

DURHAM-CHAPEL HILL-CARRBORO METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION BOARD**13 May 2020****MINUTES OF MEETING**

The Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization Board met on May 13, 2020, at 9:00 a.m. remotely via WebEx. The following people were in attendance:

Wendy Jacobs (Chair)	Durham County
Jenn Weaver (Vice Chair)	Town of Hillsborough
Renée Price (Member)	Orange County
Karen Howard (Member)	Chatham County
Ellen Reckhow (Member)	GoTriangle
Charlie Reece (Member)	City of Durham
Steve Schewel (Member)	City of Durham
Pam Hemminger (Member)	Town of Chapel Hill
Damon Seils (Member)	Town of Carrboro
Michael Parker (Alternate)	Town of Chapel Hill
Lydia Lavelle (Alternate)	Town of Carrboro
Heidi Carter (Alternate)	Durham County
Mike Fox (Alternate)	NC Board of Transportation
Joey Hopkins	NCDOT, Division 5
David Keilson	NCDOT, Division 5
Richard Hancock	NCDOT, Division 5
Patrick Wilson	NCDOT, Division 7
Stephen Robinson	NCDOT, Division 7
Tamara Njegovan	NCDOT, Division 7
Bryan Kluchar	NCDOT, Division 8
Julie Bogle	NCDOT, TPD
John Grant	NCDOT, Traffic Operations
Ellen Beckmann	City of Durham
Sean Egan	City of Durham
Bill Judge	City of Durham
Pierre Osei-Owusu	City of Durham
Evan Tenenbaum	City of Durham
Tasha Johnson	City of Durham Planning
Bergen Watterson	Chapel Hill Planning
Jomar Pastorelle	Chapel Hill Planning
Tina Moon	Town of Carrboro
Brooke Ganser	Durham County Planning
Zach Hallock	Durham County
Nish Trivedi	Orange County
Joe Geigle	FHWA
John Hodges-Copple	Triangle J Council of Governments
Meg Scully	GoTriangle

47	Jay Heikes	GoTriangle
48	Cha'ssem Anderson	University of North Carolina
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50	Felix Nwoko	DCHC MPO
51	Andy Henry	DCHC MPO
52	Aaron Cain	DCHC MPO
53	Anne Phillips DCHC MPO	
54	Brian Rhodes	DCHC MPO
55	Robert Jahn	DCHC MPO
56	Yanping Zhang	DCHC MPO
57	Dale McKeel	City of Durham/DCHC MPO

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59 Quorum Count: 10 of 10 Voting Members

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62 Chair Wendy Jacobs called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. A roll call was performed of MPO

63 Board Member and Alternates by Robert Jahn. The Voting Members and Alternate Members of the

64 DCHC MPO Board were identified and are indicated above. Karen Howard noted that she had to leave

65 the meeting at 10 a.m. due to a scheduling conflict. Chair Wendy Jacobs announced that for each

66 action item requiring a vote, Robert Jahn would perform a roll-call vote. Aaron Cain stated that

67 Vernetta Alston would no longer be serving on the MPO Board; Steve Schewel would serve as Member

68 and Javiera Caballero as Alternate.

69 **PRELIMINARIES:**

70 **2. Ethics Reminder**

71 Chair Wendy Jacobs read the Ethics Reminder and asked if there were any known conflicts of

72 interest with respect to matters coming before the MPO Board and requested that if there were any

73 identified during the meeting for them to be announced. There were no known conflicts identified by

74 the MPO Board Members.

75 **3. Adjustments to the Agenda**

76 Aaron Cain stated that there would be a presentation from Joey Hopkins about the current

77 finances and budget of NCDOT, listed below as item #15A.

4. Public Comments

There were no comments from the public.

5. Directives to Staff

Renee Price and Aaron Cain discussed making changes to the Directives to Staff. Charlie Reece suggested deleting the completed items on the list. Aaron Cain agreed to remove the completed items. Chair Wendy Jacobs and Damon Seils discussed presenting an item related to the Directives to Staff at the next MPO Meeting on June 10, 2020.

