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DURHAM-CHAPEL HILL-CARRBORO METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

July 25, 2018

MINUTES OF MEETING

The Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization Technical Committee met on July 25, 2018, 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:

Ellen Beckmann (Chair)	City of Durham Transportation
Margaret Hauth (Vice Chair)	Hillsborough Planning
Kumar Nepali (Member)	Chapel Hill Engineering
Kayla Seibel (Member)	Chapel Hill Planning
Hannah Jacobson (Member)	City of Durham Planning
Tasha Johnson (Member)	City of Durham Public Works
Zach Hallock (Member)	Carrboro Planning
Bergen Watterson (Member)	Chapel Hill Planning
Evan Tenenbaum (Member)	Durham County Planning
Scott Whiteman (Member)	Durham County Planning
Tom Altieri (Member)	Orange County Planning
Nishith Trivedi (Member)	Orange County Planning
Chance Mullis (Member)	Chatham County Planning
John Hodges-Copple (Member)	Triangle J Council of Governments
Geoff Green (Member)	GoTriangle
Tim Brock (Member)	Research Triangle Foundation
Julie Bogle (Member)	NCDOT TPD
John Grant (Member)	NCDOT Traffic Operations
Jonathan Peeler (Member)	NC Central University
Kurt Stolka (Member)	University of North Carolina
David Keilson (Alternate)	NCDOT, Division 5
Ed Lewis (Alternate)	NCDOT, Division 7
Bryan Kluchar (Member)	NCDOT, Division 8
Bryan Poole (Alternate)	City of Durham Transportation
Eddie Dancausse	Federal Highway Administration
Felix Nwoko	DCHC MPO
Andy Henry	DCHC MPO
Brian Rhodes	DCHC MPO
Aaron Cain	DCHC MPO
Meghan Makoid	GoTriangle
Kaitlin Hughes	GoTriangle
Danny Rogers	GoTriangle
Cy Stober	City of Mebane Planning
Mike Stanley	NCDOT
Van Argabright	NCDOT

46
47 Quorum Count: 24 of 31 Voting Members

48
49
50 Chair Ellen Beckmann called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. A roll call was performed. The
51 Voting Members and Alternate Voting Members of the DCHC MPO Technical Committee (TC) were
52 identified and are indicated above. Chair Ellen Beckmann reminded everyone to sign-in using the sign-in
53 sheet that was being circulated.

54 **PRELIMINARIES:**

55 **2. Adjustments to the Agenda**

56 There were no adjustments to the agenda.

57 **3. Public Comments**

58 There were no members of the public signed up to speak during the meeting.

59 **CONSENT AGENDA:**

60 **4. Approval of May 23, 2018, Meeting Minutes**

61 Chair Ellen Beckmann asked if there was any discussion on the March 28, 2018, meeting minutes.
62 Tom Altieri made a motion to approve the minutes. John Grant seconded the motion. The motion passed
63 unanimously.

64 **ACTION ITEMS:**

65 **5. STBG Funding Swap Proposal**

66 **Van Argabright, NCDOT**

67 **Mike Stanley, NCDOT**

68 **Aaron Cain, LPA Staff**

69

70 Mike Stanley provided background on the Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) Funding
71 Swap Proposal. Mike Stanley stated that obligation authority is given as a part of the budgetary process
72 each year that is allocated to the States and can only be used that year. Mike Stanley continued that any
73 obligation authority that the State receives that is not fully utilized by September 30, 2018, would

74 effectively be lost. Mike Stanley stated that North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT)
75 programs funding to the projected obligation limitation level. Mike Stanley added that Congress only
76 commits to reimburse the State on a percentage of the contract authority, which has historically been 85-
77 90% for North Carolina, adding that the cumulative obligation authority level is approximately 98%. Mike
78 Stanley stated that the apportionments of funding that typically have unobligated funds are the core
79 programs of STBG-Direct Attributable (DA), Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality (CMAQ), Transportation
80 Alternative Program (TAP) and TAP-DA. John Hodges Copple asked about rescission. Mike Stanley
81 responded the STBG-DA monies are not subject to rescission, but the TAP-DA monies would be subject to
82 rescission.

83 Mike Stanley stated that Congress obtains unused funding for those states that do not use their
84 full obligation authority near the end of the Federal Fiscal Year in August. Mike Stanley stated that
85 Congress then distributes the unused funds to eligible states. Mike Stanley stated that last year North
86 Carolina received over \$100M of obligation authority, and this year NCDOT's goal is to secure \$150M in
87 obligation authority. Mike Stanley stated that the additional obligation authority would be distributed
88 across all core programs. Mike Stanley stated that the reason that NCDOT is targeting STBG-Any Area is
89 because the STBG-DA funds are a population suballocation of that core program, therefore the eligibility
90 constraints and requirements are identical for both programs.

