

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

2 **TECHNICAL COMMITTEE**

3 **July 28, 2021**

4 **MINUTES OF MEETING**

5 The Durham-Chapel Hill Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization Technical Committee met
6 on July 28, 2021 at 9:00 a.m. through a teleconferencing platform. The following
7 members were in attendance:

- 8 Ellen Beckmann (Chair) Durham County
- 9 Nishith Trivedi (Vice Chair) Orange County
- 10 Evan Tenenbaum (Member) City of Durham
- 11 Kayla Seibel (Member) City of Durham Planning
- 12 Tasha Johnson (Member) City of Durham Public Works
- 13 Brooke Ganser (Member) Durham County
- 14 Scott Whiteman (Member) Durham County
- 15 Tina Moon (Member) Carrboro Planning
- 16 Bergen Watterson (Member) Town of Chapel Hill
- 17 Josh Mayo (Member) Town of Chapel Hill
- 18 Kumar Neppalli (Member) Chapel Hill Engineering
- 19 Margaret Hauth (Member) Town of Hillsborough
- 20 John Hodges-Copple (Member) TJCOG
- 21 Jay Heikes (Member) GoTriangle
- 22 Julie Bogle (Member) NCDOT TPD
- 23 Brandon Jones (Member) NCDOT Division 5
- 24 Kurt Stolka (Member) The University of North Carolina
- 25 Michael Page (Member) North Carolina Central University
- 26 Tom Altieri (Member) Orange County Planning
- 27 Theo Letman (Member) Orange Public Transportation
- 28 Jay Heikes (Member) GoTriangle
- 29 Bill Judge (Alternate) City of Durham
- 30 Brian Taylor (Alternate) City of Durham Transportation
- 31 David Keilson (Alternate) NCDOT Division 5
- 32 Richard Hancock (Alternate) NCDOT Division 5
- 33 Stephen Robinson (Alternate) NCDOT Division 7
- 34 Bryan Kluchar (Alternate) NCDOT Division 8
- 35 Matt Cecil (Alternate) Chapel Hill Transit/Planning
- 36 Meg Scully (Alternate) GoTriangle
- 37 Scott Levitan (Alternate) Research Triangle Foundation

- 38 Suzette Morales, Federal Highway Administration
- 39 Rachel Stair, Raleigh-Durham Airport Authority
- 40 Sean Egan, City of Durham
- 41 Evian Patterson, City of Durham
- 42 Ayden Cohen, Research Triangle Foundation

- 43 Alpesh Patel, Cambridge Systematics
- 44 Patrick McDonough, HDR
- Pam Williams, NCDOT

- 45 Brian Rhodes DCHC MPO
- 46 Aaron Cain DCHC MPO
- 47 Anne Phillips DCHC MPO
- 48 Andy Henry DCHC MPO
- 49 Dale McKeel City of Durham/DCHC MPO
- 50 Yanping Zhang, DCHC MPO
- 51 Kayla Peloquin, DCHC MPO
- 52 Jake Ford, DCHC MPO

53 Quorum count: 26 of 31 voting members

54 Chair Ellen Beckmann called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m.

55 **PRELIMINARIES:**

56 **1. Roll Call**

57 The roll call would be completed using the Zoom participant list.

58 **2. Adjustments to the Agenda**

59 There were no adjustments to the agenda.

60 **3. Public Comments**

61 There were no public comments.

62 **CONSENT AGENDA:**

63 **4. Approval of the May 26, 2021 TC Meeting Minutes**

64 There was no discussion on the consent agenda. Evan Tenenbaum made a motion to
65 approve the consent agenda. Tom Altieri seconded the motion. The motion passed
66 unanimously.

67 **ACTION ITEMS:**

68 **5. 2050 MTP – Alternative Analysis**

69 **Andy Henry, LPA Staff**

70 Andy Henry shared a presentation on the status of the 2050 Metropolitan Transportation
71 Plan (MTP) Alternative Analysis timeline, public engagement schedule, the updated website,
72 and metrics and maps. Andy Henry said the Alternative Analysis will be released on July 29,

73 2021 and the public comment period will extend through September 15, 2021. Public
74 engagement will be aligned with the Capital Area MPO (CAMPO) schedule and will include a
75 survey, online workshops, in-person pop-ups, presentations to local boards and commissions, a
76 public hearing, email and social media notifications, and possibly focus groups for communities
77 of concern. Andy Henry mentioned the DCHC MPO website has more in depth information and
78 interactive maps.

