elected not to receive Section 5307 this year due to lower than normal rural public transit usage, though it will receive Section 5310 to support services for the elderly and disabled. Meyer noted the Transit Resource Plan will be updated in FY 2023.

The next topic was a brief update about the State Transportation Improvement Program. We are in the middle of the development cycle for the FY 2024-2033 STIP. As discussed in previous meetings, this time is unusual in that rather than going through a prioritization process to figure out which projects to add, the Department is instead working to determine which projects to retain, and which to move out of the document as unfunded projects.

The roots of this situation date back to 2020 when NCDOT initiated a systematic process of reviewing cost estimates for all STIP highway projects. This review determined that the outlook for the projects programmed in the STIP was considerably more expensive than had previously been estimated. This meant that rather than adding projects to hit revenue targets, projects would have to be removed to bring costs into balance with anticipated revenues over the FY 2024-2033 timeframe.

The process to get STIP costs in balance with anticipated revenues has multiple steps. The first step was to classify projects with FY 2020-2029 STIP construction funding currently programmed through 2026 as delivery projects. The projects will be retained in the next document, though schedules are subject to change.

The next step was then to take the remaining projects through an evaluation process that is referred to as the "seniority approach." Starting with projects selected for funding under Prioritization 3.0, the department went down the list ranked by total prioritization score for each project and funding category. Then, the Department did the same for projects selected under Prioritization 4.0, followed by Prioritization 5.0. Whenever they ran out of available revenue in a category they stopped. Projects above the line were then retained in the draft FY 2024-2033 STIP, while projects below the line were marked as unfunded and removed from the list of funded projects. In this process, they basically went down each list based on seniority and previous prioritization score until they ran out of money.

The draft STIP was recently released. Staff is working to analyze it. A big part of that effort is intended to identify, quantify, and analyze what has changed. Another goal is to identify any potential need or opportunity to swap projects identified as unfunded for projects included within the draft STIP. NCDOT has established a mechanism through which MPOs and NCDOT divisions can negotiate on such swaps where project costs are within +/- 10%. We will provide more information on that in the future.

The next slide shows the new format for the Transportation Improvement Program that NCDOT has unveiled with this draft. This format is set up as an Excel spreadsheet that is intended to be a more user friendly. We are also waiting on a compare report, which will allow us to more easily determine what changes have been identified between the current and the draft STIP documents.

The next slide shows the schedule for the rest of the STIP process. The next step is for MPOs, RPOs, and divisions, to do really thorough reviews of the document and to understand it, and to

identify any potential swaps that might need to be made. Decisions on swaps will be resolved by the fall and by winter NCDOT will release the second draft STIP, which would incorporate any swaps or any other adjustments that the department has made between now and then. The MPOs would then develop their metropolitan transportation improvement program documents in a manner that is consistent with the STIP and the public involvement process would ensue. STIP approval is expected June 2023. At that point it will be time to jump into the next round of prioritization, prioritization 7.0. The department is hoping or intending, in this 2024 to 2033 STIP, to program it in such a way that there is room to add new projects again in prioritization 7.0.

Meyer closed his STIP remarks encouraging members to watch NCDOT's STIP education webinar for elected officials on May 17. He then recognized Lydia McIntyre to close out the Strategic Reports.

McIntyre noted May is Bike Month and numerous activities are planned. MPO Staff attended the Wheels on the Greenway and promoted the Safe Routes to School Program and received useful feedback. A Ride with the City event will occur on May 16 from 12 pm to 1 pm.

Other Items

1. Member Updates

Michael Abuya provided information on two items. First, the NC Clean Transportation Plan. He stated that in January of this year the governor signed Executive Order 2046, which aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 50%, below 2005 levels. Another aim of this order is to increase registered zero emission vehicles to at least 1.25 million by 2030. A link to a short survey was provided to acquire input from the public, as well as those who participate in transportation. Second, the Statewide Multimodal Freight Plan is being updated. There will be a webinar on May 17 from 3:00 pm to 5:00 pm and again on Thursday, May 19 from 10 am to 12 pm. The webinar content is the same for both sessions.

2. Wrap-Up & Adjournment

Tyler Meyer mentioned the TAC meets May 9, 2022 at 2:00 PM and thanked everyone for attending.

Tyler Meyer adjourned the meeting at 2:39 PM.