

1 **DURHAM-CHAPEL HILL-CARRBORO METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION BOARD**

2 **8 November 2017**

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4 **MINUTES OF MEETING**

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6 The Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization Board met on  
7 November 8, 2017, at 9:00 a.m. in the City Council Committee Room, located on the second  
8 floor of Durham City Hall. The following people were in attendance:  
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10	Steve Schewel (MPO Board Chair)	City of Durham
11	Damon Seils (MPO Board Vice Chair)	Town of Carrboro
12	Karen Howard (Member)	Chatham County
13	Don Moffitt (Member)	City of Durham
14	Ellen Reckhow (Member)	Durham County
15	Ed Harrison (Member)	GoTriangle
16	Brian Lowen (Member)	Town of Hillsborough
17	Pam Hemminger (Member)	Town of Chapel Hill
18	Nina Szlosberg-Landis (Member)	NC Board of Transportation
19	Wendy Jacobs (Alternate)	Durham County
20	Michael Parker (Alternate)	Town of Chapel Hill
21		
22	David Keilson	NCDOT, Division 5
23	Richard Hancock	NCDOT, Division 5
24	Ed Lewis	NCDOT, Division 7
25	Jen Britt	NCDOT, Division 8
26	Bergen Watterson	Town of Chapel Hill
27	Kayla Seibel	Town of Chapel Hill
28	John Hodges-Copple	Triangle J Council of Governments
29	Geoff Green	GoTriangle
30	Ellen Beckmann	City of Durham
31	Eddie Dancausse	Federal Highway Administration
32	Felix Nwoko	DCHC MPO
33	Andy Henry	DCHC MPO
34	Meg Scully	DCHC MPO
35	Aaron Cain	DCHC MPO
36	Dale McKeel	DCHC MPO/City of Durham
37	Brian Rhodes	DCHC MPO
38	Anne Phillips	DCHC MPO
39	Gretchen Coperine	RTP
40	Evan Tenenbaum	Durham County
41	Heidi Perov	Carrboro Bike Advocate
42	Nishith Trivedi	Orange County
43	Will Letchworth	WSP
44	Lauren Dirgo	University of Washington
45		
46		

47 Quorum Count: 9 of 10 Voting Members

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49 Chair Steve Schewel called the meeting to order at 9:04 a.m. A roll call was performed. The

50 Voting Members and Alternate Voting Members of the DCHC MPO Board were identified and are

51 indicated above. Chair Steve Schewel reminded everyone to sign-in using the sign-in sheet that was

52 being circulated.

53

**PRELIMINARIES:**

54 **2. Ethics Reminder**

55 Chair Steve Schewel read the Ethics Reminder and asked if there were any known conflicts of

56 interest with respect to matters coming before the MPO Board and requested that if there were any

57 identified during the meeting for them to be announced. There were no known conflicts identified by

58 MPO Board members.

59 **3. Adjustments to the Agenda**

60 There were no adjustments to the agenda.

61 **4. Public Comments**

62 There were no public comments.

63 **5. Directives to Staff**

64 The Directives to Staff were included in the agenda packet for review.

65 Vice Chair Damon Seils asked the LPA Staff to request an update from the Capital Area

66 Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO) on the feasibility study for the proposed I-40 bicycle

67 project.

68

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

69 **6. Approval of October 11, 2017, Meeting Minutes**

70 **7. Approval of Amendment #12 to the FY2016-25 Transportation Improvement Plan**

71 Vice Chair Damon Seils made a motion to approve the items on the Consent Agenda. Penny Rich  
72 seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

73 **ACTION ITEMS:**

74 **8. FY2018-27 Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Plan**

75 Aaron Cain, LPA Staff

76 Aaron Cain discussed the timeline for adopting the FY2016-25 Metropolitan Transportation  
77 Improvement Plan (MTIP). Aaron Cain drew attention to comments received from the public, the  
78 Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and the North Carolina Department of Transportation  
79 (NCDOT). Aaron Cain stated that changes to the MTIP would be made with an amendment at the  
80 December MPO Board meeting. He also described the two changes that were made to the MTIP, but  
81 that were not made to the State Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP).