CONSENT AGENDA:

6. March 11, 2020 MPO Board Meeting Minutes

There was no discussion of the March 11, 2020, MPO Board Meeting Minutes.

Ellen Reckhow made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Vice Chair Jenn Weaver seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

ACTION ITEMS:

7. Material Changes to the 2017 Durham County Transit Plan
Aaron Cain, LPA Staff

Aaron Cain stated that the DCHC MPO, Durham Board of County Commissioners, and GoTriangle adopted the Durham County Transit Plan (Transit Plan). Aaron Cain added that expenditure increases of more than \$500,000 on bus services are considered “material changes” and must be approved by all three governing boards per the interlocal agreement (ILA). Aaron Cain noted that the projects in the draft Work Plan deemed to be material changes are the Fayetteville Street transit emphasis corridor, bus stop access improvements, bus speed and reliability, electric vehicle acquisition, and GoDurham Computer-Aided Dispatch/Automatic Vehicle Locator (CAD/AVL). Aaron Cain stated that the Durham County Board of Commissioners on May 11 voted to approve the changes to the Transit Plan and it is scheduled to go before the GoTriangle Board of Trustees at their meeting in either May or June of 2020.

Chair Wendy Jacobs noted that the public comment period for the Transit Plan was still ongoing. Charlie Reece emphasized that the changes in the Transit Plan would greatly benefit Durham's community.

Damon Seils made a motion to adopt the resolution to approve the material changes as described in the memo. Pam Hemminger seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

8. Draft FY21 Durham and Orange Work Plans
Aaron Cain, LPA Staff

Aaron Cain stated that the Durham and Orange Staff Working Groups (SWG) released the Draft FY21 Work Plans for public comment on April 15, 2020. Aaron Cain indicated that the plans would be available for public comment until May 22, 2020. Aaron Cain added that the draft Durham Work Plan was reviewed by the Durham County Board of Commissioners on May 4. Aaron Cain listed the FY20 transit improvements as follows: bus stop improvements for GoDurham, Orange Public Transit, and Chapel Hill Transit; GoDurham service expansion; upgrades for the Southpoint transit center; design phase of the Hillsborough park-and-ride station; transit emphasis corridor design for Fayetteville Street, Holloway Street, and Chapel Hill Road; and capital funding supply for the North-South BRT. Aaron Cain added that, for FY21, the following implementations have been proposed: Chapel Hill Transit short-range transit plan; additional service frequency on selected GoDurham routes; continuation of the Fayetteville Street Transit Emphasis Corridor; vehicle purchases for GoTriangle and GoDurham; expansion of the Hillsborough circulator; bus speed and reliability improvements; repurposing of the previously envisioned Rougement service; and removal of some low-ridership routes. Aaron Cain presented a timeline for review by various boards, including the DCHC MPO Board, county boards of commissioners, and GoTriangle Board of Trustees.

Ellen Reckhow requested further review and oversight on costs related to Durham County overhead. Renee Price and Aaron Cain discussed that the Orange County Work Plan will be available for public comment though May 22. Aaron Cain added that rental fees are a major source of funding

for GoTriangle and those funds have dramatically decreased due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Ellen Reckhow suggested that the sales tax projections may have been made too high. Renee Price and Aaron Cain discussed carryover balances from FY20 to FY21, and the proper way to present the information in the transit plans. Renee Price asked if Aaron Cain was available to present information related to the Transit Plan at the Orange County Board of Commissioners meeting on May 19.

There was no further MPO Board action necessary for this item.

9. FFY20 Section 5307/5340 FULL Apportionment Split Letter
Felix Nwoko, LPA Staff

Aaron Cain stated that Section 5307/5340 funds are allocated to urbanized areas for transit capital and operating assistance, and for transportation-related planning. Aaron Cain continued that the DCHC MPO full apportionment for FFY20 was released by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to the LPA staff, and the funding amounts for each agency were made in consultation with the four fixed-route transit operators and MPO policy. Aaron Cain added that a split letter to FTA regarding the allocation of these funds among transit operators must be approved by the MPO Board to authorize the transit operators to seek applications for funding. Chair Wendy Jacobs requested further information about the funding. Aaron Cain responded that the funding is federal support for local transit agencies and can be used for operations and capital, and can be incorporated into the local budgets.

