



Technical Coordinating Committee

Meeting Minutes of June 21, 2022

2:00 PM, Greensboro, NC
Zoom Online Virtual Meeting

Attendance

Tyler Meyer	<i>TCC Chair</i>	Sean Taylor	<i>Oak Ridge</i>
Lydia McIntyre	<i>MPO Staff</i>	Scott Whitaker	<i>Summerfield</i>
Yuan Zhou	<i>MPO Staff</i>	Andy Bailey	<i>NCDOT TPB</i>
Tram Truong	<i>MPO Staff</i>	Jason Geary	<i>GSO E&I</i>
Craig McKinney	<i>MPO Staff</i>	Alex Rotenberry	<i>NCDOT IMD</i>
David Pegg	<i>GTA</i>	Suzette Morales	<i>FHWA</i>
Stephen Robinson	<i>NCDOT Div. 7</i>	David Hampston	<i>TAP/Bikesboro</i>
Elizabeth Jernigan	<i>GSO P&R</i>	Karen Capps	<i>Denberry</i>
George Linney	<i>GTA</i>	Jamie Crissman	<i>NCDOT Div. 7</i>

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

Introductory Items

1. Opening Remarks and Roll Call

Lydia McIntyre welcomed everyone to the meeting. McIntyre then took roll call for the public record. Lydia McIntyre reviewed how to use the new Zoom software.

Action Items:

1. May 11, 2022 Meeting Minutes

Stephen Robinson moved to approve. Andy Bailey seconded. The TCC voted unanimously to approve.

2. MTIP Modification: MPO Area Roadway Project

Tram Truong explained there are four modifications to be made to the MTIP. The first is to I-5964: I-40 and Elm-Eugene interchange improvements. The modification is to delay construction from FY 22 to FY 23. There will be no change in costs. The second is to R-5823: widen NC 68 from Belews Creek Rd to I-73. The modification is to delay right of way from FY 22 to 24, and to delay construction from FY 24 to FY 26. There will be no change in costs. The third is to U-4015A: Gallimore Dairy widening from NC 68 to Airpark. The modification is to increase funding by \$2

Lead Planning Agency: City of Greensboro Department of Transportation



PO BOX 3136
GREENSBORO NC 27402-3136



P 336 373-4368
F 336 412-6171



WWW.GUAMPO.ORG

million and replace the BUILDNC bonds with State Highway Trust Funds. The fourth and final change is to U-5841: widening and intersection improvement at Friendly Avenue and Lindell Rd. The modification is to delay construction from FY 22 to FY 23. There will be no change in costs. The recommendation is the TCC modify the MTIP for these four projects.

Tyler Meyer added that contract bids for projects I-5964 and U-5841 came in too high. Construction is being delayed for strategic letting purposes in the hopes of getting better prices. Meyer stated NCDOT anticipates letting the project in spring of 2023, on the thought that by that point better prices may be obtainable.

Scott Whitaker moved to approve. Stephen Robinson seconded. The TCC voted unanimously to recommend approval.

3. MTIP Amendment and Modification: MPO Area Transit Projects

Tram Truong explained the action is to amend and modify MTIP transit listings to adjust federal and matching fund levels to reflect the final FY 2022 FTA appropriations. In FY 2022, the national funding level in core FTA formula programs increased by 35% over the FY 21 levels. For the MPO, the FTA formula funding levels increased by 43%, about \$2.3 million. The operations for GTA fixed route increased by \$1 million and for paratransit funding increased by \$163,212. The routine capital for bus shelters and support vehicles increased \$157,000. Preventive maintenance increased by \$795,761. PART will use prior year balances for routine capital and operating assistance, and will not use bus and bus facilities funding in FY 2022. PART funding increased \$207,351. This funding will be programmed for next year in 2023. The MTIP also updates the future funding level from FY 23 to 29 based on the FY 22 numbers. The recommendation was the TAC approve the amendments and modify the MTIP.

Andy Bailey moved to approve. George Linney seconded. The TCC voted unanimously to recommend approval.

4. Program of Projects FY 2022

Tram Truong explained the FY 2022 Program of Projects is a publicly reviewed document accounting for formula and discretionary funds for GTA, PART and TAMS for the current fiscal federal year, from October 1, 2021 to September 30, 2022. This document is updated annually and provides more detailed information than the MTIP in the previous action. It includes a description and the funding and explanation of each MTIP element. A public comment period ran from May 13 to June 12 and no comments were received. The TAC meeting today is the public hearing for the POP document but no one signed up to speak.