82 Chair Steve Schewel declared the public hearing open. There were no public comments. Chair  
83 Steve Schewel declared the public hearing closed.

84 Pam Hemminger made a motion to adopt the FY2018-27 MTIP. Vice Chair Damon Seils seconded  
85 the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

86 **9. NC 98 Corridor Study**

87 Will Letchworth, P.E., WSP

88 Andy Henry described the scope of the NC 98 corridor study.

89 Will Letchworth provided an overview of the study. He noted that the study will account for all  
90 modes and has a strong focus on safety. He stated that the study was currently in the conceptual design  
91 phase, and that many grade separation issues need to be resolved on NC 98. Will Letchworth described  
92 the results of the stakeholder input process and public meetings, and highlighted how suggestions from  
93 the public have been incorporated into a map. Will Letchworth discussed traffic volumes on NC 98 and  
94 results of the crash analysis. He provided examples of improvements that could be made to reduce  
95 crashes along a crash-prone 2-mile segment of NC 98. Will Letchworth also discussed the results of the

96 economic analysis that was done as part of the study, and existing and planned projects along the  
97 corridor. Will Letchworth concluded his presentation by discussing short and long term changes that can  
98 be made to improve the NC 98 corridor.

99 Will Letchworth and Chair Steve Schewel discussed the proposed widening of NC 98 between  
100 Sharon Road and Junction Road. Will Letchworth and Ed Harrison discussed whether the major  
101 intersections on NC 98 were at grade. Don Moffitt and Will Letchworth discussed conflict points at  
102 continuous flow intersections and median U-turn lanes. Nina Szlosberg-Landis and Will Letchworth  
103 discussed the average speed on the corridor, the reason that a roundabout is not one of the potential  
104 intersection designs, and whether autonomous vehicles have been factored into the study. Will  
105 Letchworth stated that the current version of the Triangle Regional Model (TRM) does not currently  
106 incorporate autonomous vehicles. Michael Parker and Will Letchworth discussed whether non-grade  
107 level intersections are viable for improving NC 98.

108 Ellen Reckhow stated that she hoped that buffered lanes or shared paths were being considered  
109 due to the current speed limits on NC 98. Ellen Reckhow and Will Letchworth discussed why a multi-use  
110 path might work particularly well for NC 98. Ellen Reckhow and Ellen Beckmann discussed the segment  
111 of NC 98 that was submitted for Strategic Prioritization Office of Transportation (SPOT) prioritization.  
112 Will Letchworth stated that there has been a lot of community support for a road diet and median on  
113 NC 98. Ed Harrison and Will Letchworth discussed NC 98 right of way and whether it is workable for a  
114 multi-use path. Will Letchworth discussed the next steps in the study.

115 No further action was required by the MPO Board.

116 **10. 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) -- Public Hearing**

117 Andy Henry, LPA Staff

118 Andy Henry described recent changes that were made to the preferred option of the MTP, and  
119 the next steps for the MTP. Andy Henry and Michael Parker discussed whether a reduction of overall  
120 Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) could be added to the MTP along with a reduction of VMT per capita. Vice

121 Chair Damon Seils asked that the MTP make clear that the Carrboro extension of the light rail project is  
122 primarily conceptual at this point.

123 Chair Steve Schewel declared the public hearing open. Andy Henry and Ellen Reckhow discussed  
124 recent transit enhancements to the MTP, primarily the extension of the light and commuter rail  
125 projects. There was discussion of whether the section of the MTP about the restriction of Strategic  
126 Transportation Legislation (STI) should be put into a letter. Andy Henry stated that STI restrictions were  
127 loosened for the last decade of the MTP. Chair Steve Schewel declared the public hearing closed.