Ellen Reckhow made a motion to approve the distribution and endorse the attached FFY20 FULL apportionment split letter. Pam Hemminger seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

10. FFY20 Section COVID-19 CARES ACT 5307/5340 FULL Apportionment Split Letter
Felix Nwoko, LPA Staff

Aaron Cain stated that, as part of the COVID-19 Stimulus packet called the Corona Virus Aid, Relief and Security (CARES) ACT, FTA received funding under the Section 5307/5340 program, which is

allocated to urbanized areas for transit capital and operating assistance ,and for transportation-related planning. Aaron Cain added that CARES funding differs from the traditional 5307 because it does not require local matching funds; expenses must be incurred on or after January 2020 and it does not have to be programmed in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) if used for operating expenses.

Aaron Cain added that DCHC MPO used the same formula for CARES funding as the 5307 formula. Aaron Cain continued that the CARES funding is intended to be used to support local transit agencies while revenues are anticipated to fall due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Damon Seils affirmed his support for additional transit funding due to, in part, NCDOT budget cuts of programs supporting local transit agencies.

Damon Seils made a motion to approve the distribution and endorse the attached FFY20 CARES Act full apportionment split letter. Ellen Reckhow seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

11. FFY19 and FFY20 Section 5339 Full Apportionment Split Letter
Felix Nwoko, LPA Staff

Aaron Cain stated that the Section 5339 Buses and Bus Facilities program makes Federal resources available to states and designated recipients to replace, rehabilitate, and purchase buses and related equipment, and to construct bus-related facilities. Aaron Cain noted that the DCHC MPO is the designated recipient for the Durham urbanized area (UZA). Aaron Cain added that DCHC MPO plans to use the same formula to distribute funding as in previous years.

Damon Seils made a motion to approve the FFY19 and FFY20 Section 5339 distribution and endorse the full apportionment split letter. Ellen Reckhow seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

12. Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities (Section 5310) Grant - FY19 and FY20 Call for Projects
Felix Nwoko, LPA Staff

Aaron Cain stated that Section 5310 - Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities provides funds to improve mobility for seniors and individuals with disabilities by removing barriers to transportation service and expanding transportation mobility options, and the DCHC MPO is the designated recipient of these funds for the Durham urbanized area (UZA) and distributes the funds to eligible sub-recipients through a competitive selection process. Aaron Cain added that approximately \$500,000 was apportioned to the Durham UZA for FY2019 and FY2020. There was discussion about the types of projects that this funding would be allocated to, including the Chapel Hill Transit's Senior Shuttle and the EZ Rider program in Chapel Hill and Carrboro.

There was no further action necessary for the MPO Board.

13. Amendment #1 to the FY2020-2029 TIP

Anne Phillips, LPA Staff

Aaron Cain introduced Anne Phillips, as a Principal Planner for the DCHC MPO. Anne Phillips stated that, in March 2020, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) reconciled the DCHC MPO FY 2020-2029 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) with the FY2020-2029 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP); therefore, additions and amendments to projects that differ from the initially adopted STIP can now added to the TIP. Anne Phillips added that Amendment #1 adds these projects to the TIP.

Pam Hemminger made a motion to approve Amendment #1 to the FY2020-29 TIP. Ellen Reckhow seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

14. FHWA Highway Infrastructure Funding Swap

Aaron Cain, LPA Staff

Aaron Cain stated that the DCHC MPO is scheduled to receive \$414,806 in 2020 of Highway Infrastructure Program (Infra) funds from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). Aaron Cain continued that NCDOT has offered to swap Infra funds for an equal amount of Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) funds because Infra funds can only be used for highway projects for vehicular travel

benefit. Aaron Cain added STBG funds will allow the MPO more flexibility in allocating funding. Aaron Cain noted that MPO staff proposes to include the additional STBG funding in the upcoming call for projects for DCHC Surface Transportation Block Grant-Direct Attributable (STBGDA) and Transportation Alternatives Program-Direct Attributable (TAPDA) funds.