91 Mike Stanley stated that NCDOT proposes that approximately \$9.2M of DCHC's STBG-DA funding
92 be obligated to the Alston Avenue project. NCDOT would then obligate approximately \$9.2M of STBG-Any
93 Area funds to the projects listed on the attached document.

94 Geoff Green asked how STBG-Any Area funds are typically programmed. Mike Stanley stated that
95 historically each of the core programs has constraints on eligibility, but currently under Strategic
96 Transportation Investment (STI), NCDOT has more flexibility as to how state highway trust funds can be

97 used. Chair Ellen Beckmann asked about the Strategic Planning Office of Transportation (SPOT) 5. Mike
98 Stanley responded that it does not effectively impact Prioritization 5.0.

99 John Hodges Copple asked if DA funds could be returned to programming for allocation by the
100 MPO and then apply the increased authority that would be going to Alston Avenue, so that the MPO
101 would have the ability to program the DA funding to the Durham-Orange Light Rail Transit (D-O LRT). John
102 Hodges-Copple stated the D-O LRT was a top priority for North Carolina, and he would like to explore the
103 option to provide it additional funding. There was discussion about the feasibility and legality of this option
104 John Hodges Copple made a motion to bring forward to the MPO Policy Board a proposal for the potential
105 for funds to be flexed and used for D-O LRT and also this proposal on the swap, and the MPO Board would
106 decide which proposal to use.

107 Margaret Hauth made a motion to recommend that the Board approve the STBG-Any Area/STBG-
108 DA funding swap as outlined while investigating the options, viability, and timeliness for achieving the
109 same goal of acquiring additional funding obligation authorization to the State in order to fund other
110 projects within the timeline specified.

111 JHC asked if the motion language could be changed to, "If there is a path to accomplish the
112 obligation objectives to fund these projects that are listed with the Any Area funds and to program the
113 STBG-DA funds to the D-O LRT, then that would be a preferred alternative to what was proposed." Chair
114 Ellen Beckmann responded that the question would best be answered by a subcommittee tasked to
115 investigate the feasibility of the option proposed by John Hodges-Copple.

116 Margaret Hauth restated her support for her motion. Nishith Trivedi seconded the motion. The
117 motion passed with John-Hodges Copple voting against the motion.

118 **6. Upcoming Federal Rescission (15 minutes)**
119 **Aaron Cain, LPA Staff**

120
121 Aaron Cain stated that due to the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, there is an
122 upcoming federal rescission of funds. CMAQ, TAP, and TAP-DA funds are subject to rescission. Aaron Cain

123 stated that funding that is not obligated by the end of Federal Fiscal Year 2019, regardless of the fiscal year
124 that money is assigned to, could be subject to rescission. Aaron Cain stated that he wants to be able to
125 reprogram other year funding in order to obligate funding by September 30, 2019, which means starting
126 the process earlier and finishing by the end of May 2019 at the latest. Chair Ellen Beckmann and Aaron
127 Cain discussed swapping STBG-DA funds with CMAQ or TAP-DA funds. Aaron Cain stated that he planned
128 to discuss the process with Heather Hildebrandt, but also stated that swapping funds within CMAQ
129 projects would likely be the most feasible. Chair Ellen Beckmann and Aaron Cain discussed programmed
130 TAP-DA funds which include Morgan Creek Greenway and Old Chapel Hill Road. Felix Nwoko and Van
131 Argabright discussed the timeline for the rescission of money from the DCHC MPO.

132 Chair Ellen Beckmann and Aaron Cain discussed that D-O LRT could be a project onto which
133 funding would be increased, except with TAP-DA funding. Chair Ellen Beckmann also discussed purchasing
134 more buses as a means to avoid rescission. Aaron Cain added that the possible rescission funding will not
135 be as significant as \$9.2M, but he will have the correct figures at the next TC meeting. Chair Ellen
136 Beckmann and Van Argabright discussed that projects are chosen through the STI process. Van Argabright
137 added that if there is not sufficient TAP funding, then STBG-Any Area funds are used for TAP projects
138 awarded through the STI process.

139 Aaron Cain asked would there be sufficient State funds to use to avoid the rescission if a project is
140 short on funding and will not be able to obligate before September 30, 2019. Van Argabright replied that
141 more discussion on this subject would be necessary.