128 Andy Henry discussed the relationship between goals, objectives, and performance measures in  
129 the MTP. Chair Steve Schewel commended Andy Henry for the accessible format of the goals,  
130 objectives, and performance measures section of the MTP. Vice Chair Damon Seils and Andy Henry  
131 discussed how the MTP could better reflect the MPO's desire to ensure participation from all parts of  
132 the community, particularly transit dependent riders, and the best way to measure this goal. Chair Steve  
133 Schewel stated that the recent Environmental Justice Report might be useful for improving the  
134 discussion of equity and participation in the MTP.

135 Ellen Reckhow pointed out a minor error in the goals, objectives, and performance measures  
136 section of the MTP, and suggested that increasing mobility options should be added as a bullet point to  
137 the document. Andy Henry explained how he developed performance measures and targets for the  
138 MTP. Ellen Reckhow stated that the suite of Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies  
139 should be added to the MTP's discussion of the reduction in emissions target. Wendy Jacobs suggested  
140 that zip codes could be used to measure equitable public participation, and inquired whether the DCHC  
141 MPO was working with CAMPO to develop targets. Andy Henry stated that CAMPO probably would not  
142 develop targets. Wendy Jacobs commented on the importance of meeting with CAMPO at least twice a  
143 year. Chair Steve Schewel stated that the chairs and vice chairs of the DCHC MPO and CAMPO recently

144 met. He thanked John Hodges-Copple for arranging the meeting. Ellen Reckhow suggested that TDM be  
145 added to the discussion of transit and automobile trip share.

146 Andy Henry described the next steps for developing and approving the MTP. In response to a  
147 question from Chair Steve Schewel, Andy Henry stated that the MTP is updated every 5 years. Ed  
148 Harrison and Andy Henry discussed the two circulator roads located near the intersection of I-40 and US  
149 15-501.

150 No further action was required by the MPO Board.

151 **11. DCHC MPO Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Transition Plan and Self-Assessment**

152 Felix Nwoko, LPA Staff

153 Felix Nwoko stated that the MPO is required to develop an ADA Transition Plan as well as  
154 monitor recipients of federal funds for ADA compliance. Felix Nwoko described how the MPO collected  
155 data on the disabled population. Felix Nwoko stated that he would be serving as ADA coordinator for  
156 the MPO until the new MPO position is filled. He drew attention to the draft plan that would be released  
157 for public input, and described some of the tasks that the MPO has completed in order to comply with  
158 federal ADA regulations. He also shared how the DCHC MPO's website was updated in order to meet  
159 ADA accessibility requirements.

160 Felix Nwoko stated that the DCHC MPO was working with the US Department of Transportation,  
161 and the FHWA to determine the roles and responsibility of the municipalities. He added that the MPO is  
162 also working with NCDOT to achieve ADA compliance. Felix Nwoko stated that the MPO does not  
163 monitor transit operators for ADA compliance, because transit operators must comply with Federal  
164 Transit Administration (FTA) requirements.

165 Vice Chair Damon Seils highlighted the steps that municipalities need to take to achieve ADA  
166 compliance, and pointed out that it was important for member jurisdictions to know that they have a  
167 role to play in this process. Vice Chair Damon Seils stated that this policy was a great step for the MPO.  
168 Felix Nwoko and Chair Steve Schewel discussed the personnel responsible for ADA compliance at the

169 City of Durham. Chair Steve Schewel and Felix Nwoko discussed the timetable for finalizing the MPO's  
170 ADA policies. Chair Steve Schewel inquired why Felix Nwoko was the interim ADA coordinator, and Felix  
171 Nwoko clarified that he would be serving as ADA coordinator until the MPO hires a new staff member.  
172 There was discussion of the timeline for hiring the new MPO staff member.