Chair Wendy Jacobs and Aaron Cain discussed that a formula for the distribution of funding has not been determined, but the MPO Board would receive recommendations. Renee Price and Aaron Cain discussed that the funding would include Durham, Orange, and Chatham counties. Aaron Cain added that he would present timely information to the MPO Board regarding the STBGDA call for projects in June or August of 2020.

Renee Price made a motion to approve the Infra fund swap with NCDOT. Ellen Reckhow seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

15. Support Letter for Durham BUILD Grant and Resolution in Support of Acquisition of S-Line
Dale McKeel, LPA Staff

Dale McKeel stated that the City of Durham is submitting a Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Grant application to the U.S. Department of Transportation for construction funding for the Durham Belt Line Trail, and has requested a letter of the support from the MPO Board. Dale McKeel added that NCDOT and Northline are pursuing grant funding from the Federal Railroad Administration to acquire S-line railroad right-of-way for future high speed rail. Dale McKeel continued that there was an additional request for right-of-way for a parallel trail to S-line. Dale McKeel stated that further amendments from the Technical Committee (TC) include adding language to expand right-of-way requests from CSX to areas that would be useful for the proposed Commuter Rail Transit (CRT).

Ellen Reckhow made a motion to approve the support letter for Durham BUILD Grant and Resolution in support of the acquisition of the S-line. Pam Hemminger seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

15A. NCDOT Budget**Joey Hopkins**

Joey Hopkins indicated that the current situation at NCDOT is unprecedented and therefore requires patience and understanding. Joey Hopkins stated that, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, there were budget issues at NCDOT due to the cost of storm response and recovery as well as legal costs resulting from the Map Act. Joey Hopkins elaborated on the cost of the storm response and recovery, noting that the resulting cost was historically high. Joey Hopkins continued that due to these existing issues, measures were taken to compensate for budget shortfalls, such as delaying project letting, rescheduling capital programs, and decreased and suspended routine maintenance.

Joey Hopkins stated that NCDOT is 100% receipt supported, and the COVID-19 pandemic has severely lowered its revenue. Joey Hopkins noted that currently NCDOT is operating below their cash floor and is legally mandated to not enter new agreements or contracts. Joey Hopkins noted that traffic volumes are down approximately 40% in March and April 2020. Joey Hopkins continued that revenues have declined and it is unclear how long it will last or how much the impact will be, however current estimates indicate that there will be a \$300M loss for FY20 and a \$370M loss for FY21.

Joey Hopkins stated that there are 62 active construction projects that are continuing because the cost of delay could be \$1.5M per day in claims. Joey Hopkins stated that NCDOT has moved approximately 250 projects out of the 12 month let list. Joey Hopkins added that NCDOT currently has a hiring freeze and there is currently a 33% vacancy rate. Joey Hopkins continued that NCDOT implemented a 50% cost reduction in temporary and contract employees. Joey Hopkins added that NCDOT is considering furloughs for its employees and reduction-in-force measures. Joey Hopkins listed projects that have been suspended including; the wildflower program, litter sweeps, training programs, summer internships, the passenger ferry between Hatteras and Ocracoke, state park road maintenance, school road reimbursement, mowing services, storm repair services, pothole repair, and highway sponsorship.

254 Joey Hopkins noted that recently the General Assembly passed Senate Bill 704, which allowed
255 NCDOT to delay the transfer of \$61M into the new transportation emergency reserve for future storms,
256 which will now count toward the cash balance. Joey Hopkins added that House Bill 1043 allows NCDOT
257 to use \$300M from the CARES Act for general maintenance and reserve, but that funding is subject to
258 federal legislation or change in rules, and currently cannot be used for continued operations due to
259 revenue loss.

260 Pam Hemminger asked about grant funded projects in Chapel Hill moving forward. Joey Hopkins
261 responded that he did not know the specifics of those particular projects, but many Local Agency
262 Program (LAP) projects are not able to move forward due to the financial mechanisms within North
263 Carolina due to COVID-19 related issues. Joey Hopkins added that, despite the restrictions, some
264 programs are proceeding on a case-by-case basis. Joey Hopkins continued that NCDOT might not be able
265 to refund certain monies to localities.