Andy Bailey moved to approve. Stephen Robinson seconded. The TCC voted unanimously to recommend approval.

Business Items / Potential Action Item(s):

1. External Request to Remove the Fleming-Lewiston Connector & Interchange from MTIP

Tyler Meyer noted this item is in response to an external request and asked Lydia McIntyre to present it. McIntyre introduced the topic by showing aerial imagery of the project vicinity. She noted the nearest Urban Loop interchanges, at Bryan Boulevard and Battleground Avenue, and explained the location and purpose of the subject project. She then reminded the committee of the

nature of the MTP as a long range transportation plan, updated at least every five years, which identifies, analyzes, and accounts for planned future transportation investments.

McIntyre noted the request is from a site developer proposing to develop a site east of the interchange. The request is to remove the project from the MTP to facilitate development plans. A specific development plan has not been provided, but the developer's traffic consultant will submit a traffic study in the near future. The MPO staff will review the traffic study and will complete an internal analysis and review to develop an independent recommendation on the requested action. The purpose of this item today is to inform TCC members and get any initial feedback, before coming back at a later date with a recommendation. Summerfield and NCDOT expressed an interest in further discussion prior to the next round of MPO meetings. Meyer noted staff would arrange the meeting.

2. Transportation Improvement Program Update

Tyler Meyer stated he would provide an initial review of the draft FY 2024-2033 State Transportation Improvement Program released in late April. Staff analysis and review are ongoing, and more detailed information will be provided at the August meeting. Today's update is to apprise the MPO of some of the initial findings from this work.

Meyer first noted that the STIP can be basically divided two types of projects and two types of funding. One type is projects which go through the Strategic Transportation Investments (STI) prioritization process. The other type is projects which are selected using STI alternate criteria or other project selection processes. Examples of such projects include interstate maintenance and bridges.

Meyer indicated the focus today is on changes to the STI prioritization project details between the current FY 2020-2029 and draft FY 2024-2033 STIP. The 2020-2029 TIP identified these projects as either committed or uncommitted. Committed projects were funded in the first six years of the TIP for right of way and/or construction at the time the project was first added to the STIP. Such projects were not subject to re-prioritization. Uncommitted projects those with later initial programming, and were subject to re-prioritization. The 2020-2029 TIP currently lists 31 committed projects valued at roughly \$829 million, and 10 uncommitted projects, valued roughly at \$254 million.

Due to across the board cost increases discussed in detail at recent meetings, NCDOT has had to change the mix of projects considerably in the draft. The effect has been to narrow down the funded projects and expand the ranks for projects that are unfunded or funded for preliminary engineering only. In the draft 2024-2033 TIP listings for the MPO area, there 20 funded projects, valued at \$199 million, and 21 unfunded/ funded for PE only projects, valued at \$885 million.

Meyer then showed a slide detailing which STI prioritization projects were retained in the draft STIP and which were not. The method DOT used to determine which projects to retain, included identification of a set of delivery projects for retention in the draft STIP. These were projects with construction programmed by or before 2026 in the current 2020-2029 STIP. This was to provide stability and continuity in project development and delivery efforts. The department then prioritized remaining projects to determine which to retain and which to remove.

Two of these projects to make the cut were the Church Street widening and Sandy Ridge Road widening.

For the most part, only projects under \$50 million, and especially under \$20 million made the cut. Funded projects include railroad projects such as grade separations on Hilltop Road, English Street, and Franklin Boulevard. Several STI bicycle pedestrian projects and a few roadway projects were retained as well. Generally speaking, larger projects lost funding status. These include upgrading US 29 to interstate standards, widening and modernizing interchanges on I-40 in central Greensboro, widening US 421 into in western Guilford/ eastern Forsyth Counties. Some smaller, now-unfunded projects, including bicycle-pedestrian and roadway projects could potentially be funded using swaps. The DOT allows swapping of an unfunded project with a funded project in the draft STIP, provided the two project costs are within 10% of each other. Staff is investigating the few candidate projects for swaps. Such projects require MPO and NCDOT agreement and would need to be identified and discussed by the August meeting since the current deadline for swaps is September. DOT hopes to produce another draft of the STIP by the end of the year, and the MPO will produce an MTIP to match. The final document will be approved summer of 2023.

1. Projects Update

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. 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.

