

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

### **TECHNICAL COMMITTEE**

**January 27, 2021**

### **MINUTES OF MEETING**

The Durham-Chapel Hill Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization Technical Committee met on January 27, 2021 at 9:00 a.m. through a teleconferencing platform. The following members were in attendance:

Nishith Trivedi (Chair) Orange County  
Ellen Beckmann (Vice Chair) City of Durham  
Kayla Seibel (Member) City of Durham  
Tasha Johnson (Member) City of Durham  
Evan Tenenbaum (Member) City of Durham  
Pierre Owusu (Member) City of Durham Transportation/Go Durham  
Brooke Ganser (Member) Durham County  
Scott Whiteman (Member) Durham County  
Chance Mullis (Member) Chatham County  
Tina Moon (Member) Town of Carrboro  
Bergen Watterson (Member) Town of Chapel Hill  
Jomar Pastorelle (Member) Town of Chapel Hill  
Zach Hallock (Member) Town of Carrboro  
Kumar Neppalli (Member) Town of Chapel Hill  
Margaret Hauth (Member) Town of Hillsborough  
John Hodges-Copple (Member) TJCOG  
Jay Heikes (Member) GoTriangle  
Hank Graham (Member) Research Triangle Foundation  
John Grant (Member) NCDOT Traffic Operations  
Julie Bogle (Member) NCDOT TPD  
Michael Page (Member) North Carolina Central University  
Kurt Stolka (Member) The University of North Carolina  
Theo Letman (Member) Orange Public Transportation  
Tom Altieri (Member) Orange County Planning  
Bill Judge (Alternate) City of Durham  
Richard Hancock (Alternate) NCDOT Division 5  
David Kielson (Alternate) NCDOT Division 5  
Steven Robinson (Alternate) NCDOT Division 7  
Bryan Kluchar (Alternate) NCDOT Division 8  
Brian Taylor (Alternate) City of Durham Transportation  
Cha'ssem Anderson (Alternate) The University of North Carolina

Matt Cecil (Alternate) Chapel Hill Transit/Planning  
Meg Scully (Alternate) GoTriangle

Sean Egan City of Durham  
Tamara Njegovan NCDOT Division 7  
Joe Geigle Federal Highway Administration  
Cy Stober City of Mebane

Felix Nwoko DCHC MPO  
Brian Rhodes DCHC MPO  
Aaron Cain DCHC MPO  
Andy Henry DCHC MPO  
Dale McKeel City of Durham/DCHC MPO  
Anne Phillips DCHC MPO  
Kayla Mathews DCHC MPO

Quorum Count: 24 of 31 voting members

Chair Nishith Trivedi called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m. Aaron Cain noted that the roll call could be completed by utilizing the zoom participant list. Aaron Cain introduced the new MPO intern, Kayla Mathews.

### **PRELIMINARIES:**

#### **Adjustments to the Agenda**

Chair Nishith Trivedi asked if there were any adjustments to the agenda. Aaron Cain noted two items, the first was safety performance measures and the second was to make everyone aware of the Call for Projects that was released January 26, 2021. These items would be added to the end of the agenda.

#### **Public Comments**

Chair Nishith Trivedi asked if there were any requests for public comment. There were no public comments.

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

The January 6, 2021 meeting minutes will be presented at the February TC meeting.

**ACTION ITEMS:**

**4. US 15-501 Corridor Study (10 minutes)**

**Andy Henry, LPA staff**

Chair Nishith Trivedi mentioned that this section was intended to discuss comments and would not need a vote. Andy Henry reminded the committee that at the January meeting, the MPO Board asked staff to make a few changes to the scope, including adding a third stakeholder group and ensuring the study is aspirational. Andy Henry said the scope will be revised and brought back to the TC in February before going to the MPO Board in March. Jay Heikes noted the need to coordinate with ongoing transit plan updates both in Orange and Durham Counties as well as other potential follow up studies. Andy Henry said he would go ahead and add that to the public engagement part of the scope. Andy Henry mentioned if anyone thinks of comments later, they would be welcome at any time.

This item was for discussion purposes, no further action was required by the TC.

**5. FY2022 Unified Planning Work Program (15 minutes)**

**Felix Nwoko, LPA Staff**

Felix Nwoko informed the group that the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) was released by the Board for public comments, and so far none have been received. Felix Nwoko mentioned a few new changes to the FY 22 UPWP New Initiatives, stating that the cost was removed that was associated with some initiatives as they would be completed by MPO staff and the two new low-cost initiatives requested by TJCOG. Felix Nwoko added that another change was that the FY 22 Planning (PL) funds estimate has been added to the funding for new initiatives, and an equivalent amount of Surface

Transportation Block Grant (STBG) funds has been removed so there is no net change to overall funding for new initiatives.