142 Van Argabright explained that a lapse is when an MPO does not use funds within the prescribed
143 timeline, which results in a loss of money. Van Argabright added that there is currently \$5M of lapsed
144 funding in jeopardy at the DCHC MPO. Van Argabright added that the result of lapsed funds is that there
145 are less unobligated funds, which would cause issues for the August redistribution. Felix Nwoko and Van
146 Argabright discussed the NCDOT strategy for obligating CMAQ funds.

147 No further action was required by the TC.

148 **7. NC 98 Corridor Study**

149 **Will Letchworth, P.E., WSP**

150 **Andy Henry, MPO Staff**

151

152 Andy Henry stated that on August 23, 2018, Durham City Council will receive a short
 153 presentation on the NC 98 Corridor Study and provide comments and feedback. Andy Henry added that
 154 the Durham Board of County Commissioners will also receive a presentation on September 4, 2018.

155 Will Letchworth explained that the study started in December of 2016. Will Letchworth stated
 156 NC 98 provides a vital east-west roadway. Will Letchworth stated that there are 27 miles in the NC 98
 157 Corridor from urban areas from the west in Durham, to more rural areas in the middle near Falls Lake,
 158 and then more urban and suburban areas in Wake Forest. Will Letchworth stated that there are high
 159 percentages of minorities in the Durham section of the corridor. Will Letchworth added that in Durham
 160 high percentages of households are without car ownership, therefore there were more people who
 161 walked or used transit. Will Letchworth stated that crashes and fatalities were an issue on the Durham
 162 side, partly due to there being no street median. Will Letchworth talked about long-term alternatives for
 163 the section of NC 98 Corridor closest to Durham as being a four-lane median divided section or possibly
 164 a two-lane road diet. The final study recommends the four-lane section. Will Letchworth stated that he
 165 recommends a cross section for Durham that includes bike lanes and sidewalks.

166 Will Letchworth stated that there is a high volume of traffic on Sherron Road to get to RTP. Will
 167 Letchworth stated that there are hilly areas in the middle of the corridor, which caused accidents due to
 168 limited sight distance while passing. Will Letchworth stated that Northern Durham Parkway currently is
 169 not funded, but it is an important section to divert traffic away from NC 98. Will Letchworth stated that
 170 there is economic and population growth along the corridor and in the Triangle in general, however, the
 171 Durham end is experiencing a lower rate of increase compared to Wake Forest.

172 Will Letchworth stated that, based on the traffic data and the impact on right-of-way and
173 environmental conditions, the corridor should not be designed to accommodate six lanes. Will
174 Letchworth also cautioned against adding additional traffic signals. Will Letchworth recommended
175 keeping the traffic flowing and providing access to the side streets by adding a variety of alternative
176 intersection configurations.

177 Will Letchworth stated that examples of short-term solutions for NC 98 are traffic signals and
178 roundabouts. Will Letchworth stated that the short-term solutions can be funded through local
179 municipalities or real estate developers. Will Letchworth noted that he recommended adding a left turn
180 lane at Camp Kanata Road. Will Letchworth recommended widening the segment from Sherron Road
181 through Wake Forest to a four-lane cross section. Will Letchworth discussed alternative intersection
182 configurations, which included public opinions on those configurations. Will Letchworth noted that
183 there was substantial public participation, including scheduling public workshops, talking to local
184 residents, and receiving feedback from a crowdsourced map at www.nc98corridor.com.

185 Geoff Green asked about width of bike lanes and speed of the roads. Will Letchworth responded
186 that the bike lanes would be a five foot width, and increasing the speed of NC 98 was not a priority. Will
187 Letchworth stated that widening the road for additional bike lane width would cause issues with right-
188 of-way. Will Letchworth noted that there are other topographical issues related to widening the
189 corridor. Will Letchworth stated that there is some designed stretch of multiuse path that is on the
190 north side of NC 98 near the Durham section.

191 Evan Tenenbaum made a motion to receive the presentation and recommend that the MPO
192 Board release the report of a 30-day public comment period. Scott Whiteman seconded the motion. The
193 motion passed unanimously.