The Greene Street Streetscape and two-way conversion had a successful bid opening and City Council has approved the contract. The start date and schedule of work are currently being discussed.

Alamance Church Road is progressing with completion expected by spring 2024. Construction has begun with clearing operations taking place. New waterline and storm sewer installation has begun as well.

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 and should be completed within a couple months. Summit Avenue Streetscape is progressing even with storm sewer material delays.

The College Road / New Garden Road sidewalk is going well. U-5532 K the North Elm Street sidewalk has started and is also progressing well, it should be complete by the end of the year.

Craig McKinney questioned why the Sandy Ridge Road and I-40 interchange is cut in the draft STIP, but the Sandy Ridge Road widening project north of the interchange remains funded. A lot of the design work for the interchange is already completed, and it seems out of proper sequence. Meyer said that had caught his eye as well and that further discussions would help to resolve that issue in an appropriate fashion. Stephen Robinson agreed and noted the importance of a holistic view on roadway projects. Discrete projects such as Sandy Ridge Road Widening and the Sandy

Ridge Road / I-40 interchange are closely interrelated. Future discussions with NCDOT should consider the interwoven nature of streets, and how portions of one project may affect another.

2. Complete Streets Policy Briefing

Stephen Robinson provided an update on the new NCDOT Complete Streets Policy, how it has evolved over time, and some of the challenges NCDOT is working to address in the implementation effort. The chief goal is to reduce pedestrian and bicycle crashes and unsafe road conditions. Additional goals include improved access and mobility for those without a vehicle, enhanced quality of life through additional transportation choices, and creation of an equitable transportation system that works for everybody.

Robinson highlighted the challenges facing a walkable North Carolina today. The state is regularly ranked top five in pedestrian fatalities nationally. Over 600,000 North Carolinians live in households without a vehicle, and one million or more have limited vehicle access. Surveys indicate 70% of North Carolinians would walk or bike more if they had access to bike and pedestrian infrastructure. The adoption of complete streets is intended to mitigate these alarming figures. The DOT Board of Transportation first established a Complete Streets policy in 2009. The policy was updated in 2019 and integrated Complete Streets into the Integrated Project Delivery, the roadway design manual, and ongoing process improvements within the Atlas information management system. The DOT also merged the public transit, bicycle, and pedestrian divisions into the IMD, the integrated mobility division.

A key challenge to implementation has been inconsistency in the manner that different divisions have approached the policy. There is currently a distinct lack of standardization which results in policy gaps in critical areas such as maintenance. For example, the department does not maintain separated facilities or sidewalks. Instead a third party agreement handles facility maintenance. Issues arise when NCDOT constructs or allows construction of facilities on its roadways outside of incorporated areas because most counties do not have a mechanism in place for maintaining these facilities. Other issues include limited metrics and data tracking, and a lack of enhanced training.

Robinson detailed some of the proposed improvements to implementation, such as a new streamlined and standardized evaluation methodology. The new methodology will better guide project managers through the process of identifying needs, selecting appropriate facility type, and estimating added impacts to the project. Site observations, project specific data, and discussions with local partners supplement the new methodology. The new approach better integrates the Complete Streets evaluation into project development, and is intended to lead to more consistent inclusion of appropriate facilities on all DOT projects.

The modifications also clarify that the DOT will pay the full cost of needed Complete Street elements when the elements are in a plan such as a CTP or MTO. The change highlights the importance of keeping transportation plans up to date. The modifications also clarify that maintenance agreements are needed for all separated facilities. Procedures for exceptions to this rule are currently being drafted.

Robinson showed a 5-step flow chart of how Complete Street elements are considered under the new methodology. The process begins with data inputs and an initial screening. The screening provides preliminary indication of appropriate facility type. The primary document screened is the Comprehensive Transportation Plan, in addition to municipal and regional plans. Next a multimodal

network connectivity review and gap analysis is conducted around the project area. The gap analysis finds pedestrian facilities within a half mile radius and bicycle facilities within a 3 mile radius from the project location. Projects with a limited scope or short time frame, such as safety projects, emergency repairs, or maintenance projects, may not be suited for a Complete Streets evaluation. The development of a streamlined process for these projects is underway.

The second step is a determination of transportation needs. Transportation demand is estimated using several tools such as the Integrated Mobility Division demand map, observed conditions, and current and future land use. The IMD demand map pulls from US census and American community survey data. These data sets contain information on zero household vehicles, population density, and employment density. The resulting map is highly useful, but potentially low resolution and may fail to capture the entire demographic profile of an area. Observing conditions such as worn paths and holding conversations with local stakeholders, as well as considering current and future land use, provides key supplemental insight.

