

DURHAM-CHAPEL HILL-CARRBORO METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

November 16, 2016

MINUTES OF MEETING

The Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization Technical Committee met on November 16, 2016 at 9:00 a.m. in the City Council Committee Room, located on the second floor of Durham City Hall. The following people were in attendance:

David Bonk (TC Chair)	Chapel Hill Planning
Ellen Beckmann (TC Vice-Chair)	Chapel Hill Planning
Bergen Watterson (Member)	Carrboro Planning
Tina Moon (Member)	Carrboro Planning
Margaret Hauth (Member)	Hillsborough Planning
Tom Altieri (Member)	Orange County Planning
Max Bushell (Member)	Orange County Planning
Cara Coppola (Member)	Chatham County Planning
Scott Whiteman (Member)	Durham County Planning
John Hodges-Copple (Member)	Triangle J Council of Governments
Corey Liles (Member)	Research Triangle Foundation
Julie Bollinger (Member)	NCDOT, TPB
David Keilson (Alternate)	NCDOT, Division 5
Ed Lewis (Alternate)	NCDOT, Division 7
Jennifer Britt (Alternate)	NCDOT, Division 8
Kelly Becker (Member)	NCDOT Traffic Operations
Geoff Green (Member)	GoTriangle
Kayla Seibel (Alternate)	Chapel Hill Planning
Mila Vega (Alternate)	Chapel Hill Planning/Transit
Dale McKeel	City of Durham/DCHC MPO
Felix Nwoko	DCHC MPO
Andy Henry	DCHC MPO
Meg Scully	DCHC MPO
Eddie Dancausse	FHWA
Solanda Adkins	City of Durham
Bryan Poole	Durham Transportation
Paul Black	CAMPO
Danny Arnold	AECOM
Cindy Camacho	AECOM
Matthew Potter	AECOM
Derrick Lewis	NCDOT
Nancy Baker	Walkable Hillsborough
Amy Cole	Walkable Hillsborough
Heidi Perov Perry	

46
 47 Quorum Count: 18 of 31 Voting Members

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 49 Chair David Bonk called the meeting to order at 9:08 a.m. The roll call was performed after the
 50 public comment portion of the meeting to accommodate late-arriving members. The Voting Members and
 51 Alternate Voting Members of the DCHC MPO Technical Committee (TC) were identified and are indicated
 52 above. Chair David Bonk reminded everyone to sign-in using the sign-in sheet that was being circulated.

53 **PRELIMINARIES:**

54 **2. Adjustments to the Agenda**

55 Chair David Bonk asked if there were any adjustments to the agenda. There were no adjustments
 56 to the agenda.

57 **3. Public Comments**

58 Chair David Bonk asked if there were any members of the public signed up to speak.

59 Amy Cole, a citizen residing at 101 Old Heritage Court, Hillsborough NC, and a representative of
 60 Walkable Hillsborough Coalition, spoke about the unsafe conditions of the I-40 overpass on Orange Grove
 61 Road near Cedar Ridge High School and Grady Brown Elementary School. Amy Cole stated that this area is
 62 part of the Safe Routes to School Program (SRTS). Although a complete plan to improve the area was
 63 approved in 2014, many pedestrians, particularly students at Cedar Ridge High School, face unsafe
 64 conditions as they cross the overpass to get to and from school. The overpass has a 30-inch tall rail and
 65 was not intended for pedestrian use. Although Orange County has recognized the unsafe conditions of the
 66 portion of Orange Grove Road near Cedar Ridge High School and has initiated hazard busing for students,
 67 many students still use the overpass to get to and from school, particularly those who participate in
 68 afterschool activities. Amy Cole noted that logging trucks often use this portion of Orange Grove Road,
 69 further exacerbating unsafe conditions for pedestrians.