194 **8. Quarterly Update on the Durham-Orange Light Rail Transit Project**
195 **Geoff Green, GoTriangle**

196 Geoff Green stated that the D-O LRT project is on schedule despite funding issues originating in
197 the General Assembly State Budget. The result of the State Budget and the resulting Budget Technical
198 Corrections Bill Session Law 2018-97 resulted in a cap of \$109M in State funding for the D-O LRT project
199 that has a fixed budget of \$2.476B. Geoff Green stated that the Durham percentage of price matching is
200 fixed at 30% and Orange County is fixed at 6% per the Transit Plans and Interlocal Cautionary
201 Agreement. Geoff Green continued that the State Budget and the subsequent Technical Corrections Bill
202 resulted in a budget gap for the D-O LRT.

203 Geoff Green stated that the first deadline for the Full Funding Grant Agreement (FFGA) is on
204 April 30, 2019, which is to secure all non-state and non-federal funds. Geoff Green added that the
205 second deadline is on 30 November, 2019, to secure all non-state funds, which means there needs to be
206 an executed FFGA. Felix Nwoko asked about the timeline for the allocation of funding once the FFGA
207 application has been submitted. Danny Rodgers responded that the final application in April 2019 is
208 consistent with the FTA requirements for timing in order to get by September 30, 2019, and based on
209 FTA guidance.

210 Geoff Green identified the critical partner agreements via an agenda attachment list. Geoff
211 Green added that this list is necessary to fulfill the FFGA. John Hodges-Copple and Geoff Green
212 discussed the future need for additional agreements.

213 Geoff Green discussed design and coordination challenges regarding the D-O LRT, including
214 grade alignment, Pettigrew Street, and the shifts in the Gateway Station and Patterson Place Station.
215 Geoff Green stated that GoTriangle will release a supplemental environmental assessment pending
216 completion in Fall 2018 for public comment. Felix Nwoko, Geoff Green, and Meghan Makoid discussed
217 the role of the MPO is to provide comments and share information.

218 No further action was required by the TC.

219 **9. D-O LRT Project Request for Design Change Input**
220 **Geoff Green, GoTriangle**

221 Geoff Green stated that there are two design changes to be reviewed; the Martin Luther King Jr
222 Parkway Station Park and Ride lot and the Erwin Road alignment. Geoff Green and Chair Ellen Beckman
223 discussed that that the GoTriangle Board will decide to accept or reject the design changes, and the role
224 of the TC and MPO Boards would be to provide input and comments.

225 Geoff Green stated that the modification for the Martin Luther King Jr Parkway Station Park and
226 Ride lot is to reconfigure the design to no longer require the acquisition of a particular large building due
227 to increased cost. Geoff Green stated that there will be an increase in parking spaces at the nearby
228 South Square Park and Ride station to provide for the loss of parking at the Martin Luther King Jr Park
229 and Ride. Geoff Green also stated that the change will result in a net savings of \$8-10M versus baseline
230 costs due to already budgeted acquisition of property at the South Square Station for right-of-way,
231 which will be used for additional parking. Vice Chair Margaret Hauth requested a more detailed map of
232 the proposed changes.

233 Geoff Green stated that GoTriangle is working with Durham VA Medical Center, Duke University
234 and Duke University Medical Center to address issues impacting access to their buildings and
235 infrastructure issues along Erwin Road. Geoff Green discussed the changes to the D-O LRT alignment and
236 rail stations along Erwin Road. Geoff Green stated that the change will result in an approximate \$90M
237 cost increase. John Hodges-Copple stated that the change in the location of rail stations would impact
238 ridership. Geoff Green and Danny Rodgers discussed that further investigation of adding an additional
239 station would impact, and possibly endanger, the budget and timeline. John Hodges-Copple discussed
240 the need to look to the future cost of an additional rail station versus the current cost. Chair Ellen
241 Beckmann and Danny Rodgers discussed the ongoing partnership with Duke University and Hospital.
242 Chair Ellen Beckmann and Danny Rodgers also discussed the need for ongoing coordination and
243 cooperation with railroads. Scott Whiteman requested further detailing in the map of the current
244 station plan.

245 No further action was required by the TC.

246 **10. Allocation of Local Input Points for Regional Impact Projects**

247 **Aaron Cain, LPA Staff**

248 Aaron Cain stated that the DCHC MPO Board approved local input points for Regional Impact
249 projects for Prioritization 5.0, and it was subject to further discussions with MPOs, Rural Transportation
250 Planning Organizations (RPO), and NCDOT, and any adjustments were required to be approved by the
251 DCHC MPO Board Chair Damon Seils and Vice Chair Wendy Jacobs. Aaron Cain stated that a final
252 allocation of local input points for Regional Impact projects was developed and submitted. Aaron Cain
253 stated that this item is informational.

