

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

2 **9 September 2020**

3  
4 **MINUTES OF MEETING**

5  
6 The Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization Board met on  
7 September 9, 2020, at 9:00 a.m. remotely via Webex. The following people were in  
8 attendance:

9		
10	Wendy Jacobs (Chair)	Durham County
11	Jenn Weaver (Vice Chair)	Town of Hillsborough
12	Charlie Reece (Member)	City of Durham
13	Steve Schewel (Member)	City of Durham
14	Pam Hemminger (Member)	Town of Chapel Hill
15	Damon Seils (Member)	Town of Carrboro
16	Renée Price (Member)	Orange County
17	Karen Howard (Member)	Chatham County
18	Michael Parker (Member)	GoTriangle
19	Javiera Caballero (Alternate)	City of Durham
20	Amy Ryan (Alternate)	Town of Chapel Hill
21	Mark Bell (Alternate)	Town of Hillsborough
22	Heidi Carter (Alternate)	Durham County
23	Mike Fox (Alternate)	NC Board of Transportation
24		
25	Joey Hopkins	NCDOT Division 5
26	Richard Hancock	NCDOT Division 5
27	Wright Archer	NCDOT Division 7
28	Stephen Robinson	NCDOT Division 7
29	Pat Wilson	NCDOT Division 7
30	Tamara Njegovan	NCDOT Division 7
31	Brandon Jones	NCDOT Division 8
32	Bryan Kluchar	NCDOT Division 8
33	Julie Bogle	NCDOT Transportation Planning Division
34	John Grant	NCDOT Traffic Operations
35	Joe Geigle	FHWA
36	Van Argabright	NCDOT Division of Planning & Programming
37	Ellen Beckmann	City of Durham
38	Sean Egan	City of Durham
39	Bill Judge	City of Durham
40	Pierre Osei-Owusu	City of Durham
41	Evan Tenenbaum	City of Durham
42	Bergen Watterson	Chapel Hill Planning
43	Jomar Pastorelle	Chapel Hill Planning
44	Matt Cecil	Chapel Hill Transit
45	Tina Moon	Town of Carrboro
46	Zach Hallock	Town of Carrboro

47	Brooke Ganser	Durham County Planning
48	Theo Letman	Orange County
49	John Hodges-Copple	Triangle J Council of Governments
50	Meg Scully	GoTriangle
51	Jay Heikes	GoTriangle
52	Kurt Stolka	University of North Carolina
53	Cha'ssem Anderson	University of North Carolina
54		
55	Felix Nwoko	DCHC MPO
56	Aaron Cain	DCHC MPO
57	Andy Henry	DCHC MPO
58	Dale McKeel	City of Durham/DCHC MPO
59	Anne Phillips	DCHC MPO
60	Yanping Zhang	DCHC MPO
61	Brian Rhodes	DCHC MPO
62	Filmon Fishastion	DCHC MPO
63		
64	Lynn Purnell	WSP

65  
66 Quorum Count: 10 of 10 Voting Members

67  
68 Chair Wendy Jacobs called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. A roll call was performed of MPO  
69 Board Member and Alternates by Aaron Cain. The Voting Members and Alternate Voting Members of  
70 the DCHC MPO Board were identified and are indicated above.

71 **PRELIMINARIES:**

72 **2. Ethics Reminder**

73 Chair Wendy Jacobs read the Ethics Reminder and asked if there were any known conflicts of  
74 interest with respect to matters coming before the MPO Board and requested that if there were any  
75 identified during the meeting for them to be announced. There were no known conflicts identified by  
76 the MPO Board Members.

77 **3. Adjustments to the Agenda**

78 Aaron Cain requested to remove the Consent Agenda because the MPO Board Meeting  
79 Minutes for August 12 have not yet been completed. Aaron Cain added that those minutes would be  
80 submitted at the October 14 Board Meeting. Chair Wendy Jacobs agreed to remove the Consent  
81 Agenda from the MPO Board Meeting.

82 **4. Public Comments**

83 Aaron Cain stated that there were no comments from the public.

84 **5. Directives to Staff**

85 There were no directives to staff.

86 **CONSENT AGENDA:**

87 **6. August 12, 2020 MPO Board Meeting Minutes**

88 Aaron Cain stated that the August 12, 2020, MPO Board Meeting Minutes would be  
89 submitted at the October 14 MPO Board Meeting.

