

MECKLENBURG - UNION TECHNICAL COORDINATING COMMITTEE
Summary Meeting Minutes
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center
Room 280
October 4, 2012

Voting Members: *TCC Chair* – Bill Coxe (Huntersville), Danny Pleasant (CDOT), George Berger (Charlotte Engineering & Property Management), Norm Steinman – alt for Ken Tippet (CDOT Bicycle Coordinator), Jonathan Wells – alt for Debra Campbell (C-M Planning), Jason Rayfield (LUESA-Air Quality), John Rose – alt for David McDonald (CATS), Andrew Grant (Cornelius), Ben McCrary (Davidson), Adam McLamb – alt for Scott Kaufhold (Indian Trail), Ralph Messera (Matthews), Lisa Stiwinter (Monroe), Shannon Martel (Stallings), Greg Mahar (Waxhaw), Jordan Cook (Weddington), Joshua Langen (Wesley Chapel), phone: Jamal Alavi (NCDOT-TPB)

Staff: Robert Cook (MUMPO), Stuart Basham (MUMPO), Andy Grzyski (CDOT), Carolyn Johnson (City of Charlotte Attorney's Office), Pate Butler (NCDOT), Trisha Hartzell (NCDOT), Loretta Barren (FHWA), Keith Sorensen (Indian Trail), Jim Loyd (Monroe), phone: Rodger Rochelle (NCDOT), Virginia Mabry (NCDOT)

Guests: Todd Steiss (PB)

Bill Coxe opened the meeting at 10:00 AM.

1. Adoption of the Agenda

Mr. Coxe asked if any modifications to the agenda are necessary. Hearing none, the agenda was adopted by acclamation.

2. Consideration of September Meeting Minutes

Mr. Coxe asked if any changes to the minutes are necessary. Hearing none, he noted three minor corrections then asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Jonathan Wells made a motion to approve the September TCC minutes with the changes noted. Adam McLamb seconded the motion. Upon being put to a vote, the motion passed unanimously.

3. State Ethics Act

Presenter: Carolyn Johnson, City of Charlotte

Summary/FYI:

Ms. Johnson highlighted the contents of a memo she prepared describing new state ethics requirements that apply to the TCC and MPO members. She stated that beginning January 1, 2013 TCC and MPO members will be subject to the state ethics act that was enacted several years ago, and beginning next year, will also apply to MPO members. She outlined some of the requirements of the act as follows:

- o Any conflicts of interest must be monitored and disclosed;
- o Financial disclosure;
- o May not use position for public or private gain;
- o Cannot accept or solicit gifts;
- o Electronic statements of economic interest must be filed by April 15, 2013;

- o Ethics training must be completed by June 30, 2012.

Ms. Johnson then noted where more resources could be found related to the ethics act. She stated that the only authorized agency that can interpret and enforce the act is the State Ethics Commission, and that there are penalties for not meeting the requirements stated. She indicated that some of the economic disclosures are public record. Mr. Cook noted that the State Ethics Commission is being invited to the next CRAFT meeting scheduled for October 16 to provide more information. Ms. Johnson stated that the training is good for two years once completed. She also reminded the TCC that the economic disclosure pertains to the entire household, not just the individual TCC or MPO member. The requirements apply to voting delegates and alternates. George Berger suggested that if possible, training should be offered at a single location in the Charlotte area so everyone has the opportunity to attend. Mr. Cook noted that this information will be included on the MUMPO website for reference, and Ms. Johnson indicated that she plans to attend the MPO meeting in November to inform that body about the new state ethics requirements.