79 Chair Ellen Beckmann asked for clarification on the timing of the proposed July 29, 2021
80 release even though some of the materials have not been completed. Andy Henry said that the
81 vast majority of materials are completed, and a summary of the alternative scenarios and
82 measures of effectiveness (MOEs) will be created prior to the MPO Board meeting on August
83 11, 2021. Andy Henry pointed out that there are only small changes in the MOEs amongst the
84 three scenarios, but the trends are moving in the expected direction.

85 Andy Henry mentioned the MTP Alternative Analysis survey will resemble the Durham
86 County Transit Plan survey in terms of the emphasis on tradeoffs. There was a discussion on
87 public engagement coordination with the Durham and Orange Transit Plans to avoid confusing
88 the public. Andy Henry said he is aiming to release the MTP preferred scenario for public
89 comment in October 2021 and have the MPO Board adopt the preferred scenario in January
90 2022. Aaron Cain said the goal is for the MTP development and public engagement process to
91 coincide with the Durham and Orange Transit Plans. There was a discussion on how to best
92 align both plan development processes and ensure project horizon years are consistent among
93 plans. John Hodges-Copple said he will check with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
94 to verify the date the current MTP lapses, then discussions will continue on the schedule
95 coordination of the MTP and the Durham and Orange Transit Plans.

96 This item was for informational purposes; no further action was required by the TC.

97 **6. Bus On Shoulder Study (BOSS)**
98 **Patrick McDonough, HDR**
99 **Alpesh Patel, Cambridge Systematics**

100 Patrick McDonough said formal work on the Bus on Shoulder System (BOSS) study
101 concluded in June 2021 and the primary goal of the study was to identify the most promising
102 locations for BOSS expansion in the Triangle. Patrick McDonough said another goal of the
103 study was to document best practices to create a blueprint to help guide other regions
104 interested in BOSS implementation as the peer review process revealed that little
105 documentation exists of previous BOSS projects. Patrick McDonough shared the results of the
106 study including cost estimates for incremental improvements and the creation of 24
107 recommended criteria for design and operations to create a BOSS facility.

108 Alpesh Patel reviewed the suitability analysis of travel demand and transit operations
109 metrics using 2035 Triangle Regional Model (TRM) data. Alpesh Patel shared that overall,
110 primary BOSS expansion opportunities occur mostly along interstates that connect core
111 destinations and BOSS is more suitable when traffic is more challenging. These findings were
112 depicted in the color coded suitability map that includes 75 miles of tier 1 (most suitable)
113 facilities in the Triangle region for monetary return on investment. Alpesh Patel shared the
114 suitability map overlaid with State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) projects to
115 demonstrate Traffic System Management Operations (TSMO) projects already planned within
116 the next 10 to 20 years. This map helps facilitate joint visioning and coordinated decision
117 making to serve state and local partner interests as well as evaluate and potentially re-scope
118 future STIP projects to include BOSS deployment.

119 Aaron Cain asked why the US 70 segment was in the “less suitable” category and
120 Alpesh Patel mentioned that a BOSS facility may be included in a future rebuild of the roadway
121 but is not conducive to the current cross section. There was a discussion on BOSS suitability for
122 US 70, and Patrick McDonough pointed out that the suitability study focused solely on a cost-
123 benefit analysis to find locations that would provide the highest return on investment. Therefore,

124 it does not necessarily mean that BOSS is the best option for transit improvement in segments
125 listed as “most suitable”, but rather BOSS would be a cost-effective solution for those segments.
126 There was discussion on the need for further project-level assessments prior to deploying
127 BOSS. Chair Ellen Beckmann said she is interested in the next steps for this study to be able to
128 potentially implement BOSS. Patrick McDonough said the next steps are to continue active
129 dialogue among Triangle BOSS team members as well as have transit agencies and MPOs
130 work with NCDOT staff to explore which STIP projects could incorporate BOSS. Andy Henry
131 suggested including the BOSS suitability map in the 2050 MTP to guide further discussions.

