

**DURHAM-CHAPEL HILL-CARRBORO METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION BOARD****14 April 2021****MINUTES OF MEETING**

The Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization Board met on April 14 2021, at 9:00 a.m. remotely via Zoom. The following people were in attendance:

Wendy Jacobs (Chair)	Durham County
Jenn Weaver (Vice Chair)	Town of Hillsborough
Pierce Freelon (Member)	City of Durham
Michael Parker (Member)	GoTriangle
Lisa Mathis (Member)	NCDOT
Mark Bell (Alternate)	Town of Hillsborough
Amy Ryan (Alternate)	Town of Chapel Hill
Lydia Lavelle (Alternate)	Town of Carrboro
Javiera Caballero (Alternate)	City of Durham
Sally Greene (Alternate)	Orange County
Brenda Howerton (Alternate)	Durham County
Nimasheena Burns (Alternate)	Durham County
Ellen Beckmann	Durham County
John Hodges-Copple	TJCOG
Zach Hallock	Town of Carrboro
Tina Moon	Town of Carrboro
Bergen Watterson	Town of Chapel Hill
Matt Cecil	Chapel Hill Transit/Planning
Sean Egan	City of Durham
Bill Judge	City of Durham
Evan Tenenbaum	City of Durham
Brian Taylor	City of Durham
Tasha Johnson	City of Durham
Theo Letman	Orange Public Transportation
Bret Martin	CAMPO Staff
Caroline Dwyer	Renaissance Planning Group
Chassem Anderson	The University of North Carolina
Kurt Stolka	The University of North Carolina
Elise Bielen	Simpson Engineering
Jay Heikes	GoTriangle
Inez Nicholson	GoTriangle
Liz Raskopf	GoTriangle
Meg Scully	GoTriangle
Richard Hancock	NCDOT Division 5
Bob Deaton	NCDOT Division 5

47	Patrick Wilson	NCDOT Division 7
48	Stephen Robinson	NCDOT Division 7
49	Bryan Kluchar	NCDOT Division 8
50	Brandon Jones	NCDOT Division 8
51	John Grant	NCDOT Traffic Operations
52	Julie Bogle	NCDOT TPD
53		
54	Aaron Cain	DCHC MPO
55	Andy Henry	DCHC MPO
56	Anne Phillips	DCHC MPO
57	Brian Rhodes	DCHC MPO
58	Dale McKeel	DCHC MPO
59	Felix Nwoko	DCHC MPO
60	Yanping Zhang	DCHC MPO
61	Kayla Mathews	DCHC MPO
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63	Elizabeth Macam	Resident
64	Fred Lampe	Resident
65	Tony B.	Resident
66	Mike Waldroup	Resident

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68 Quorum Count: 9 of 10 Voting Members

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70 **1. Roll Call**

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72 Chair Wendy Jacobs called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. A roll call of MPO Board Members

73 and Alternates was performed. The Voting Members and Alternate Voting Members of the DCHC MPO

74 Board were identified and are indicated above. Lydia Lavelle made a motion to excuse the absences of

75 Pam Hemminger, Charlie Reece, and Damon Seils. Jenn Weaver seconded the motion. The motion

76 passed unanimously.

77

**PRELIMINARIES:**

78 **2. Ethics Reminder**

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

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

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

82 MPO Board Members.

Chair Wendy Jacobs reminded the Board Members and Alternates of the requirement to file a Statement of Economic Interest form and a Real Estate Disclosure form by April 15, 2021.

### **3. Adjustments to the Agenda**

There were no adjustments to the agenda.

### **4. Public Comments**

There were no public comments.

### **5. Directives to Staff**

Chair Wendy Jacobs mentioned the 15/501 Corridor Study item needs to be revised with the latest information on the directives to staff. Chair Wendy Jacobs suggested adding to the directives that MPO staff will review the Federal Funding Policy and bring it back to the Board at the appropriate time.

### **CONSENT AGENDA:**

### **6. March 10, 2021 Board Meeting Minutes**

Chair Wendy Jacobs made a correction to line 283 of the March 10, 2021 Board Meeting Minutes to reflect her welcoming the proposal from Lisa Mathis to give a regular report at Board meetings.

