

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

2 **13 May 2020**

3
4 **MINUTES OF MEETING**

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6 The Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization Board met on May 13,
7 2020, at 9:00 a.m. remotely via WebEx. The following people were in attendance:

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9	Wendy Jacobs (Chair)	Durham County
10	Jenn Weaver (Vice Chair)	Town of Hillsborough
11	Renée Price (Member)	Orange County
12	Karen Howard (Member)	Chatham County
13	Ellen Reckhow (Member)	GoTriangle
14	Charlie Reece (Member)	City of Durham
15	Steve Schewel (Member)	City of Durham
16	Pam Hemminger (Member)	Town of Chapel Hill
17	Damon Seils (Member)	Town of Carrboro
18	Michael Parker (Alternate)	Town of Chapel Hill
19	Lydia Lavelle (Alternate)	Town of Carrboro
20	Heidi Carter (Alternate)	Durham County
21	Mike Fox (Alternate)	NC Board of Transportation
22		
23	Joey Hopkins	NCDOT, Division 5
24	David Keilson	NCDOT, Division 5
25	Richard Hancock	NCDOT, Division 5
26	Patrick Wilson	NCDOT, Division 7
27	Stephen Robinson	NCDOT, Division 7
28	Tamara Njegovan	NCDOT, Division 7
29	Bryan Kluchar	NCDOT, Division 8
30	Julie Bogle	NCDOT, TPD
31	John Grant	NCDOT, Traffic Operations
32	Ellen Beckmann	City of Durham
33	Sean Egan	City of Durham
34	Bill Judge	City of Durham
35	Pierre Osei-Owusu	City of Durham
36	Evan Tenenbaum	City of Durham
37	Tasha Johnson	City of Durham Planning
38	Bergen Watterson	Chapel Hill Planning
39	Jomar Pastorelle	Chapel Hill Planning
40	Tina Moon	Town of Carrboro
41	Brooke Ganser	Durham County Planning
42	Zach Hallock	Durham County
43	Nish Trivedi	Orange County
44	Joe Geigle	FHWA
45	John Hodges-Copple	Triangle J Council of Governments
46	Meg Scully	GoTriangle

47	Jay Heikes	GoTriangle
48	Cha'ssem Anderson	University of North Carolina
49		
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

58
59 Quorum Count: 10 of 10 Voting Members

60
61
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.

78 **4. Public Comments**

79 There were no comments from the public.

80 **5. Directives to Staff**

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

85 **CONSENT AGENDA:**86 **6. March 11, 2020 MPO Board Meeting Minutes**

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

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

90 **ACTION ITEMS:**

91

92 **7. Material Changes to the 2017 Durham County Transit Plan**93 **Aaron Cain, LPA Staff**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

166 **11. FFY19 and FFY20 Section 5339 Full Apportionment Split Letter**

167 **Felix Nwoko, LPA Staff**

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

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

176 **12. Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities (Section 5310) Grant - FY19 and**
177 **FY20 Call for Projects**

178 **Felix Nwoko, LPA Staff**

179 Aaron Cain stated that Section 5310 - Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with
180 Disabilities provides funds to improve mobility for seniors and individuals with disabilities by removing
181 barriers to transportation service and expanding transportation mobility options, and the DCHC MPO is
182 the designated recipient of these funds for the Durham urbanized area (UZA) and distributes the funds
183 to eligible sub-recipients through a competitive selection process. Aaron Cain added that approximately
184 \$500,000 was apportioned to the Durham UZA for FY2019 and FY2020. There was discussion about the
185 types of projects that this funding would be allocated to, including the Chapel Hill Transit's Senior
186 Shuttle and the EZ Rider program in Chapel Hill and Carrboro.

187 There was no further action necessary for the MPO Board.

188 **13. Amendment #1 to the FY2020-2029 TIP**

189 **Anne Phillips, LPA Staff**

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

196 Pam Hemminger made a motion to approve Amendment #1 to the FY2020-29 TIP. Ellen

197 Reckhow seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

198 **14. FHWA Highway Infrastructure Funding Swap**

199 **Aaron Cain, LPA Staff**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

229 **15A. NCDOT Budget**
230 **Joey Hopkins**

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

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

244 Joey Hopkins stated that there are 62 active construction projects that are continuing because
245 the cost of delay could be \$1.5M per day in claims. Joey Hopkins stated that NCDOT has moved
246 approximately 250 projects out of the 12 month let list. Joey Hopkins added that NCDOT currently has a
247 hiring freeze and there is currently a 33% vacancy rate. Joey Hopkins continued that NCDOT
248 implemented a 50% cost reduction in temporary and contract employees. Joey Hopkins added that
249 NCDOT is considering furloughs for its employees and reduction-in-force measures. Joey Hopkins listed
250 projects that have been suspended including; the wildflower program, litter sweeps, training programs,
251 summer internships, the passenger ferry between Hatteras and Ocracoke, state park road maintenance,
252 school road reimbursement, mowing services, storm repair services, pothole repair, and highway
253 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.

277 Damon Seils asked about if NCDOT has made any decisions concerning public transportation.
 278 Joey Hopkins responded that those decisions have not yet been made, but there has been discussion.
 279 Damon Seils asked about resurfacing projects in Chapel Hill and Carrboro. Joey Hopkins responded that
 280 the continuation of contract resurfacing has not yet been determined. Mike Fox added that it is
 281 uncertain when the economic downturn due to the COVID-19 pandemic will end, and there are
 282 projections currently being made with many variables. Joey Hopkins stated that he had to leave the
 283 conversation due to prior engagements.

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

294 **REPORTS:**

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

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

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

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

303 **18. Report from LPA Staff**
304 **Felix Nwoko, Andy Henry, LPA Staff**

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

309 **19. NCDOT Report**

310 David Keilson, Division 5, stated that Liberty Street is anticipated to be reopened by mid-June
311 2020 for the Alston Avenue project (U-3308). David Keilson added that the Old Chapel Hill/Old Durham
312 Road project (EB-4707A) is ongoing. David Keilson noted that the Briggs Avenue onramp has reopened
313 for the East End Connector project (U-0071).

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

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

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

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

323 **INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:**