90 **ACTION ITEMS:**

91

92 **7. Locally Administered Projects and NCDOT Budget**

93 **Van Argabright, NCDOT**

94 Van Argabright stated that the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) was  
95 released in September 2019, and since that time there have been \$3 billion in cost increases, and \$2  
96 billion in revenue declines. Van Argabright continued that, due to these changes, the North Carolina  
97 Department of Transportation (NCDOT) reprogrammed the STIP. Van Argabright added that the  
98 changes were presented to the North Carolina Board of Transportation in September 2020 and were  
99 forwarded to DCHC staff and the MPO Board. Van Argabright noted that the MPO Board would be  
100 asked to approve these changes in October 2020. Van Argabright noted that the STIP can be  
101 amended after it is approved.

102 Van Argabright stated that Locally Administered Projects (LAP) have been delayed. Van  
103 Argabright noted that NCDOT has dispersed \$15M in funding to Transportation Management  
104 Associations (TMA). Van Argabright continued that there has been no schedule for the continued  
105 dispersal of funding.

106 Aaron Cain presented the list of delayed LAP projects that were prioritized in collaboration  
107 with NCDOT and local jurisdictions. Aaron Cain noted that, due to the \$15M released by NCDOT,

108 there were two LAP projects that were able to advance. Aaron Cain stated that there were four  
109 projects allowed to proceed due to the August redistribution of Congestion Mitigation and Air  
110 Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) and Transportation Alternatives Program-Directly  
111 Attributable (TAPDA) funding. Van Argabright added that the funding will be distributed from NCDOT  
112 by September 30, 2020.

113 Steve Schewel asked when the authorization for construction will be received for the two  
114 projects that received a portion of the \$15M in funding. Aaron Cain responded that the authorization  
115 was granted so that a design contract can send a Request for Bid and can receive bids for that  
116 project. Ellen Beckmann added that Durham General Services staff are finalizing the design contract  
117 bid for proposal, and they are waiting on NCDOT Division 5 for final approval.

118 There were questions about how projects are prioritized. Aaron Cain responded that local  
119 staff provides input on the list and MPO staff also prioritizes projects that already have right-of-way  
120 or are in the design phase. Van Argabright added that highway projects and non-highway projects  
121 are not competing against each other for funding.

122 Van Argabright stated that the sale of \$700M in Build NC bonds is vital to the NCDOT  
123 financial plan, but the North Carolina Treasurer has been reluctant to approve the sale. Van  
124 Argabright added that NCDOT prefers that sale begin in September, but the sale would most likely  
125 occur in December. Chair Wendy Jacobs and Van Argabright discussed that the impact of waiting  
126 until December would be limited funding for projects until further funding is released, and the ability  
127 to begin new projects would be limited. Mike Fox stated that the NC Board of Transportation has  
128 contacted the NC Treasurer in support of the sale of the Build NC bonds.

129 Steve Schewel recommended that the MPO Board draft a letter to the Secretary of  
130 Transportation to promote local interests in the reprogramming of the STIP. Aaron Cain added that  
131 he has met with the STIP Central Region Manager, Mike Stanley, to communicate the DCHC MPO

132 project priorities. There was consensus from the MPO Board to draft a letter to NCDOT to highlight  
133 local priorities. Aaron Cain stated that staff would draft the letter and seek approval from Chair  
134 Wendy Jacobs and Vice Chair Jenn Weaver.

135 There was no action is necessary at this time; this item is for informational and discussion  
136 purposes only.

137 **8. STIP Reprogramming**

138 **Anne Phillips, LPA Staff**

139 Anne Phillips stated that the STIP was impacted by NCDOT budget shortfalls issues related to  
140 COVID-19, the Map Act, and storm responses. Anne Phillips added that the STIP now goes to 2032  
141 instead of 2029 as originally planned. Anne Phillips added that the STIP must be realigned for it to be  
142 fiscally constrained. Anne Phillips stated that the STIP reprogramming is impacted by its committed  
143 status, relative SPOT score, and delivery status.

144 Anne Phillips added that there are plans from NCDOT for \$700M in Build NC bonds, which  
145 would allow for more projects to advance. Anne Phillips added that the reprogrammed STIP is  
146 scheduled to be reviewed by the North Carolina Board of Transportation and is scheduled to be  
147 voted on in October 2020. Anne Phillips added that some projects may be swapped, but further  
148 conversations with NCDOT are needed. Anne Phillips stated that there are 37 total transportation  
149 projects impacted within the DCHC MPO boundaries. Anne Phillips added that most were widening  
150 and pavement rehabilitation projects with the average delay being approximately three to four  
151 years. Anne Phillips and Chair Wendy Jacobs discussed that MTP amendments may be required due  
152 to the reprogramming of the STIP. Anne Phillips added that due to the date of the next horizon year  
153 being in 2025, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has stated that MTP amendments may not  
154 be required because that date is outside the first four years of the STIP. Anne Phillips and Chair Wendy  
155 Jacobs discussed amending the MTP .