### **7. 2021 CRRSSA Section 5310 Call for Projects**

Felix Nwoko, LPA Manager

### **8. FFY 2021 Section 5307/5340 Full Apportionment Split Letter**

Felix Nwoko, LPA Manager

### **9. FFY 2021 Section 5339 Full Apportionment Split Letter**

Felix Nwoko, LPA Manager

### **10. FY21 UPWP Amendment #2**

Felix Nwoko, LPA Manager

Zachary Hallock, Town of Carrboro

Amy Ryan made a motion to approve all items on the Consent Agenda. Jenn Weaver seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**ACTION ITEMS:****11. CTP Amendment #3****Andy Henry, LPA Staff**

Andy Henry gave a presentation on the Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP)

Amendment #3 and asked for comments. Andy Henry summarized the relationship between the CTP and the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) as well as the new highway projects, multiuse paths, transit projects, and bicycle projects included in the amendment.

Andy Henry mentioned NCDOT upper management had been unaware of the size of this amendment, and they could request changes during the upcoming review process. Chair Wendy Jacobs expressed concern over the potential disconnect between MPO staff and NCDOT management. Lisa Mathis said she will look into the sources of potential hesitancy at the state level.

Lydia Lavelle made a motion to release CTP Amendment #3 for public comment. Michael Parker seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**12. TIP Amendment #5****Anne Phillips, LPA Staff**

Anne Phillips pointed out the highlighted projects in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment #5 summary sheet have been amended in the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) by NCDOT and must now be updated in the DCHC MPO TIP.

Michael Parker made a motion to approve TIP Amendment #5. Lisa Mathis seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**13. Wake Transit Vision Plan Update****Bret Martin, CAMPO Staff**

Bret Martin, project manager for the Wake County Transit Plan, gave an update of the plan which now extends to 2030. Bret Martin reviewed the steps taken so far as well as the transit plan's relation to the refined transit investment strategy. One of the major influencing factors of the transit plan is financial planning, which Bret Martin compared to the levels of uncertainty associated with

hurricane forecasting. Bret Martin said that to explore different financial scenarios, five scenarios were created ranging from conservative to optimistic that include current and presumed financial impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Surveys available to the public and stakeholders in August and September of 2020 provided valuable input on investment priority tradeoffs, and Bret Martin reviewed each investment focus category. Lastly, Bret Martin summarized the investment strategy for each of the Wake Transit Plan's "Four Big Moves", including: 1) connect the region 2) connect all Wake County communities 3) provide frequent, reliable urban mobility and 4) enhance access to transit.

Chair Wendy Jacobs thanked Bret Martin for a great presentation and model for the transit plan update. Sally Greene asked if there is an existing or planned bus transfer stop in the Research Triangle Park (RTP) to connect to other systems. Bret Martin said GoTriangle is undertaking feasibility studies for a new regional transit center within RTP as the current center is not within RTP. Jay Heikes added that the feasibility study findings will be presented at the May 2021 DCHC MPO Board Meeting. Chair Wendy Jacobs asked about the level of collaboration between CAMPO staff and DCHC MPO staff. Bret Martin answered that although there has not been a formal process for coordination, there is frequent collaboration, and he would support a structured approach.

This item was for informational purposes and no further action was required by the MPO Board.

#### **14. Durham County Transit Plan Update** **Aaron Cain, LPA Staff**

Aaron Cain presented the two phases of outreach, the three scenarios, and the planned next steps. Phase I of the Durham Transit Plan Update included online surveys, stakeholder meetings, in-person events at major transit sites, and engagement ambassadors with an emphasis on reaching under-represented communities. Aaron Cain said Phase II of public engagement will focus on the three scenarios. More frequent service, improved bus stops, and service later at night will be included in each of the three scenarios while other factors will be addressed at varying levels in each scenario.

