

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

Quorum Count: 24 of 31 Voting Members

Chair Ellen Beckmann called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. A roll call was performed. The

Voting Members and Alternate Voting Members of the DCHC MPO Technical Committee (TC) were identified and are indicated above. Chair Ellen Beckmann reminded everyone to sign-in using the sign-in sheet that was being circulated.

PRELIMINARIES:

2. Adjustments to the Agenda

There were no adjustments to the agenda.

3. Public Comments

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

CONSENT AGENDA:

4. Approval of May 23, 2018, Meeting Minutes

Chair Ellen Beckmann asked if there was any discussion on the March 28, 2018, meeting minutes.

Tom Altieri made a motion to approve the minutes. John Grant seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

ACTION ITEMS:

5. STBG Funding Swap Proposal

Van Argabright, NCDOT

Mike Stanley, NCDOT

Aaron Cain, LPA Staff

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Aaron Cain stated that due to the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, there is an 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.

No further action was required by the TC.

7. NC 98 Corridor Study

Will Letchworth, P.E., WSP

Andy Henry, MPO Staff

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

No further action was required by the TC.

9. D-O LRT Project Request for Design Change Input
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.

No further action was required by the TC.

10. Allocation of Local Input Points for Regional Impact Projects

Aaron Cain, LPA Staff

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

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

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

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

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

No further action was required by the TC.

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

Aaron Cain, LPA Staff

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

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

12. Amendment #4 to the FY2018-2027 TIP

Aaron Cain, LPA Staff

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

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

No further action was required by the TC.

REPORTS:

13. Reports from the LPA Staff

Andy Henry, LPA Staff

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

14. Report from the DCHC MPO TC Chair

Ellen Beckmann, DCHC MPO TC Chair

There was no report from Chair Ellen Beckmann.

15. NCDOT Reports

There was no report from NCDOT Division 5.

There was no report from NCDOT Division 7.

There was no report from NCDOT Division 8.

There was no report from the Transportation Planning Division.

There was no report from NCDOT Traffic Operations.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

16. Recent News, Articles, and Updates

There were no informational items.

ADJOURNMENT:

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