70 Amy Cole reviewed the effect of speed limits on risk of injury or death to pedestrians, and shared
 71 data about traffic incidents on the relevant portion of Orange Grove Road. She also discussed the number

72 of students and families who are potentially affected by the unsafe conditions of the road. Amy Cole noted
73 that improving the conditions of Orange Grove Road all the way to Churton Street would mean that
74 residents would have access to school facilities, as well as better access to the town and parks of
75 Hillsborough. Amy Cole discussed the challenges that disabled pedestrians might face in trying to access
76 the relevant portion of the road. Amy Cole stated that she has coordinated with residents and the
77 principals at both the high school and the elementary school, and they are in support of improving
78 conditions on Orange Grove Road.

79 Chair David Bonk asked Amy Cole to clarify her request from the Technical Committee (TC), and
80 Amy Cole stated that she was requesting federal funding to help support the building of sidewalks and an
81 overpass along the strip from South Churton Street to Grady Brown School Road.

82 Chair David Bonk and Margaret Hauth discussed past attempts to fund projects on the road.
83 Margaret Hauth noted that previous projects were not well received because of the lack of a supporting
84 pedestrian network, the fact that the area is outside of the city limits, and it is difficult to build sidewalks
85 on state roads. There was additional discussion of attempts to fund projects along Orange Grove Road,
86 particularly through Strategic Planning Office of Transportation (SPOT) programs.

87 Vice Chair Ellen Beckmann asked about Cedar Ridge High School's plan to build a sidewalk leading
88 up to the school. Nancy Baker, a citizen residing at 123 West Union, Hillsborough NC, also a member of
89 Walkable Hillsborough Coalition, stated that the principal of Cedar Ridge High School was interested in
90 building a sidewalk that leads from the I-40 overpass to the school to go along with a planned soccer field
91 which was recently funded through a bond referendum. Nancy Baker expressed concern that such a
92 sidewalk might encourage more students to walk across the bridge.

93 There was discussion of using town funds to construct sidewalks and plans for a sidewalk from Eno
94 Mountain Road to I-85. There was discussion of potential problems with the SPOT process. Vice Chair Ellen

95 Beckmann suggested adding bicycle safe railings to the pedestrian bridge. Chair David Bonk asked Ed Lewis
96 to follow up on potential solutions to the problems along the road.

97 Tom Altieri suggested using bond funds to construct sidewalks, but noted that the 20% local match
98 requirement for the construction of sidewalks was a potentially limiting factor.

99 Heidi Perry, a member of the Carrboro Bicycle Coalition, spoke about unsafe conditions for cyclists
100 along Old NC 86, particularly the area from Carrboro’s town limits to the intersection at Dairyland Road.
101 Heidi Perry shared data from recently installed counters and noted that usage of the road by bicyclists may
102 have been underreported. Heidi Perry noted that the best long term solution to the unsafe conditions
103 faced by bicyclists is to put bike lanes and a roundabout at Dairyland Road, but that projects proposing
104 such solutions never score well. She suggested several short term solutions, such as adding a “Bicycles May
105 Use Full Lane Sign” to the road, and extending the 35 mph speed limit from the Carrboro town limit to the
106 Dairyland intersection.

107 There was discussion of the history of proposed projects for this section of Old NC 86. Chair David
108 Bonk asked Ed Lewis to take this issue back to the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT).

109 Max Bushell inquired whether there was precedent for a “Bicycles May Use Full Lane” sign in
110 North Carolina, and was informed that there was.

111 **CONSENT AGENDA:**

112 **4. Approval of October 26, 2016 Meeting Minutes**

113 Chair David Bonk asked if there was any discussion of the October 26, 2016 meeting minutes.
114 There was no discussion of the minutes. Geoff Green made a motion to approve the October 26, 2016
115 meeting minutes. Tom Altieri seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

116 **ACTION ITEMS:**

117 **5. I-40 Feasibility Study**

118 Derrick Lewis, NCDOT Feasibility Studies Unit

119 The NCDOT hired a consultant to conduct a traffic forecast and feasibility study (FS-1205A) for
120 adding capacity to I-40 (I-85 to Wade Avenue). Derrick Lewis, NCDOT Feasibility Studies Unit, presented
121 the feasibility study method, results, and recommendations to the TC.