132 This item was for informational purposes; no further action was required by the TC.

133 **7. D-O LRT Corridor in CTP**
134 **Aaron Cain, LPA Staff**

135 Aaron Cain gave some background information on the Durham-Orange Light Rail
136 Transit (D-O LRT) project that, when discontinued, left behind an alignment that remains in the
137 Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP). Aaron Cain said the alignment remaining in the
138 CTP poses a significant financial liability to Durham City and County per the ruling in North
139 Carolina Supreme Court Case Kirby v. NCDOT. Aaron Cain added that all parties involved
140 recognize the need for a high-capacity transit project, perhaps Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), from
141 Durham to Chapel Hill and maintaining this corridor alignment *could* aid in accomplishing that,
142 though there are currently no concrete plans or proposed projects. MPO staff recommended
143 that the D-O LRT corridor be removed from the CTP through Amendment #3 and asked for
144 direction from the TC before bringing the full CTP Amendment #3 to the TC and MPO Board.

145 John Hodges-Copple mentioned concerns over losing the South Square and Patterson
146 Place reservations as those two locations would be critical for any high-capacity transit project
147 between Durham and Chapel Hill and it may be impossible to get those back in the future if the
148 alignment is removed from the CTP. Aaron Cain agreed that losing South Square and Patterson
149 Place would be detrimental to a potential BRT project, but the exact path of such a project is still

150 unknown and the financial impact and legal ramifications make it difficult to justify keeping the
151 alignment at this time.

152 Scott Whiteman pointed out that because there is no concrete plan, funding, preferred
153 route, or project sponsor, keeping the former D-O LRT alignment in the CTP should not be
154 considered. Chair Ellen Beckmann agreed with John Hodges-Copple that serving South Square
155 would be very important to any future transit project, but the lines drawn for the former D-O LRT
156 corridor are impractical for a BRT project and would end up being more expensive than other
157 options utilizing existing roads. Jay Heikes said GoTriangle is supportive of the MPO staff
158 recommendation. Julie Bogle agreed that because there is no clear purpose for the alignment,
159 there shouldn't be reservation.

160 Bill Judge made a motion to follow the MPO staff recommendation to remove the D-O
161 LRT corridor from the CTP and replace it with language about the need for high-capacity transit
162 between Durham and Chapel Hill. Scott Whiteman seconded the motion. Julie Bogle mentioned
163 that vague statements in the CTP can be considered goals and not proposals or
164 recommendations. Andy Henry said CTP Amendment #3 includes maps of BRT along 15-501
165 and NC 54, which is important as the NC Board of Transportation only adopts the maps. Bill
166 Judge modified the motion to still remove the D-O LRT corridor from the CTP but to include
167 maps of BRT along 15-501 and NC 54 in CTP Amendment #3. The motion passed
168 unanimously.

169 **8. US 70 East Access and Connectivity Study Introduction**
170 **Jake Ford, LPA Staff**

171 Jake Ford, project manager for the US 70 East Access and Connectivity Study, gave an
172 update on the purpose and scope of the study. NCDOT STIP project U-5720 includes the
173 conversion of US 70 from a rural highway to a freeway and was frozen by NCDOT along with
174 the Wake County side of US 70 (U-5518). Jake Ford said that NCDOT is proceeding with
175 National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documentation and environmental assessment for

176 the Wake County project later this year and there is ample time on the Durham County side to
177 study how the current plans for US 70 impact the corridor and the broader community. Jake
178 Ford mentioned Durham City and County staff have raised several concerns over multimodal
179 access safety, environmental justice, and congestion. Chair Ellen Beckmann expressed support
180 for the study, the letter to NCDOT, and further investigation of transit issues that have affected
181 Durham residents for years.

182 Pam Williams clarified that the environmental assessment for U-5518 on the Wake
183 County side was completed in 2019, and the project is ready for design and construction as
184 soon as funding is available. The NEPA document was restarted in March for U-5720 and a
185 meeting with consultants in the near future is being set up.

186 Evan Tenenbaum made a motion to recommend that the MPO Board authorize the
187 Chair to sign the letter to NCDOT requesting incorporation of this study and its findings into the
188 development of U-5720. Chair Ellen Beckmann seconded the motion. The motion passed
189 unanimously.