Chair Nishith Trivedi asked for confirmation that the MPO will pay the local match for the two US-70 studies and Felix Nwoko confirmed this. Zach Hallock asked about the third item on the New Initiative table attachment after much local interest in an emission estimation tool. Felix Nwoko answered that there will be some minor formatting changes to the document. Julie Bogle and Felix Nwoko discussed coordination with the State Transportation Involvement Program (STIP) on the unobligated STBG funds.

Kumar Neppalli made a motion to recommend that the MPO Board approve the UPWP. Zach Hallock seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**6. Draft Public Involvement Policy (PIP) and Limited English Proficiency Plan (LEP) (20 minutes)**

**Anne Phillips, LPA Staff**

Anne Phillips shared that the MPO has advertised the public comment period, but so far none have been received. The TC previously requested an executive summary and examples of the spectrum of engagement which have since been added to the PIP. There was a public hearing at the last MPO Board meeting, but nobody spoke at that hearing. Pierre Owusu asked if the MPO was a part of the City of Durham LEP group. Anne Phillips replied that the MPO is not part of that group, but the required federal procedures are very similar. In response to a question from Pierre Owsusu, Anne Phillips clarified that the MPO does not have a budget associated with the LEP, so moving forward the MPO should keep track of expenses related to implementation of the LEP.

Chance Mullis made a motion to recommend that the MPO Board approve the PIP and LEP Plan. Pierre Owusu seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**7. CTP Amendment #3 (15 minutes)**  
**Andy Henry, LPA Staff**

Andy Henry gave a presentation on the Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) Amendment #3 and asked for any comments. The presentation covered the CTP and Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) relationship, previous CTP amendments, summarized the proposed CTP Amendment #3, and reviewed the proposed schedule. Zach Hallock mentioned it would be helpful to identify what municipalities have regarding local Bicycle and Pedestrian plans and that Carrboro adopted their new Bicycle and Pedestrian plan on January 12, 2021.

John Hodges-Copple stated that the language in the CTP should not be constraining. Vice Chair Ellen Beckmann mentioned there would be a lot of overlap in the engagement process in terms of what the MPO is asking for the CTP Amendment #3 and the Orange and Durham Counties MTPs. Aaron Cain mentioned that these efforts could be coordinated. Andy Henry stated the need for greater clarification to avoid public confusion as the MTPs are smaller, more well defined plans whereas the CTPs are much broader.

Jay Heikes asked Andy Henry about how much thought has gone towards bus stops and bus pull outs that are elements of the Complete Streets policy. Andy Henry said bus stops and bus pull outs haven't been designated yet in the CTP, but the language of the complete streets policy will be added that encompasses many elements. Andy Henry stated he would add slides to address today's discussion before forwarding the presentation to the MPO Board.

This item was for discussion purposes only, no action was required by the TC.

**8. FFY 2021 CRRSSA (COVID Relief) Section 5307 Apportionment for DCHC UZA (5 minutes)**

**Felix Nwoko, LPA Staff**

Felix Nwoko reviewed the CARES ACT 5307 Split Letter that divides the funding in a manner that is consistent with methodologies formerly approved by the MPO Board. Jomar Pastorelle asked about the reason for safety and security funds. Felix Nwoko responded that transit agencies are required to set aside 1% of their funding for safety and security measures. Meg Scully added that transit agencies generally meet the safety and security minimum requirement with other funding which is why it does not appear on the attached apportionment chart.

Jomar Pastorelle made a motion to recommend that the MPO Board approved the Section 5307 Apportionment split letter for COVID relief. Pierre Owusu seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**9. FHWA Highway Infrastructure Funding Swap (10 minutes)**

**Anne Phillips, LPA Staff**

Anne Phillips mentioned the MPO did this funding swap last year and it is a fairly routine action. Anne Phillips explained that the MPO has received its allocation of Highway Infrastructure (Infra) funds from NCDOT, but these funds can only be used for projects with a vehicular benefit. Additionally, NCDOT has offered to swap Infra funds for STBG funds, which can be used for projects more in line with the MPO's goals.

Evan Tenenbaum made a motion to recommend Board approval of the FHWA Highway Infrastructure funding swap with NCDOT. Jomar Pastorelle seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**10. Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment #4 (5 minutes)**  
**Anne Phillips, LPA Staff**

Anne Phillips explained that the changes in this amendment were mostly changes made to the STIP by NCDOT and therefore needed to be reflected in DCHC MPO's TIP. Anne Phillips asked attendees to review projects in their jurisdictions to see if there are any potentially conflicting changes. Evan Tenenbaum asked if project funding amounts that have been previously discussed are included in this amendment or if they would be included in a subsequent amendment. Anne Phillips answered that there are mostly schedule changes in TIP Amendment #4 and Aaron Cain added that some funding changes, such as to Morreene Road, are included in this amendment. Aaron Cain stated there may be another TIP Amendment from the MPO to ensure NCDOT is clear about how much funding should be allocated to each project for the STIP.