122 Derrick Lewis stated the study explored both one and two managed lanes in each direction of I-
123 40. Derrick Lewis stated that his preference was for two managed lanes per direction because it would
124 cost only \$50 million more than one lane per direction. Derrick Lewis stated that right-of-way was not a
125 particular problem except with certain direct access locations, but noted that the final determination on
126 access points has not yet been made. Although some dedicated access points were included in the
127 study, specifics would be negotiated as part of the final design. Derrick Lewis also mentioned that the
128 rail study and the joint toll study with CAMPO (Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization) might
129 affect how the I-40 improvements are divided into project sections.

130 Chair David Bonk and Derrick Lewis discussed ingress/egress solutions.

131 Andy Henry and Derrick Lewis discussed how the division of the project may lead to a \$200
132 million funding overlap with improvements to NC 147.

133 Vice Chair Ellen Beckmann and Derrick Lewis discussed whether investing in areas not facing the
134 worst congestion was worthwhile. Vice Chair Ellen Beckmann and Derrick Lewis further discussed the
135 sections of the project.

136 Vice Chair Ellen Beckmann pointed out that the project did not include direct access to NC 54
137 which would mostly likely be needed given the volume and direction of traffic. Geoff Green pointed out
138 that GoTriangle runs buses down I-40 down to NC 54 and noted that an expensive managed lane
139 solution that does not have an intersection or interchange with NC 54 does not help transit.

140 Max Bushell stated that he had equity issues with managed lanes. Max Bushell commented that
141 while he respects that the study is preliminary, the project as described is incredibly expensive and he
142 was not sure that the returns on such a project would be worthwhile.

143 Chair David Bonk and Andy Henry discussed the joint toll study with CAMPO. Chair David Bonk
 144 and Andy Henry discussed whether this information should be forwarded to the MPO Board.

145 Derrick Lewis stated that he could look into the cost of alternate access points.

146 This item was informational and no further action was required by the TC.

147

148 **6. NC 147 Feasibility Study**

149 Matthew Potter, AECOM

150 The NCDOT hired AECOM to conduct a traffic forecast and feasibility study (FS-1205C) for adding
 151 capacity to NC 147 (NC 55 to I-40). Matthew Potter presented the feasibility study method, results, and
 152 recommendations to the TC.

153 Matthew Potter discussed the segmentation of the project, the project limits, and the current
 154 conditions on NC 147. Matthew Potter stated that the study primarily explored whether one or two
 155 lanes should be added to each direction of NC 147, and that the specific alternatives explored by the
 156 study were about the implementation of managed lane solutions. He weighed the costs and benefits of
 157 various solutions for adding capacity to NC 147.

158 Geoff Green inquired whether there was any analysis of the different maintenance and
 159 operational costs of an eight lane versus a six lane road, and Matthew Potter stated that there was no
 160 analysis of this issue in the current study. Scott Whiteman expressed skepticism that adding four lanes
 161 instead of two would not greatly increase right-of-way acquisition costs.

162 Vice Chair Ellen Beckmann and Mathew Potter discussed whether dropping a lane at the East
 163 End Connector might be an option. Geoff Green noted that it would be interesting to see the impact of
 164 the East End Connector when it is complete. Mathew Potter pointed out that designs and
 165 recommendations are based on a snapshot of current information, and the goal was not to limit
 166 alternatives from being studied.

167 John Hodges-Copple and Matthew Potter discussed the potential construction of lanes near the
168 median north and south of the East End Connector. John Hodge-Copple asked whether cost estimates
169 included breakouts by section, and Mathew Potter confirmed that they did. John Hodges-Copple raised
170 questions about the boundaries of the project. Matthew Potter stated that he was in the process of
171 finalizing a report for a more complete feasibility study.

172 Chair David Bonk stated that the MPO Board would want information on this project and
173 inquired about the best way to present information about the two feasibility studies. Vice Chair Ellen
174 Beckmann pointed out that one of the alternatives described in the study, a widening of a section of NC
175 147, has already been funded and that this information should be shared with the MPO Board. There
176 was additional discussion about six versus eight potential lanes on NC 147.