156 Steve Schewel asked about the status of the Woodcraft Parkway Extension. Steve Schewel  
157 and Aaron Cain discussed that there has already been approximately \$230,000 in design costs to  
158 date. Ellen Beckmann added that she is awaiting further guidance from the Federal Highway  
159 Administration (FHWA) regarding funding.

160 Steve Schewel stated that the 15-501 / Garrett Road Interchange project is on this list and  
161 was influenced by the Durham-Orange Light Rail Transit (DOLRT) design. Steve Schewel asked if there  
162 is an opportunity for its redesign due to the dissolution of the DOLRT. Joey Hopkins responded that  
163 the 15-501 / Garrett Road Interchange project design is already completed.

164 Chair Wendy Jacobs and Aaron Cain encouraged the MPO Board to review the list and  
165 provide comments to MPO staff by Tuesday, September 15.

166 There was no action is necessary at this time; this item was for informational and discussion  
167 purposes only.

168 **9. MPO Board Governance Committee**  
169 **Damon Seils, Town of Carrboro**

170 Damon Seils stated that an MPO Board Governance Committee was formed to explore issues  
171 related to governance and organizational structure of the MPO. Damon Seils added that the  
172 recommendations are for the MPO Board to authorize the Lead Planning Agency (LPA) to issue a  
173 request for information (RFI) from the DCHC MPO's list of prequalified contractors about their  
174 capabilities to study and make recommendations to the MPO Board by February 2021. Damon Seils  
175 added that the project will focus on governance, organization, and management.

176 Chair Wendy Jacobs asked about the amount of funding and how it would be provided.  
177 Damon Seils responded that Sean Egan previously stated that there are funds available. There was  
178 discussion about the cost of the proposal. Damon Seils responded that the most that would be  
179 available was \$200,000, but he believed that the cost would be significantly lower. There was a

180 discussion that there would be no budget limit set on the RFI, because the scope can be narrowed  
181 based on the price of the bids.

182 Michael Parker stated that there have been concerns about the MPO not being as much of a  
183 robust presence in the area as it could be. There was discussion about how the DCHC MPO brings its  
184 values into their projects. Renée Price asked about reorganization based on balance between  
185 different jurisdictions. Damon Seils responded that the urbanized areas are defined by law and  
186 representation within the MPO is dictated by population changes. Renée Price and Damon Seils  
187 discussed the role of financial management in DCHC MPO.

188 There was discussion that two MPO Board Members would be appointed to a selection  
189 committee to finalize the scope of work, prepare an independent cost estimate and identify  
190 resources, review responses to the RFI, and select one or more contractors. Damon Seils and Karen  
191 Howard were chosen by the MPO Board to serve on the selection committee.

192 Renée Price made a motion made a motion to adopt the recommendations of the committee.  
193 Karen Howard seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

194 **10. 2050 MTP -- Goals and Objectives**

195 **Andy Henry, LPA Staff**

196 Andy Henry stated that the 2050 MTP Goals and Objectives were released in June 2020 for a  
197 public comment period, and a public hearing occurred in August 2020. Andy Henry added that the Goals  
198 and Objectives were modified based on the public comments. Andy Henry presented to the MPO Board  
199 a list of the original Goals and Objectives and the changes that were made. Andy Henry noted that the  
200 modified Goals and Objectives are more based on outcomes. Chair Wendy Jacobs and Andy Henry  
201 discussed that certain Goals and Objectives adopted language that was stronger and clearer.

202 Renée Price made a motion to approve the Goals and Objectives for use in the development of  
203 the 2050 MTP. Vice Chair Jenn Weaver seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

204 **11. 2050 MTP Public Engagement Plan and Schedule**

205 **Andy Henry, LPA Staff**

206 Andy Henry stated that the 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) Public Engagement  
207 Plan and Schedule was released for public comment in June 2020, and the public hearing occurred in  
208 August. Andy Henry continued that only one public comment was recorded, and MPO staff does not  
209 recommend any changes to the 2050 MTP Public Engagement Plan and Schedule.

210 Damon Seils made a motion to approve the Public Engagement Plan and schedule for use in  
211 developing the 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). Vice Chair Jenn Weaver seconded the  
212 motion. The motion passed unanimously.