There are extra considerations for projects in areas with intermittent or no demand. If the project is near another multimodal facility, a connection should be made to eliminate gaps in the network. Smaller municipalities should not be forgotten, and need to include multimodal accommodations. Lastly, state or regional facilities such as the Mountain to Sea Trail or the Carolina Thread Trail induce demand from outside the area which may not be captured on the demand map.

The third step is facility selection and risk assessment. The data from steps one and two are refined and used to select preferred and alternative facility types. Step three is also an opportunity to consider other design elements such as transit, intersections, and midblock crossings.

The next step is the assessment of potential impacts. Project cost, right of way constraints, adjacent parcel characteristics, and historical and environmental impacts are all considered. The impacts are weighed against the needs factors and preliminary analysis and the appropriate facility type recommendation is finalized.

The final step begins with a cost impact evaluation. Projects that exceed a 10% cost increase are subject to greater scrutiny. A NCDOT review has shown Complete Street elements typically increase project cost by 2% -10%. There are possible exceptions for small projects, such as bridges, when associated Complete Street elements are expected to be larger. A considerable cost increase necessitates returning to step three and evaluating alternative facility types and design modifications. Schedule impacts are also evaluated. The analysis is performed on a case-by-case basis. Projects with spending deadlines, such as bond projects, are most likely to be affected.

Step five also includes the final documentation of the decision making. Documentation is saved in the project SharePoint files as a critical document to ensure compliance. If no facility is recommended, the project team will submit a request to the Complete Streets Review Team to develop an alternative plan. The Review Team may decline the request and direct the project team to include Complete Street elements under specific guidance.

Ongoing discussions are in progress to work out the particulars of new complete streets guidance. The aforementioned maintenance of separated multimodal facilities, such as sidewalks and shared-use paths that are outside the municipal boundaries, remains a problem under discussion. Another discussion is the inclusion of Complete Street elements within maintenance projects rather than with TIP projects. Another discussion is harmonizing the Complete Streets processes with the project

delivery network, including planning and express design. The planning and express design evaluation takes place before a project becomes a project, and helps establish good cost estimates.

Further issues include the relationship of complete street evaluation facility type recommendations and the recommendations in local comprehensive transportation plans or other local or MPO/RPO transportation plans. More work needs to be done to determine the cost and benefits of the Complete Street elements, which are often difficult to reliably quantify. Finally, Complete Street elements should be included in initial cost estimates prior to programming to ensure they do not introduce significant and unexpected cost impacts later in the project delivery stage.

Three work groups are currently refining the project development network harmonization, improving cost estimates, and solving maintenance issues. They are comprised of representatives from divisions, MPOs, and RPOs. Discussions began in March 2022, and will be finished by July 2022. The work groups will hopefully agree on solutions to the identified problems.

Training and outreach on the methodology and resources will continue. NCDOT is going to convene work groups and develop update recommendations. They make updates to Complete Street resources as necessary and provide revised guidance and trainings. The next and final step is collecting data, monitoring implementation, and identifying additional improvements to the guidance. Hopefully, this process creates more efficient planning, prioritization, project development, and maintenance activities.

Scott Whitaker asked about changes to the design and usage of Complete Streets elements in the last three years. Steven Robinson answered that the approach and evaluation methodology has changed. Alex Rotenberry added further that NCDOT is focusing more attention on protecting the road's most vulnerable users. Improved census data better reveals the locations and needs of vulnerable populations, and this comes coupled with a realization that not all people are traveling by car. NCDOT is also moving away from sharrows, and prioritizing building fully separated bike lanes instead.

Andy Bailey clarified that projects not listed in CTPs can still receive funding. Local plans that identify a need and show how a facility satisfies that need will suffice. The important thing is to have a plan laid out from the beginning. However CTPs are preferred.

Meyer noted the funding procedures in this new implementation of Complete Streets are superior to older iterations. In the past DOT and local governments split the cost of elements such as road widenings and sidewalks. If the local government did not agree to the cost share then the facility would not be built. The new implementation provides a path for automatic funding, even if the local government is unable to pay. Meyer also reiterated a city feasibility study or area plan should receive some deference in defining appropriate Complete Street elements. Meyer further emphasized the 10% limit on cost increases is only a guideline and one that really doesn't fit well in all circumstances, especially on relatively low cost projects. Given that the primary goal of the program is to protect vulnerable road users, the pursuit of safety will sometimes justify and even necessitate more than a 10% increase in particular projects.