254 Aaron Cain stated that one change to the point allocation as previously discussed would be no
255 longer adding points to NC 54 in southern Durham and moving those points to US 70 because the
256 former project was noncompetitive and the latter was competitive.

257 Aaron Cain stated that there are fewer projects that are likely to get funded due to a cost
258 increase of \$200M on a Region C project, which resulted in a reduction in the Region C funding that was
259 available for other projects. Evan Tenenbaum and Aaron Cain discussed that the US 15-501 project is
260 above the cut line despite having a lower score than some projects below the cut line is because that US
261 15-501 project is in Region D, which has more funding. Chair Ellen Beckmann and Aaron Cain discussed
262 that the DCHC MPO has more points than viable projects for funding. Aaron Cain discussed that there
263 are three projects that are likely to be funded: Durham-Orange Light Rail; NC 55 3rd southbound lane;
264 and US 15-501 from 54 to Ephesus Church in Chapel Hill. Aaron Cain stated that the projects that fall
265 below the cut line are not likely to be funded, but that depends on how competitive other projects are
266 in the region. Aaron Cain also stated that the projects that fall below the cut line could cascade down
267 and be eligible for Division level funding.

268 Andy Henry asked how budget increases affect the Strategic Prioritization of Transportation
269 (SPOT) cycles. Aaron Cain stated that for projects committed for SPOT 3 or SPOT 4, the increased

270 funding will be granted. Aaron Cain continued that the committed projects in the SPOT 5 cycle are
 271 subject to NCDOT committee review. Chair Ellen Beckmann and Aaron Cain discussed that the DCHC
 272 MPO Board and the Divisions are able to not add points to any project that they do not want funded.

273 No further action was required by the TC.

274 **11. Initial Allocation of Local Input Points for Division Needs Projects in Prioritization 5.0**

275 **Aaron Cain, LPA Staff**

276 Aaron Cain stated that the Initial Allocation of Local Points for Division projects was based on
 277 the Methodology that the DCHC MPO Board adopted and asked the TC to recommend that the MPO
 278 Board release the list for public comment. Aaron Cain also stated that Regional projects that cascaded
 279 down to the Division level are not included in the document provided to the TC and Board because
 280 those projects violate the DCHC MPO Methodology. Aaron Cain added that those Regional projects that
 281 are not included will be up for discussion at the TC Subcommittee meeting to discuss the allocation of
 282 local points on August 14, 2018, at 2pm on the fourth floor of City Hall. Chair Ellen Beckmann and David
 283 Keilson discussed that in September NCDOT will release which Division projects would receive funding.
 284 Aaron Cain added that historically, projects that score well at the Regional level do not necessarily score
 285 well at the Division level and vice versa.

286 Margaret Hauth made a motion to recommend that the MPO Board release the initial allocation
 287 of local input points for Division Needs projects for Prioritization 5.0 for public review and comment, and
 288 that the Board hold a public hearing as its September 12, 2018 meeting. The motion was seconded by
 289 Scott Whiteman. The motion passed unanimously.

290 **12. Amendment #4 to the FY2018-2027 TIP**

291 **Aaron Cain, LPA Staff**

292 Aaron Cain stated that the amendment #4 to the FY2018-27 TIP includes two local requests: the
 293 Town of Carrboro requests adding STBG-DA funds to U-4726 DE, Bolin Creek Greenway; and Carrboro
 294 and Chapel Hill request to split EB-5886, Estes Road Bike/Ped, into two sections that are split at the

295 municipal boundary in order to allow for each jurisdiction to move forward at an appropriate delivery
296 schedule. Aaron Cain added that there are other additions shown in the attachment that are requested
297 from NCDOT.

298 No further action was required by the TC.

299 **REPORTS:**

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

301 Andy Henry, LPA Staff

302 Andy Henry stated that there was no report. Andy Henry continued that the amendment to the
303 CTP will be postponed until the August 22, 2018, TC meeting, due to a citizen participant being unavailable
304 to provide comment beforehand, which was requested by MPO Board Chair Damon Seils.

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

306 Ellen Beckmann, DCHC MPO TC Chair

307 There was no report from Chair Ellen Beckmann.

308 **15. NCDOT Reports**

309 There was no report from NCDOT Division 5.

310 There was no report from NCDOT Division 7.

311 There was no report from NCDOT Division 8.

312 There was no report from the Transportation Planning Division.

313 There was no report from NCDOT Traffic Operations.

314 **INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:**

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

316 There were no informational items.

317 **ADJOURNMENT:**

318 There being no further business before the DCHC MPO Technical Committee, the meeting was
319 adjourned at 12:01pm.