4. I-77 HOT Lanes

Presenter: Bill Coxe, Town of Huntersville

Summary/Requested Action:

Mr. Coxe updated the TCC on recent activities of the I-77 Tech Team and NCDOT regarding the I-77 HOT Lanes project, as follows:

- o The I-77 Tech Team has prepared a memo, which was distributed to the TCC the day prior to the October TCC meeting, to be sent to NCDOT, which contains formal comments regarding the environmental documents for two of the three proposed segments of the I-77 HOT lanes project;
- o The environmental document (Categorical Exclusion) for the central section of the project (TIP No. I-5405) has been signed by the FHWA and NCDOT;
- o The environmental document for the southern section (TIP #I-3311C) is proposed to be a Categorical Exclusion or an Environmental Assessment – the Tech Team believes it should be an Environmental Assessment based on the potential impacts;

He then addressed the comments included in the memo referenced above as follows:

- o There is a desire for a unified vision for the entire corridor, which has resulted in questions about why 3 separate environmental documents are being prepared for the I-77 north corridor;
- o A study was completed in 2001 that suggests the ultimate build out would be 4 general purpose lanes in each direction, including 2 HOV lanes, strengthening the median and outside shoulder for bus operations, and completing interchange improvements, among other improvements;
- o There is a desire to know how the proposed project fits into that vision, as well as what will be the benefit of the HOT lanes;
- o Questions remain regarding the restrictions implementing HOT lanes will place on the rest of the corridor, how vehicles will move across the general purpose lanes from a HOT lane to get on or off the freeway at an interchange, what measures of success have been identified for the project, and how success is measured by the private sector versus the public sector; and
- o Reconciliation is sought regarding the discrepancies between the analysis years proposed for the current environmental documents – 2017 for southern section and 2015 for northern section – and the 20 year horizon that is analyzed for a typical NEPA document.

Mr. Coxe then noted that the Tech Team concluded that HOT lanes are a viable approach for the corridor, and that the TCC is being asked to adopt the comments to be sent to NCDOT. Norm Steinman noted that the underlying key of the letter is that MUMPO would like to be treated as a partner in the process due to

the fact that this is such an important decision that the MPO will make. Danny Pleasant asked when the MPO board will be informed about the recent progress on this proposed project, to which Mr. Coxe responded that the board will receive an update at its November meeting.

Motion:

Mr. Pleasant made a motion that the TCC provide formal comments to NCDOT for the environmental documents for I-4750 and I-3311C. Andrew Grant seconded the motion. Upon being put to a vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Following the motion and vote, there was a discussion about the required conformity determination associated with the I-77 HOT lanes project. Mr. Cook read into the record the action from the October 3rd I-77 Tech Team meeting as follows: "Proceed with scenarios 1 and 5 for traffic operational analysis for a 2035 horizon year which will provide operational benefits – this should be complete by October 31; consider moving forward with 2 scenarios for conformity determination following a consultation with NCDOT officials." Mr. Steinman then highlighted the two scenarios as follows:

- o Scenario 5 consists of 2 HOT lanes in each direction from Brookshire Freeway to Catawba Avenue – including a direct connect flyover to and from the Brookshire Freeway into the HOT lanes – and 1 HOT lane in each direction north of Catawba Avenue;
- o Scenario 1 is a less costly, less complicated scenario which consists of converting the existing HOV lanes on I-77 to HOT lanes, and construct 1 HOT lane in each direction north of I-485 – with no direct connection to the Brookshire Freeway;
- o Scenarios 1 and 5 represent the potential maximum and minimum project scenarios, and the scenarios would be run for horizon year 2035 – which is not specifically what NCDOT requested.

Mr. Rochelle stated that the intent of the conformity is to end up with one scenario that is reflected in the RFP and that bids come in for only that one scenario. Mr. Coxe asked when NCDOT will feel comfortable with one project scenario, to which Mr. Rochelle responded that work is being done in consultation with project teams to make sure that a financially feasible project is reached. It was noted that the adoption of an updated TIP in 2013 will also require an additional conformity determination, which could include amendments to the proposed I-77 project scenario. Ms. Barren stated that the earliest that a conformity determination could be made for the updated TIP would be October 1, 2013.