213 **12. US 15-501 Corridor Study**

214 **Andy Henry, LPA staff**

215 **Lynn Purnell, WSP (consultant)**

216 Andy Henry stated the US 15-501 Corridor Study began in 2018 with a visioning exercise of local  
217 stakeholders who toured the corridor by bus. Andy Henry added there has also been a steering  
218 committee, public workshops, public outreach, presentations to local governments, and interim reports  
219 to the MPO Board. Andy Henry noted that a community profile and travel profile were created. Andy  
220 Henry continued that the final report splits the 15-501 corridor into four segments to better understand  
221 travel patterns and provide recommendations. Lynn Purnell stated that he would discuss the 15-501  
222 corridor in four segments, each with its own vision.

223 Lynn Purnell stated that that Segment 1 is from Ephesus Church Road to I-40 and has the highest  
224 level of through traffic. Lynn added that the vision is to create a more urban environment. Lynn Purnell  
225 stated that residential and commercial development is increasing. Lynn Purnell added that the plan is to  
226 improve bicycle and pedestrian connectivity. Lynn Purnell stated that the cross-section design for  
227 Segment 1 is to have a multi-use path on either side of 15-501. Lynn Purnell continued that there will be  
228 a bus lane in either direction, but the type of bus travel has not yet been decided. Lynn Purnell added  
229 that there will be six lanes on 15-501 with a wide median.

230           Lynn Purnell stated that Segment 2 is from I-40 to the 15-501 bypass. Lynn Purnell stated that  
231 this segment is similar to Segment 1 with high traffic volumes. Lynn added that Segment 2 would be  
232 grade separated. Lynn Purnell stated that the cross section for Segment 2 would have a multi-use path  
233 adjacent to the corridor with a landscaped area between it and the road. Lynn Purnell added that there  
234 would also be a bus lane in either direction.

235           Lynn Purnell stated that Segment 3 is from the 15-501 bypass to Chapel Hill Road. Lynn Purnell  
236 noted that traffic is at a lower volume than the previous two segments. Lynn added that the lack of  
237 street scaping emboldens drivers to exceed the speed limit, therefore there are plans to build  
238 roundabouts to slow traffic. Lynn Purnell stated that the cross section for Section 3 would have a  
239 landscaped median and a multi-use path on either side of the road.

240           Lynn Purnell stated that Segment 4 is from Chapel Hill Road to University Drive, and it would  
241 have a more residential feel that would build off the previous road diet. Lynn Purnell added that it  
242 would have slower speeds. Lynn Purnell stated that the cross section would have on-street bicycle  
243 facilities and a sidewalk on either side of the road.

244           Lynn Purnell stated that the implementation for the recommended changes would take place in  
245 the short, medium, and long-term time frames that have been identified in the local plans and the STIP.  
246 Lynn Purnell noted that there will be additional analysis as projects move into implementation. Lynn  
247 Purnell mentioned that there will be a higher level of design and analysis in future phases.

248           Andy Henry stated that the next steps are to release the reports and map for public comment  
249 that would run through October 15. Andy Henry continued that the MPO Board would hold a public  
250 hearing at their meeting on October 14. Andy Henry added that the MPO Board would then vote on final  
251 approval at their November 11 meeting.

252           Michael Parker asked about the design of bus lanes in Segment 2. Andy Henry responded that  
253 the bus stops would be in the developments, not on the roadway, and the lanes will travel up the middle

254 of the 15-501 corridor. Michael Parker asked about right-of-way allowances for Segment 1. Andy Henry  
255 responded that there is sufficient right-of-way to accommodate the cross-section plans.

256 Renée Price expressed concerns that the plans do not provide enough access and safety for  
257 pedestrians in Segment 1 and 2. Andy Henry responded that Segment 2 will be grade separated, and  
258 pedestrians will travel over US 15-501 and I-40 instead of traversing them. Andy Henry added that  
259 Segment 1 allows for signal timing to control the speed of traffic to allow for pedestrians to safety cross.  
260 Renée Price noted that the designs seem to favor vehicle traffic and would prefer to see more safety  
261 measures for pedestrians. There was discussion of implementing more of the DCHC MPO's values into  
262 this design to accommodate bicycle and pedestrian travel. There was further discussion about the  
263 difficulty of designing for the different segments and balancing priorities.

264 Chair Wendy Jacobs asked about transit in Segment 3 and 4. Andy Henry responded that in  
265 Segment 1 and 2 there would be dedicated transit lanes, but in Segment 3 and 4 there would be only  
266 local transit service. Andy Henry continued that buses would use Segment 1 and 2 for through traffic to  
267 help get people to their homes or places of employment.

268 Chair Wendy Jacobs asked how MPO staff will engage the public during the public comment  
269 period while observing COVID restrictions. Andy Henry responded that he had plans to send  
270 notifications through his active participant list, neighborhood associations, and public affairs offices in  
271 local jurisdictions.