190 **9. Transportation Improvement Program Amendment #7**
191 **Anne Phillips, LPA Staff**

192 Anne Phillips said most of the projects included in TIP Amendment #7 have already
193 been amended in the STIP. Anne Phillips stated that TIP Amendment #7 will have to be
194 released for a 21-day public comment period per the MPO's Public Involvement Policy as the
195 City of Durham's request to flex Surface Transportation Block Grant Direct Attributable funding
196 to the Federal Transit Administration exceeds \$1 million. Anne Phillips mentioned that language
197 will be added to the TIP through this amendment to reflect DCHC's Transit Safety Performance
198 Targets that were adopted on June 9, 2021.

199 Scott Whiteman made a motion to recommend that the MPO Board release TIP
200 Amendment #7 for a 21-day public comment period. Ellen Beckmann seconded the motion. The
201 motion passed unanimously.

202 **REPORTS FROM STAFF:**

203 **10. Report from Staff**
204 **Felix Nwoko, LPA Manager**

205 Aaron Cain recognized Brian Rhodes for his well-earned retirement after almost thirty
206 years of service to the City of Durham and the MPO. Brian will be recognized by the MPO Board
207 on August 11, 2021. Aaron Cain reminded Board and TC members to take the survey regarding
208 a potential return to in-person meetings.

209 Anne Phillips said that as the Federal Funding Policy is being updated as directed by the
210 MPO Board, there will be two TC subcommittee meetings in August to review the draft. Aaron
211 Cain mentioned the email sent out last week that SPOT 6.0 has been cancelled and the next
212 STIP development for FY24-33 will include no new projects added through SPOT 6.0. Aaron
213 Cain relayed the news from NCDOT that the quantitative results will be released in September
214 2021 to provide relative scoring information for future project submissions.

215 **11. Report from the Chair**
216 **Ellen Beckmann, TC Chair**

217 Chair Ellen Beckmann mentioned the Complete Streets Guidelines that NCDOT updated
218 in 2019 that had a great impact on bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. Chair Ellen Beckmann
219 said the guidelines were supposed to result in better, more complete projects, but is concerned
220 about a lack of implementation of the policy in P-5706 that did not have sidewalks included in
221 the environmental documentation. Chair Ellen Beckmann suggested making this topic an
222 upcoming agenda item along with a request that NCDOT provide an update on how the policy is
223 being implemented. Bill Judge suggested setting up a meeting with NCDOT Integrated Mobility
224 Division and anyone else interested, and if there are persistent concerns, NCDOT could be
225 invited to present the policy implementation strategy to the TC and/or Board. Aaron Cain said
226 the MPO will help facilitate and participate in those meetings, and many other TC members
227 expressed interest in participating as well.

228 **12. NCDOT Reports**

229 **Brandon Jones (David Keilson, Richard Hancock), Division 5 – NCDOT**

230 Richard Hancock announced his retirement from NCDOT. David Keilson gave some
 231 updates on the Alston Avenue/Holloway Street project and said the overall project has a
 232 completion date of November 2022. David Keilson said the Old Durham/Old Chapel Hill Road
 233 project should be completed by the end of 2021.

234 **Wright Archer (Pat Wilson, Stephen Robinson), Division 7 – NCDOT**

235 Stephen Robinson highlighted a few new all-way stops that will be implemented as well
 236 as the completion of plans and pending construction of traffic signal revisions and a high-
 237 visibility crosswalk at East Franklin Street and Henderson Street. Stephen Robinson stated the
 238 I-3306 project for the I-40 widening is still on track for a let date of August 17, 2021.

239 **Patrick Norman (Bryan Kluchar, Jen Britt), Division 8 - NCDOT**

240 Bryan Kluchar had no additional report.

241 **Julie Bogle, Transportation Planning Division – NCDOT**

242 Julie Bogle mentioned the resiliency data and tools available on Project Atlas including
 243 flood inundation data, coastal roadway inundation simulation data, and geotechnical asset
 244 management data.

245 **John Grant, Traffic Operations – NCDOT**

246 There was no additional report.

247 **Bryan Lopez, Integrated Mobility Division-NCDOT**

248 There was no additional report.

249 **INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:**

250 **Adjourn**

251 There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by Chair Ellen Beckmann
 252 at 11:27 a.m.

253 **Next meeting: August 25, 9 a.m., meeting location to be determined**