169 Aaron Cain outlined the three scenarios. Scenario A focuses on bus operations (reduce  
170 headways, extend hours, and relieve crowding). Scenario B focuses on bus capital improvements (Bus  
171 Rapid Transit) to create faster and more efficient service such as dedicated lanes as well as improved  
172 regional connections. Scenario C includes commuter rail and focuses less on bus operations and capital  
173 improvements.

174 Sally Greene asked about the difference in years of delay of local improvements between  
175 scenario A and B. Aaron Cain said the difference would be 2-5 years, which is less than the 5-10 year  
176 delay between scenario A and C. Javiera Caballero expressed the need for a scenario that includes both  
177 regional and local improvements that also reduces the number of cars on the roads to reduce carbon  
178 emissions. Javiera Caballero encouraged moving quickly on local corridor improvements using the  
179 existing fund balance. Aaron Cain clarified that public engagement efforts are aimed at choosing the  
180 best parts of each scenario to make a preferred scenario that will incorporate aspects from different  
181 scenarios.

182 Jenn Weaver asked if there have been any discussions about increasing connectivity between  
183 Orange County, Hillsborough, and Durham. Aaron Cain said the main organization that expressed desire  
184 for improvements to the Orange-Durham Express (ODX Route) was Durham Tech, which wants Orange  
185 County residents to have more direct access to Durham Tech's Durham campus.

186 Michael Parker mentioned the apparent lack of outreach into communities and groups who  
187 don't currently use transit, which is necessary to reach both goals of better serving the current riders as  
188 well as increasing ridership numbers. Michael Parker asked if any of the budget projections assume any  
189 level of debt. Aaron Cain said some debt financing is assumed, at least in scenario C.

190 Chair Wendy Jacobs said she would like more background information on what the financial  
191 assumptions are for each scenario, the potential availability of state and federal funding in the future,  
192 and the context of future travel markets. Chair Wendy Jacobs said the public needs to understand the

tradeoffs between each scenario in order to provide informed input. Aaron Cain responded that maps illustrating the distance a transit user can travel in different time intervals will be included in the public outreach materials. Aaron Cain added that the preferred scenario will most likely include some combination of local and regional improvements.

This item was for informational purposes and no further action was required by the MPO Board.

#### **15. Greater Triangle Commuter Rail Update**

**Jay Heikes, GoTriangle**

**Liz Raskopf, GoTriangle**

**Elise Bielen, Simpson Engineering**

Jay Heikes gave an update on the Greater Triangle Commuter Rail Feasibility Study that is being performed to help elected officials reach an informed decision on whether or not to proceed with the commuter rail project, and if so, how, and when. Jay Heikes said that if commuter rail is implemented, it will help increase connectivity between local and regional transit, which will be further explored in the currently underway rail analysis, opportunity analysis, and public engagement efforts. Jay Heikes said Triangle J Council of Governments (TJCOG) is working on an affordable housing analysis and an access analysis through an equity lens.

Liz Raskopf gave an overview on the first phase of public engagement that aimed to raise awareness of the commuter rail project and feasibility study, obtain public feedback, and increase regional coordination. Liz Raskopf reviewed data for survey views, comments, and other metrics as well as efforts to reach populations underrepresented in the transit planning process. The public engagement process included both online materials and in-person events that had to be adapted to adhere to public safety guidance during the COVID-19 pandemic. Elise Bielen added more information about demographic data for survey respondents and in what areas it mirrors or departs from general population demographics. Elise Bielen shared the major takeaways of the surveys and respondents'

most commonly shared benefits and concerns. Elise Bielen reported finding overwhelmingly positive sentiments from comments in response to the question “what do you see the commuter rail train doing for your community?”

Brenda Howerton asked if there have been any efforts to reach people from Oxford Manor or those that live in public housing that may not have access to computers because individuals in those communities are more likely to use transit. Liz Raskopf said in person engagement events were conducted at Durham Station and the Village Shopping Center as well as a meeting with the Durham Housing Authority. Liz Raskopf said a next step could be to doing targeted engagement once the results of the affordable housing study are published.