173 Vice Chair Damon Seils made a motion to authorize the release of the DCHC MPO Draft ADA  
174 Transition Plan and Self-Assessment for public comment. Ellen Reckhow seconded the motion. The  
175 motion passed unanimously.

176 **12. Legislative and Policy Framework for SPOT Process**

177 Aaron Cain, LPA Staff

178 Dale McKeel, LPA Staff

179 Aaron Cain stated that his presentation would highlight the differences between STI Law and  
180 NCDOT policy. Aaron Cain discussed the history of the STI law and provided an overview of the law,  
181 particularly relating to how the law changed the way that transportation projects are prioritized using  
182 the data-driven SPOT process. Aaron Cain identified funding sources for transportation projects, and  
183 explained how funds are divided for statewide, regional, and division projects. Aaron Cain provided  
184 examples of statewide and regional projects. There was discussion of whether projects on US 15-501 are  
185 statewide projects. Aaron Cain discussed STI funding restrictions on transit projects. He defined regions  
186 and divisions, and stated that the DCHC MPO spans three regions and three divisions. Aaron Cain stated  
187 that the fact that the DCHC MPO spans three regions and three divisions means that jurisdictions do not  
188 compete with each other for funding.

189 Vice Chair Damon Seils asked for and received clarification that the 10% cap on regional transit  
190 projects only applies to light and commuter rail projects. Michael Parker and Aaron Cain discussed how  
191 projects that span multiple regions are funded. Aaron Cain defined and provided examples of division-  
192 wide projects. Aaron Cain and Ellen Reckhow discussed how projects are categorized. There was  
193 discussion of how bicycle and pedestrian projects are categorized and funded, and the local government

194 match required for bicycle and pedestrian projects. Chair Steve Schewel and Aaron Cain discussed how  
195 population affects funding allocations for MPOs. Dale McKeel stated that the lack of consideration for  
196 population in allocating funding was meant to help rural legislators support the STI program. There was  
197 discussion of whether there have been any studies looking at the equity issues of spending per capita in  
198 the four iterations of the SPOT process.

199 Aaron Cain described the SPOT prioritization process. In response to a question from Michael  
200 Parker, Aaron Cain clarified that commuter rail projects are considered transit, not rail, projects. Aaron  
201 Cain described how projects are scored in the SPOT process. There was discussion of whether  
202 jurisdictions have to agree to projects being submitted within their jurisdiction by another party. Chair  
203 Steve Schewel described recent discussions that he has had with the CAMPO chair and vice chair,  
204 Triangle J Council of Governments (TJCOG), and GoTriangle to ensure that projects are properly  
205 sequenced when submitted for SPOT prioritization and that the Durham-Orange Light Rail Transit (D-O  
206 LRT project) receives priority consideration. Chair Steve Schewel stated that it was important to be  
207 cooperative in seeking SPOT scoring and funding for the D-O LRT. Vice Chair Damon Seils concurred that  
208 it was important to collaborate instead of compete for funding for the D-O LRT.

209 Aaron Cain discussed factors other than scoring, such as project readiness, that affect funding  
210 for projects that are submitted through the SPOT process. Ellen Reckhow reiterated the importance of  
211 working collaboratively to fund transportation projects.

212 Aaron Cain highlighted NCDOT policies, primarily normalization, weighting, and bicycle and  
213 pedestrian policies, that the MPO may be able to influence. There was discussion of how these policies  
214 affect the DCHC MPO. Aaron Cain, Nina Szlosberg-Landis, and Ellen Beckmann discussed how NCDOT's  
215 bicycle and pedestrian policies favor cities that have resources. Aaron Cain explained how each mode has  
216 a different funding formula under STI legislation. He discussed how separate formulas for separate



217 modes affects the MPO. In response to a request from Wendy Jacobs, Aaron Cain confirmed that he  
218 would circulate his PowerPoint presentation.