177 This item was informational and no further action was required by the TC.

178 **7. 2040 MTP Amendment #3 and D-O LRT LPA (Extension to NCCU)**

179 Andy Henry, LPA Staff

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181 At the October 19, 2016 Board meeting, the MPO released for public comment an amendment
182 to the Locally-Preferred Alternative (LPA) for the Durham-Orange Light Rail Transit system (D-O LRT) and
183 an amendment to the 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). Both amendments are to extend
184 the D-O LRT from Alston Avenue to a station at the North Carolina Central University (NCCU).
185 Engineering studies have shown that the extension is technically feasible and modeling indicates the
186 added station will generate high ridership.

187 Andy Henry stated that Pamela Thorpe-Young from NCCU expressed enthusiastic support for
188 the extension at the November 9th MPO Board meeting. He also received a public comment from a
189 citizen, James Svara, expressing concern that moving the station closer to NCCU was going to interfere
190 with a proposed parking lot at the Alston Avenue stations. Andy Henry promised to forward this
191 comment to the TC.

192 Andy Henry reviewed the items in his packet and commended GoTriangle for their work on
 193 putting together the resolutions. Andy Henry reviewed the content of the resolutions.

194 Chair David Bonk confirmed that the TC was recommending that the MPO Board adopt these
 195 resolutions, and not adopting the resolutions itself.

196 Danny Rogers stated that the Orange County Board of Commissioners recommended approving
 197 the extension to NCCU, in addition to the City of Durham and Durham County.

198 Chair David Bonk, Danny Rogers, and Tom Altieri discussed a point raised at the Orange County
 199 Board of Commissioners meeting, that the cost share agreement needs to be revisited and that the new
 200 draft financial plan should include the NCCU project among others. Danny Rogers stated that the issue
 201 at hand was adding the extension to the project, and that funding would be a further discussion.

202 John Hodges-Copple made a motion to recommend the two resolutions to the MPO Board. Scott
 203 Whiteman seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

204 **8. 2040 MTP – Update to Environmental Justice**

205 Paul Black, CAMPO

206 Since February, CAMPO and the DCHC MPO worked collaboratively with NCDOT, Triangle J
 207 Council of Government (TJCOG), and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to develop an
 208 updated methodology to define “communities of concern” for the Environmental Justice section of the
 209 2045 MTP. The resulting maps will be used as a regional-scale screening tool for MTP public outreach
 210 and for the updated benefits/burdens analysis required by FHWA. Paul Black described the three
 211 changes, or varying impacts, to the current DCHC method, and reasons for these changes.

212 There was discussion about the best way to present this information to the MPO Board.

213 Vice Chair Ellen Beckmann commented that she was expecting Durham to be more of an outlier
 214 than it ended up being, and that adding Wake County does even things out. She stated that she was still
 215 interested in seeing some statistics by county. There was some discussion of linguistic diversity in Wake
 216 County.

217 Max Bushell asked whether the data from the presentation was available to the TC, and Paul
218 Black stated that he would convey this data in the form of tables and Shapefiles. Cara Coppola asked
219 whether data was available for the other end of Chatham County, and was told by Paul Black that it was
220 not. There was continued discussion about how this data would be used. Paul Black discussed the
221 benefits of a regional approach to data collection and analysis. Paul Black confirmed that 2013 American
222 Community Survey (ACS) data was used. Andy Henry and Paul Black discussed the implications of using
223 multiple indicators.

224 This item was informational and no further action was required by the TC.

225 **9. Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) – Release Draft**

226 Andy Henry, LPA Staff

227 Julie Bollinger, NCDOT

228 The different modes in the draft Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) have been reviewed
229 by MPO, local government, and NCDOT staff over the last several months. The MPO staff has provided
230 updates to the MPO Board throughout the development process. A subcommittee met on November 8,
231 2016 to make changes to the CTP.

232 Andy Henry drew attention to slides detailing the different developmental stages of the project.
233 He emphasized that the CTP is not yet perfect, but would be taken to elected officials, boards,
234 commissions, and other local groups for feedback during the three-month public comment period. Andy
235 Henry noted that a final copy of the CTP was on NCDOT's website but that a few other changes would be
236 made based on feedback from Bergen Watterson and Bryan Poole.