272 Damon Seils made a motion to release the US 15-501 Corridor Study for public comment.

273 Michael Parker seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

274 **13. Environmental Justice Report**

275 **Anne Phillips, LPA Staff**

276 Anne Phillips stated that the MPO Board released the Environmental Justice (EJ) Report in May  
277 2020 for its 45-day public comment period. Anne Phillips added that no public comments were received  
278 during the public comment period nor during the subsequent public hearing in August. Anne Philips

279 noted that the only significant change to the EJ Report is that that local staff added the thresholds for  
280 the three counties and mapped communities of concern to the appendix.

281 Michael Parker made a motion to adopt the 2020 Environmental Justice Report. Karen Howard  
282 seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

283 **14. Designation of I-885**

284 **John Grant, NCDOT**

285 John Grant stated that, due to a Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) requirement, NCDOT  
286 has requested a resolution of support from DCHC MPO regarding the addition of I-885 in Durham  
287 County, which would be a continuous highway from I-85 to I-40. John Grant added that this highway  
288 would be designated as I-885 upon completion of the East End Connector in Durham. John Grant  
289 continued that this designation would rename the portion of what is currently NC 147 from the East End  
290 Connector to I-40 as I-885.

291 There was discussion about whether transit facilities would be allowed on I-885 after its re-  
292 designation. There was discussion that there was not clear guidance about future transit facility  
293 allowances. There was discussion about drafting a letter to FHWA to express concerns about future  
294 transit accommodations. John Grant responded that he is reluctant to add that language to the  
295 resolution due to potential scrutiny of the designation. There was discussion about an expected  
296 communication to DCHC MPO from NCDOT from State Traffic Engineer Kevin Lacy that would document  
297 that the interstate designation would not negatively impact the ability to have dedicated transit facilities  
298 on the roadway in the future, and that would be more useful than drafting a resolution to FHWA.

299 Michael Parker made a motion to adopt the resolution re-designating a portion of NC 147 as I-  
300 885, with the understanding that the MPO would be receiving a letter from State Traffic Engineer Kevin  
301 Lacy about allowing transit facilities on the redesignated I-885. Renée Price seconded the motion. The  
302 motion passed unanimously.

303 **15. Air Quality Memorandum of Agreement**



329 Chair Wendy Jacobs asked Vice Chair Jenn Weaver to report on the Joint DCHC MPO and  
330 CAMPO executive committee meeting. Vice Chair Jenn Weaver and Aaron Cain noted that attendees  
331 discussed agenda items such as legislative priorities for 2021 and commuter rail, among other topics.  
332 Vice Chair Jenn Weaver and Aaron Cain discussed that tentative future dates for joint DCHC MPO and  
333 CAMPO meeting were December 1, 2020, and January 5, 2021.

334 **18. Report from the Technical Committee Chair**

335 Nish Trivedi, TC Chair

336 Nish Trivedi stated that there is nothing additional to report.

337 **19. Report from LPA Staff**

338 **Felix Nwoko, Andy Henry, LPA Staff**

339 Felix Nwoko stated that there is nothing additional to report. Aaron Cain stated that Kevin Lacy  
340 has been scheduled to discuss an agenda item about road improvements surrounding schools at the  
341 next MPO Board meeting.

342 **20. NCDOT Report**

343 Richard Hancock, Division 5, stated that US 70 is scheduled to be included in the configuration  
344 of the East End Connector project by November 2020. Richard Hancock added that Alston Avenue is  
345 closed from Liberty Street to Holloway Street, and it is now scheduled to open in late October. Richard  
346 Hancock continued that the utility issues have been addressed for EB 4707A - Old Durham Road near  
347 Wegmans.

348 Pat Wilson, Division 7, stated that Division Engineer Mike Mills has retired, and Wright Archer is  
349 the new Division Engineer.

350 Bryan Kluchar, Division 8, stated that there is no additional report.

351 Julie Bogle, Transportation Planning Division, stated that the traffic survey group published the  
352 2019 annual average daily traffic (AADT) volume counts on [connect.ncdot.gov](https://connect.ncdot.gov).

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

354

**INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:**

355

**21. Recent News, Articles, and Updates**

356

Chair Wendy Jacobs encouraged attendees to read the information items, and reminded

357

everyone that the next MPO Board Meeting would be on October 14 at 9:00 a.m.

358

**ADJOURNMENT:**

359

There being no further business before the DCHC MPO Board, the meeting was adjourned at

360

11:48 a.m.