3. Division Engineer Report

Steven Robinson noted a considerable amount of concrete has been poured for the Loop project. About 6,000 feet of concrete pavement has been placed, leaving about 2.6 miles remaining. The last

bridge deck on the project, the Elm Street Bridge, has been poured. Once the bridge deck cures there will be total continuity throughout the project.

Jason Geary gave a quick overview on city and local projects. Value engineering for the Downtown Greenway is underway. Geary thanked Eric Clarke for his work in the project. The Greene Street Streetscape was approved by city council and contracts are being routed for execution. Storm sewers and similar utilities were installed on Alamance Church Road. Ballinger Road bridge is on schedule. Utility work is complete, and needed materials are on site. The project should be complete by the end of the year. Horsepen Creek widening is also on schedule and should be complete summer 22. The Summit Street project is behind due to material delays. Sidewalk projects on College, New Garden, and Elm Street are progressing weekly. A tree at the corner of New Garden and Friendly Avenue needs to be removed.

4. Strategic Reports

Tyler Meyer explained that NCDOT is participating in a pilot program designed to test technology that could be used for a future mileage based user fee. Since gas tax revenues in the United States have been declining, new revenue sources are needed to support transportation needs. The decline is due to vehicles becoming more fuel efficient, and to the ever growing number of electric vehicles and hybrids on the road. A mileage based user fee has been talked about for years as part of the solution, but has yet to get off the ground other than pilot programs. This NCDOT program is an effort to get closer to a realistic implementation of a mileage based user fee revenue system.

The DOT is looking for MPO participants to take part in this pilot, especially for elected officials. Participants will be mailed a device that is plugged into an input jacked in their car. The device records the mileage, and after a few months it is sent back. The information collected helps determine how a mileage based user fee could be implemented in the future. The pilot program will begin in August. Tyler asked for volunteers, and the TCC unanimously agreed to participate. Tyler thanked the committee and moved on to the next item.

The state is developing a clean energy plan. A listening meeting will be held June 29 from 6:00 to 7:30. The meeting will provide information about what the state is doing to pursue clean energy goals, how this relates to its clean energy transportation plan, and various options that are under consideration for obtaining clean energy goals.

Meyer also noted a pedestrian and bicycle committee meeting will be held June 24 from 2:00 to 4:00.

Other Items

1. Federal Highways Update

Suzette Morales discussed upcoming discretionary funding opportunities. The first was Safe Streets for All. This is an opportunity for non-state DOT applicants, such as MPOs to apply for funding to support Vision Zero type planning and engineering initiatives. The Notice of Funding Opportunity is out and the deadline is September 15.

Another opportunity is the Bridge Improvement Program. This discretionary program provides for both planning and capital projects. The NOFO is out and the deadline is either August 9 or

September 8 depending on the size of the project. Off system bridge capital projects, which are mostly bridges owned by municipalities, only require a 10% match.

Morales noted there are definitely opportunities to receive funding and get some programs and products from MTIPs and local plans into existence. She encouraged the MPO to monitor the USDOT website to learn more about these opportunities as they continue to come out.

2. NC Clean Transportation and Freight Plans

Andy Bailey explained the North Carolina clean transportation plans are underway. A public survey is currently open. The state is also updating its freight plan. A public comment period will take place between July and August, and the final plan is set to release November 22.

3. Learning Opportunities

Alex Rotenberry discussed some recently recorded presentations that may be of interest to the TCC. The Integrated Mobility Division recently administered training for new transit directors and the recordings are available. A session detailing some of the statewide and regional planning work is available. Lastly Sarah Searcy, the Deputy Director of Innovations and Data, created a presentation of her work on micro-mobility.

Rotenberry also noted the White House released a rural playbook explaining the bipartisan infrastructure bill. The guide breaks down the new funding processes that are coming up due to the infrastructure law. Rotenberry said he found the guide so useful he sent it out to all his MPOs and RPOs, regardless of whether they have rural areas or not.

4. Wrap-Up & Adjournment

Tyler Meyer advised the next TCC meeting is set for August 8 at 2:00 PM and thanked everyone for attending.

Tyler Meyer adjourned the meeting at 3:23 PM.