237 Andy Henry described how he would present the CTP to the MPO Board in order to highlight
238 what is most important. Chair David Bonk confirmed that the MPO Board would release the CTP at their
239 December 14, 2016 meeting.

240 Geoff Green made a motion to recommend that the MPO Board release the CTP in its revised
241 form for public comment. Cara Coppola seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

242 **10. 2045 MTP – Learning Scenario**

243 John Hodges Copple, TJCOG

244 John Hodges-Copple drew attention to a one-page document describing the twelve steps to the
245 2045 MTP. Running an initial scenario is the sixth step in this process. John Hodges-Copple stated that
246 the Learning Scenario was run a week before the TC meeting. The results from the Learning Scenario
247 have been shared with the Triangle Regional Model team and they are now working on the
248 transportation side of things. John Hodges-Copple discussed the results of the Learning Scenario and
249 reasons for anomalies within the results. John Hodges-Copple stated that there would be a presentation
250 at the joint MPO Board and CAMPO meeting on November 30, 2016 in order to see if it passed the
251 “smell test” for representatives of various jurisdictions.

252 Chair David Bonk and John Hodges-Copple discussed how this information would be presented
253 at the joint meeting. Chair David Bonk asked when the materials related to the presentation would be
254 available to the LPA Staff. John Hodges-Copple stated that the detailed tables of the allocations are
255 almost done and will be posted shortly. John Hodges-Copple gave a brief description of other types of
256 materials that would be included in the presentation.

257 This item was informational and no further action was required by the TC.

258 **11. Durham-Orange Light Rail Transit (D-O LRT) – Funding**

259 Danny Rogers, GoTriangle

260 The financial plan for the D-O LRT needs additional funding to mitigate the effects of several
261 setbacks, including a change in state transportation funding legislation and lower federal caps on annual
262 funding outlays. A TC subcommittee met on November 9, 2016, to discuss the possibility of using
263 Surface Transportation Block Grant (STP-BG, formerly STP-DA), Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality grant
264 program (CMAQ), and/or Transportation Alternative (TAP) funding to help fill the D-O LRT funding gap.
265 One suggestion was to allocate \$10 million of STP-BG and \$10 million of CMAQ funding to bicycle and
266 pedestrian projects that are part of the D-O LRT project design. This \$20 million would be allocated over

267 a ten-year period. The subcommittee did not make a decision on the allocation and this issue was
268 forwarded to the TC.

269 Danny Rogers provided an overview of the cost and the history of proposed funding for the D-O
270 LRT project. He emphasized that the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) requires a 30% non-New Starts
271 funding commitment in order to move the project into the engineering phase.

272 Vice Chair Ellen Beckmann and Danny Rogers discussed how the sales tax would affect funding
273 for the project. Danny Rogers pointed out that GoTriangle is also looking at private revenue and right-of-
274 way donations or in-kind contributions in order to help fund the project. Vice Chair Ellen Beckmann and
275 Danny Rogers discussed sources of non-New Starts federal funds. Danny Rogers discussed steps taken
276 by GoTriangle to close the funding gap, and stated that one option is to explore whether the MPO could
277 contribute federal funds to the project.

278 Chair David Bonk and Danny Rogers reviewed the schedule for meeting with local jurisdictions
279 to discuss funding for the D-O LRT. Danny Rogers read the resolution that would be taken to local
280 jurisdictions in order to request the needed funding. Danny Rogers reviewed the funding commitments
281 needed for different phases of the project. Chair David Bonk and Danny Rogers discussed whether the
282 language of the resolution would be acceptable to FTA as a level of commitment.

283 There was an extended discussion of how the allocation of federal funds from the MPO would
284 affect the MPO's budget and the work of the staff. There was some discussion of how allocating MPO
285 federal funds to LRT might disproportionately affect counties, such as Chatham, that will not directly
286 benefit from LRT. There was continued discussion of how to best present information about the effect of
287 allocating MPO federal funds to the D-O LRT to the MPO Board. Meg Scully, John Hodges-Copple, and
288 Danny Rogers discussed steps taken by GoTriangle to locate additional funding.

289 Mila Vega asked if it was possible for the third slide of the presentation to be changed to show
290 dollars instead of percentages moving forward.