266 Vice Chair Jenn Weaver and Joey Hopkins discussed that the North Carolina State Budget and
267 Management Office is responsible for the CARES Act funding until the rules change or new legislation
268 that allows revenue replacement. Joey Hopkins and Mike Fox discussed the likelihood of federal
269 legislation that would make CARES Act funding more accessible for North Carolina.

270 Renee Price and Joey Hopkins discussed that there will be a case by case analysis for specific
271 projects that will be cut due to budgeting issues. Joey Hopkins added that there is the Move Forward List
272 at NCDOT.gov that records which projects are currently moving forward. Mike Fox added that there are
273 no projects on the Move Forward List within the DCHC MPO jurisdiction. Chair Wendy Jacobs asked how
274 determinations are made for projects to proceed. Joey Hopkins answered there are several variables to
275 a project moving forward including the type of funding allocated to the project and the state of the
276 project.

Damon Seils asked about if NCDOT has made any decisions concerning public transportation.

Joey Hopkins responded that those decisions have not yet been made, but there has been discussion.

Damon Seils asked about resurfacing projects in Chapel Hill and Carrboro. Joey Hopkins responded that the continuation of contract resurfacing has not yet been determined. Mike Fox added that it is uncertain when the economic downturn due to the COVID-19 pandemic will end, and there are projections currently being made with many variables. Joey Hopkins stated that he had to leave the conversation due to prior engagements.

Ellen Reckhow asked Mike Fox if NCDOT planners are looking into transportation behavior changes as a result of COVID-19. Mike Fox responded that NCDOT is looking into behavior changes and how that will impact telework and vehicle usage. Charlie Reece asked about how projects will be prioritized after the current disruption. Mike Fox responded that the NCDOT prioritization practices will be followed, prioritization will be considered for projects that are most ready to proceed, and input from local communities. Chair Wendy Jacobs asked about alternative models for funding and possible reduced projects costs. Mike Fox responded that in 2019 NCDOT established the NC First Commission to address alternative models to funding. Mike Fox added that reduced projects costs would be accessed after a six month period due to the project pipeline being full. Mike Fox continued that project costs may be lower for future projects due to increased competition.

REPORTS:

16. Report from the MPO Board Chair **Wendy Jacobs, Board Chair**

Chair Wendy Jacobs stated that the next MPO Board Meeting will likely continue to be virtual.

17. Report from the Technical Committee Chair **Nish Trivedi, TC Chair**

Nish Trivedi stated that the Burlington-Graham Metropolitan Planning Organization (BGMPO) is planning to release their 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) in the near future for its 30-day public comment period, and it is scheduled to be voted for adoption in June 2020.

18. Report from LPA Staff

Felix Nwoko, Andy Henry, LPA Staff

Aaron Cain noted that there are a few planning project updates from Andy Henry located in the agenda packet. Chair Wendy Jacobs observed that there were some issues with the US 15-501 Corridor Study. Aaron Cain stated that the study is scheduled to be reviewed by the TC in July and presented to the MPO Board in August 2020.

19. NCDOT Report

David Keilson, Division 5, stated that Liberty Street is anticipated to be reopened by mid-June 2020 for the Alston Avenue project (U-3308). David Keilson added that the Old Chapel Hill/Old Durham Road project (EB-4707A) is ongoing. David Keilson noted that the Briggs Avenue onramp has reopened for the East End Connector project (U-0071).

Pat Wilson, Division 7, stated that Main Street and Franklin Street road diet plans in Chapel Hill and Carrboro were delayed until next year. Pam Hemminger and Pat Wilson discussed that Chapel Hill and Carrboro can submit changes to the configuration of the road diet until the end of 2020. Damon Seils and Pam Hemminger discussed meeting for a further review of the road diet plans.

Bryan Kluchar, Division 8, stated that Division 8 projects are not active.

Julie Bogle, Transportation Planning Division, stated that draft recommendations for the NC Moves 2050 plan will be released to the public following a presentation to the North Carolina Board of Transportation in June 2020.

John Grant, NCDOT Traffic Operations, stated that there was no additional report.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

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