219 Dale McKeel stated that he had prepared a list of issues with funding for bicycle and pedestrian  
220 projects in preparation for a proposed meeting with Transportation Secretary James Trogdon and/or  
221 Deputy Secretary Julie White. Ellen Reckhow provided suggestions on how to tweak several bullets on  
222 the list. Chair Steve Schewel thanked Dale McKeel for developing the list of issues.

223 This item was informational and no further action was required by the MPO Board.

224 **REPORTS:**

225 **13. Report from the DCHC MPO Board Chair**

226 Steve Schewel, DCHC MPO Board Chair

227 Chair Steve Schewel stated that he and Vice Chair Damon Seils met with the chair and vice chair  
228 of CAMPO. Chair Steve Schewel asked Felix Nwoko to circulate the details about the upcoming joint  
229 meeting between the DCHC MPO and CAMPO.

230 **14. Report from the DCHC MPO Technical Committee Chair**

231 Ellen Beckmann, DCHC MPO TC Chair

232 There was no report from the TC Chair.

233 **15. Reports from LPA Staff**

234 Felix Nwoko, LPA Staff

235 Aaron Cain stated that there would be a call for nominations for MPO Chair and Vice Chair at the  
236 December MPO Board meeting. Chair Steve Schewel formed a nominating committee for the upcoming  
237 MPO Board elections. Pam Hemminger and Karen Howard volunteered to serve on the committee along  
238 with Chair Steve Schewel.

239 Dale McKeel stated that the Golden Modes program would be held on November 9, 2017, and  
240 that an MPO Board member would be recognized at the program.

241 **16. NCDOT Reports:**

242 Richard Hancock, NCDOT Division 5, provided updates on the East End Connector project, the  
243 Old Chapel Hill Road bicycle and pedestrian project, the Alston Avenue project, and the  
244 Barbee/Herndon roundabout project.

245 Ed Lewis, NCDOT Division 7, stated that the Division 7 report was included in the agenda  
246 packet. In response to a question from Vice Chair Damon Seils, Ed Lewis provided an update on the  
247 project to put up a fence on the I-40 bridge on Orange Grove Road. Brian Lowen asked for a timetable  
248 for the Orange Grove Road project. Ed Lewis stated that the Division was still looking for funding for  
249 the project, but promised to follow up with a timetable.

250 Pam Hemminger and Ed Lewis discussed whether there were any upcoming meetings for the  
251 Merritt Mill Road roundabout project. Ed Lewis provided a general update on the Merritt Mill Road  
252 roundabout project and the projected cost of the project. Pam Hemminger asked for an update on the  
253 Mt. Carmel Church Road project, and Ed Lewis promised to follow up with additional information.  
254 Michael Parker asked for and received an update on the Mt. Carmel Church/Bennett Road roundabout.

255 There was no report from NCDOT Division 8.

256 There was no report from NCDOT Transportation Planning Branch.

257 **INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:**

258 **17. Recent News, Articles, and Updates**

259 Ed Harrison stated that this would be his last MPO Board meeting. He reflected on how he  
260 became involved with the MPO. Nina Szlosberg-Landis thanked Ed Harrison for his service to the MPO  
261 Board. Don Moffitt commended Ed Harrison for his work on the MPO Board, and for his service to  
262 Chapel Hill and Durham.

263 Felix Nwoko and Chair Steve Schewel discussed plans to recognize the outgoing MPO Board  
264 members.

265 Ellen Reckhow reflected on her working relationship with Ed Harrison. Pam Hemminger stated  
266 that Chapel Hill, the MPO, and Durham have benefited from Ed Harrison's collaborative approach to the  
267 work of the MPO Board. Ellen Reckhow commended Don Moffitt for his attention to detail and his  
268 preparedness at MPO Board meetings.

269 Don Moffitt congratulated MPO Board members who were successful in their recent re-election  
270 campaigns.

271 **ADJOURNMENT:**

272 There being no further business before the DCHC MPO Board, the meeting was adjourned at  
273 11:27 a.m.