291 Danny Rogers clarified that the Chapel Hill Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and the extension to central
292 are included in the cost estimate for the D-O LRT.

293 John Hodges-Copple and Meg Scully discussed specific changes that needed to be made to the
294 presentation in order to take it to the MPO Board. There was continued discussion of the best way to
295 discuss the effect of a potential allocation of federal funds to the D-O LRT with elected officials. Chair
296 David Bonk clarified that the staff was not being asked to make a decision about the allocation of funds.
297 Rather, they are being asked to carry information about the implications of funding decisions on the
298 broader program to elected officials.

299 Vice Chair Ellen Beckman stated that she would be comfortable not recommending the
300 allocation of funds to the D-O LRT because of the potential for negative impacts on transportation
301 funding available for other needed projects. John Hodges-Copple suggested that the TC hold off on
302 decision until there is more clarity about the effect of potential funding allocations to the D-O LRT. There
303 was continued discussion about the need to clarify how a funding allocation to the D-O LRT would affect
304 the MPO.

305 Bergen Watterson inquired whether there was some formula that might determine how much
306 money is collected from participating jurisdictions to fund LRT, and would therefore let individual
307 jurisdictions decide whether contributing funding to the D-O LRT was right for them. There was an
308 extended discussion of how to approach jurisdictions that may not directly benefit from LRT.

309 There was some discussion of how prioritizing projects in close proximity to the proposed Light
310 Rail might help to contribute funds to the Light Rail project. There was an extended discussion of
311 whether funds should be taken from the CMAQ program and how this might potentially negatively
312 impact smaller jurisdictions.

313 Max Bushell summarized possible scenarios that could be taken to the MPO Board, and Chair
314 David Bonk suggested that the subcommittee meet to flesh out possible scenarios. There was discussion

315 of when to schedule the subcommittee meeting. Meg Scully stated that she would synthesize the
 316 discussion for the MPO Board and emphasize concerns raised by the TC. Meg Scully promised to list a lot
 317 of options for the MPO Board and to lay out formulas with accompanying descriptions.

318 Scott Whiteman made a motion to recommend that the subcommittee meet to flesh out
 319 scenarios that can be shared with the MPO Board at their December 14th meeting. Margaret Hauth
 320 seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

321 **12. Election of Technical Committee Officers for 2017**

322 David Bonk, DCHC MPO TC Chair

323 Chair David Bonk reminded the TC that he would be retiring on January 1, 2017. Chair David
 324 Bonk appointed John Hodges-Copple as chair of a committee to nominate officers for the 2017 TC. He
 325 also asked Max Bushell to serve on the nominating committee. Chair David Bonk stated that a new chair
 326 should be elected at the December TC meeting. John Hodges-Copple asked that anyone wishing to serve
 327 on the nominating committee notify him or Max Bushell.

328 No further action was required by the TC.

329 **REPORTS:**

330 **13. Reports from the LPA Staff**

331 Felix Nwoko, LPA Staff

332 There was no additional report from the LPA Staff.

333 **14. Report from the DCHC MPO TC Chair**

334 David Bonk, DCHC MPO TC Chair

335 There was no additional report from the DCHC MPO TC Chair.

336 **15. NCDOT Reports**

337 David Keilson, NCDOT Division 5, stated that there were public meetings in recent weeks but Max
 338 Bushell and Bergen Watterson were in attendance and were therefore up to speed on recent occurrences.

339 There was no report from NCDOT Division 7.

340 Jennifer Britt, NCDOT Division 8, stated that information about the improvements to O’Kelly
341 Chapel Road had been compiled in response to a question from the November MPO Board meeting. Chair
342 David Bonk asked Jennifer Britt to present these changes at the December MPO Board meeting.

343 There was no report from NCDOT Transportation Planning Branch.

344 There was no report from NCDOT Traffic Operations.

345 **INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:**

346 **16. Recent News, Articles, and Updates**

347 There were no informational items.

348 **ADJOURNMENT:**

349 There being no further business before the DCHC MPO Technical Committee, the meeting was
350 adjourned at 12:25 p.m.