Amy Ryan asked if there was an estimated fare cost for commuter rail compared to bus service. Jay Heikes said early analysis is being done on fare prices but they do not yet have an estimate. Javiera Caballero asked how the financial and tax burdens are being communicated to residents, which would likely impact a resident’s opinion of the project. Jay Heikes said one element of the current study is identifying risks and ensuring they can be mitigated. Chair Wendy Jacobs added that many lessons were learned from the former light rail project, so safeguards are built into the process for the commuter rail project.

This item was for informational purposes and no further action was required by the MPO Board.

**16. Orange County Transit Plan Update**  
**Caroline Dwyer, Renaissance Planning Group**

Caroline Dwyer said the project is approaching the second phase of identifying projects and developing a preferred scenario with public input. Caroline Dwyer outlined the upcoming schedule for next steps.

This item was for informational purposes and no further action was required by the MPO Board.



**17. Chapel Hill North-South Bus Rapid Transit Update****Matt Cecil, Chapel Hill Transit**

Matt Cecil mentioned existing transit services are insufficient to meet current and growing demand in Chapel Hill, and Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) with dedicated lanes is a long-term solution. Matt Cecil summarized the planned connections and travel times in the 8.2-mile-long corridor, the future timeline, and funding sources.

This item was for informational purposes and no further action was required by the MPO Board.

**18. FY22 Durham and Orange Annual Transit Work Programs****Aaron Cain, LPA Staff**

Aaron Cain said the annual transit work programs set the budget for the upcoming fiscal year to implement the 2017 transit plans. Both work programs are currently out for public comment until April 30, 2021. Aaron Cain mentioned this year's Orange Transit Work Program has one major change from the previous year and the Durham Transit Work Program has several new projects.

This item was for informational purposes and no further action was required by the MPO Board.

**REPORTS:****19. Report from the MPO Board Chair****Wendy Jacobs, Board Chair**

Chair Wendy Jacobs mentioned a joint MPO Board meeting with CAMPO is being planned for this summer. Chair Wendy Jacobs also directed staff to review the Federal Jobs and Infrastructure Plan from the Biden Administration so they are ready to take action if it is approved. Finally, Chair Wendy Jacobs asked Board members to support Representative Vernetta Alston's bill for a commuter rail study.

**20. Report from the Technical Committee Chair****Ellen Beckmann, TC Chair**

Ellen Beckmann mentioned NCDOT has applied for an Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) grant for funding for grade separations and railroad improvements to the North Carolina Railroad (NCRR) through Durham and Wake Counties that would overlap with the commuter rail project.

**21. Report from LPA Staff**  
**Felix Nwoko, LPA Manager**

Andy Henry mentioned that no proposals were received in response to the Request for Information (RFI) for the 15/501 Corridor Study and listed some of the reasons given for not participating. Andy Henry said a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) will be released to allow necessary changes to the scope to provide a more flexible procurement process.

**22. NCDOT Reports**

**Brandon Jones (David Keilson/Richard Hancock), Division 5 - NCDOT**

Chair Wendy Jacobs introduced Brandon Jones, who is taking Joey Hopkins' position as the Division Engineer for Division 5. Brandon Jones was previously the Division Engineer for Division 8. Bob Deaton gave an update on several current projects that are underway.

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

Pat Wilson mentioned the Franklin Street repaving has been rescheduled for next year.

**Patrick Norman (Bryan Kluchar, Jen Britt), Division 8 - NCDOT**

Bryan Kluchar said Patrick Norman is the new Division 8 engineer.

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

Julie Bogle mentioned Joey Hopkins is now Deputy Chief of the Transportation Planning Branch.

**John Grant, Traffic Operations - NCDOT**

There was no additional report.

**Bryan Lopez, Integrated Mobility Division-NCDOT**

There was no additional report.

**Lisa Mathis, North Carolina Board of Transportation**

Lisa Mathis mentioned the anticipated financial stability expected to accompany declining COVID-19 cases, the several current safety campaigns, the train services resuming across the state, current job openings at NCDOT, and litter prevention messaging and litter cleanup efforts.

**INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:**

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

**24. Designation of I-885 – Letter of Approval**

**25. Active Transportation Fact Sheet 2021-03-04**

Chair Wendy Jacobs recommended everyone review the informational items.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

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

12:00 p.m.