Kumar Neppalli made a motion to recommend the Board approve TIP Amendment #4. Scott Whiteman seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**10A. Safety Performance Measures**  
**Andy Henry, LPA Staff**

Andy Henry stated the goal for this agenda item is to elicit comments and forward the item to the MPO Board for adoption by resolution. Andy Henry gave a presentation on the Transportation Performance Measures – Safety (TPMS) that are a federal requirement. In January 2019, the MPO adopted Safety measures and targets that were subsequently updated in November 2019. The MPO has two options – to either establish their own measures or to support NCDOT measure values. There was a discussion on the benefits and drawbacks of each option and a consensus was reached to support NCDOT measures so as to gain access to NCDOT data and to not incur additional burden on MPO staff.

Felix Nwoko stated that because the MPO Board has expressed interest in an MPO-centric safety TPMS plan, a compromise may be necessary to follow NCDOT targets while the

MPO develops a broader plan that discusses objectives and strategies. Joe Geigle added that no MPO within NC has adopted their own performance targets. Andy Henry added that funding and decision making processes would be unlikely to change if the MPO created their own performance targets despite the significant burden of staff time required to gather data and calculate targets. Vice Chair Ellen Beckmann and Joe Geigle discussed whether NCDOT and DCHC MPO had compatible safety goals. Chair Nishith Trivedi added that NCDOT approved a Highway Strategic Safety Plan in 2019 that identifies how they plan to achieve their targets. Joe Geigle clarified that the 2035 reduction by 50% is an interim goal to bridge the gap to the 2050 goal of zero fatalities or serious injuries (Vision Zero).

Kumar Neppalli made a motion to recommend that the MPO Board endorse NCDOT safety targets by resolution. Pierre Owusu seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**10B. Call for Projects**  
**Anne Phillips, LPA Staff**

Anne Phillips mentioned the MPO sent out the call for projects on January 26, 2021, including application materials for STBG and Congestion Mitigation Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) funds. Applications are due on February 10, 2021. Aaron Cain reminded everyone that all of these funding sources require a 20% local match. Ellen Beckmann asked if the STBG any area funds are divided by jurisdiction. Aaron Cain responded that those funds are available to any jurisdiction through a competitive application basis.

Aaron Cain added that, as discussed previously with MPO staff after they were notified by localities of potential funding shortfalls on existing projects, along with the backlog of projects, the funds will be preferentially given to existing projects to finish the implementation process rather than adding new projects to the list of uncompleted projects.



**11. TC Officer Elections (10 minutes) 21-113**  
**Aaron Cain, LPA Staff**

Aaron Cain stated per the bylaws that a new Chair and Vice Chair need to be elected. The only nominations that have been received thus far is Ellen Beckmann for Chair and Nishith Trivedi for Vice Chair. Aaron Cain opened up the virtual floor for any other nominations before proceeding.

Pierre Owusu made a motion to approve the nominations of Ellen Beckmann for Chair and Nishith Trivedi for Vice Chair. Jomar Pastorelle seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

At this point in the meeting, Ellen Beckmann officially became the Chair of the TC and Nishith Trivedi became the Vice Chair.

**REPORTS FROM STAFF:**

**12. Report from Staff**  
**Felix Nwoko, LPA Staff**

Felix Nwoko brought up that the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) released the new Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSA) that has been published in the Federal Registrar for a 60 day comment period. The OMB is proposing raising the minimum threshold for an MSA from the current threshold of 50,000 people to the proposed threshold of 100,000 people. It is unclear how this new change would affect the MPO's mission or the MPO as a whole.

**11. Report from the Chair**  
**Ellen Beckmann, Newly Elected TC Chair**

Chair Ellen Beckmann had no additional report.

**12. NCDOT Reports**  
**Joey Hopkins (David Keilson, Richard Hancock), Division 5 - NCDOT**

David Keilson reported comments on two projects. The Alston Avenue project and the reopening of the Alston/Holloway intersection has been pushed back a month due to weather

and utility conflicts. The Old Durham/Old Chapel Hill Road project the water line that was slowing the project down is being pressure tested today and if it passes, then the remaining sidewalk, curb, and final inch of asphalt can be completed ideally before the Wegmans Store opens on February 24, 2021.

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

Stephen Robinson had no additional report.

**Brandon Jones (Bryan Kluchar, Jen Britt), Division 8 - NCDOT**

Bryan Kluchar had no additional report.

**Julie Bogle, Transportation Planning Division - NCDOT**

Julie Bogle had no additional report.

**John Grant, Traffic Operations - NCDOT**

John Grant had no additional report.

**Kathryn Zeringue, Integrated Mobility Division - NCDOT**

Kathryn Zeringue had no additional report.

**INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:**

**Adjourn**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by Chair Ellen Beckmann at 10:43 a.m.

**Next Meeting: February 24, 9:00 a.m., Meeting to be held by teleconference**