5. Draft 2014-2020 Transportation Improvement Program

Presenter: Robert Cook

Summary/FYI:

Mr. Cook noted that the draft TIP was discussed at the transportation staff meeting on Wednesday, October 3rd and that the TIP will likely need to be endorsed by the MPO in late summer 2013 due to the implementation of a new emissions model and the emissions budgets associated with the new model. He indicated that several projects were discussed at the staff meeting, and highlighted the following:

- o Idlewild Road widening in Stallings (TIP #U-4913) is a funded project in the current TIP in FY 2018, but the project is not included in the draft 2014-2020 TIP;
- o Idlewild Road was identified as a priority project submitted to NCDOT for Prioritization 1.0, and because it received funding in the current TIP was not again identified in Prioritization 2.0;
- o Shannon Martel indicated that the Town of Stallings is attempting to schedule a meeting with the NCDOT Division Office to determine the options available to reestablish funding for the project;
- o Independence Boulevard (TIP #U-209B) is programmed in the draft TIP, but there is a question about which type of funds are applied to the project – Mobility Fund versus GARVEE Bonds;
- o The next phase of the Independence Boulevard project (TIP #U-2509) was programmed for

- funding for right-of-way and some construction in the current TIP, which is no longer programmed in the draft TIP;
- Division 12 projects in Lincoln and Iredell counties were not discussed, but it will need to be determined which of those projects programmed in the draft TIP are in the MPO's future planning area boundary;
 - MUMPO staff will work with the RPO staff currently representing those areas of Division 12 to determine what those projects are, and whether there are any issues associated with them;
 - Two future meetings will be set up to discuss locally administered projects: 1) Determine which of those projects are still viable, and 2) Determine what to do about allocating funds that are available to the MPO but not currently programmed for specific projects.

Mr. Coxe noted that the funds used for locally administered projects are funds that the MPO has control over, so it is important that those funds are spent responsibly and that they are all programmed by the MPO so they are not rescinded at some point in the future.

6. MPO Planning Area Boundary Expansion

a. Draft Planning Area Boundary

Presenter: Robert Cook

Summary/FYI:

Mr. Cook informed the TCC that the MPO approved a draft boundary at its September meeting, which includes a small portion of Gaston's urbanized area located in Lincoln County.

b. Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

Presenter: Robert Cook

Summary/FYI:

Mr. Cook noted that progress is being made on revisions to the MPO's MOU, and that a list of issues has been identified and prioritized. He stated that two of the highest priority issues include voting and fees, and indicated that staff has conducted research on those issues. He indicated that a meeting will be held in Huntersville on October 15 to discuss the fees issue. Mr. Coxe and Mr. Steinman noted the importance of determining what the MPO hopes to accomplish, and that will help inform the MPO what fees and resources will be necessary. Mr. Cook noted that the TCC will need to be consulted after the October MOU subcommittee meeting in order to ensure that the TCC members are included in the process and providing the appropriate feedback to inform some of the subcommittee's recommendations. Finally, he noted that the issue of TIP amendment guidelines was raised by the subcommittee and that it was determined that TIP amendment guidelines are outside the scope of the MOU, and should be handled through the normal TCC and MPO approval process.

7. 2040 LRTP Update

Presenter: Robert Cook

Summary/FYI:

Mr. Cook reminded the TCC that an Advisory Committee and Steering Committee have been formed to guide the LRTP update process, and that an important topic of discussion at the next Advisory Committee meeting will be reviewing MUMPO's highway project ranking criteria and begin the process of determining what revisions to the criteria might be necessary. He stated that a consultant is assisting the MPO with the process and encouraged any TCC members that are available to attend the Advisory Committee

meeting on October 8 to engage in the process. Mr. Cook also reminded the TCC that a request for LRTP candidate projects will soon be sent out, and that only projects included in the current Thoroughfare Plan, or proposed Comprehensive Transportation Plan, will be considered.

8. Upcoming Issues

Mr. Coxe made the following announcements:

- A CTP meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 10 to begin the discussion about which fields will be included in the GIS database underlying the CTP maps;
- MUMPO staff will be sending several surveys in the near future to acquire information from the TCC members regarding several initiatives that are currently ongoing, and request that the surveys be completed in a timely manner.

Mr. Steinman reminded the MPO that a land use subcommittee is currently working on developing population projections, which is an important factor in the work accomplished by the MPO.

9. Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 11:35 AM.