



Federal Highway  
Administration

Federal Transit  
Administration

# MUMPO Certification Review

**FINAL REPORT**

**March 20, 2012**

The logo for MUMPO (Mecklenburg-Union Metropolitan Planning Organization). It features the text "mecklenburg-union" in a small, italicized font above the large, stylized letters "MUMPO". The "M" and "P" are blue, while the "U" and "O" are yellow. Below "MUMPO" is the text "metropolitan planning organization" in a smaller, italicized font. The entire logo is enclosed in a dashed rectangular border.

*mecklenburg-union*  
**MUMPO**  
*metropolitan planning organization*

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## **Executive Summary**

### **Statement of Finding**

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) find that the transportation planning process substantially meets Federal requirements and jointly certify the planning process subject to MUMPO completing and implementing the Congestion Management Process (CMP) by March 1, 2013. In addition MUMPO must develop an action plan by April 13, 2012 outlining key milestones of completion. The review identified seven (7) noteworthy practices and twenty-two (22) recommendations.

### **Purpose**

Pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 134(i)(5) and 49 U.S.C. 1607, the FWHA and FTA are required to jointly review and evaluate the transportation planning process for urbanized areas over 200,000 in population at least every four years. According to the 2000 Census, the Mecklenburg Union Metropolitan Planning Organization (MUMPO) has a population of 758,927 and, therefore, is subject to a certification review.

### **Methodology**

The review consisted of a desk audit, a public comment session conducted on December 5, 2011, and an on-site review that was conducted December 5 and 6, 2011. In addition to the formal review, routine oversight, such as attendance at meetings, day-to-day interactions, review of work products, and working with the MPO on past certification review recommendations and corrective actions provide a major source of information upon which to base the certification findings. After the on-site review is complete, a report is written to document the findings.

# Introduction

## Purpose

Pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 134(i)(5) and 49 U.S.C. 1607, the FWHA and FTA are required to jointly review and evaluate the transportation planning process for urbanized areas over 200,000 in population at least every four years. The Certification Review process helps to ensure that the planning requirements of 23 U.S.C. 134 and 49 U.S.C. 5303 are being satisfactorily achieved and that Federally funded highway and transit projects resulting from that process can be implemented. According to the 2000 Census, the Mecklenburg Union Metropolitan Planning Organization (MUMPO) had a population of 758,927 and, therefore, is subject to a certification review.

## Scope

The Federally required transportation planning certification review is an assessment of the transportation planning processes and products conducted by all partners charged with cooperatively carrying out the transportation planning process required in 23 U.S.C. 134 and 49 U.S.C. 5303 on a daily basis, and how they meet the Federal requirements.

Partners in the Mecklenburg Union Metropolitan Planning Organization (MUMPO) process include: Mecklenburg and Union counties, the cities of Charlotte and Monroe, the towns of Cornelius, Davidson, Huntersville, Indian Trail, Matthews, Mint Hill, Pineville, Stallings, Waxhaw, Weddington, Wesley Chapel and Wingate; the NC Board of Transportation (NCBOT); the Charlotte Mecklenburg Planning Commission, the Union County Planning Board and the NC Turnpike Authority.

## Methodology

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## Certification Report

For each topic reviewed at the on-site review, this report will document the regulatory basis, current status, and findings.

**Regulatory Basis** – Defines where information regarding each planning topic can be found in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) and/or the United States Code – the “Planning Regulations” and background information on the planning topic.

**Current Status** – Defines what the Transportation Management Area (TMA) is currently doing in regards to each planning topic.

**Findings** – Statements of fact that define the conditions found during the review which provide the primary basis for determining the corrective actions, recommendations, and/or noteworthy practice, if any, for each planning topic. Because many planning topics are interlinked, but may have been reviewed as separate topics, some findings may reference other documents or requirements than the one being covered. Findings of the planning process include:

**Noteworthy Practice** – Is a process or practice that demonstrates innovative, highly effective, well-thought-out procedures for implementing the planning requirements. Elements addressing items that have frequently posed problems nationwide could be cited as noteworthy practices. Also, significant improvements and/or resolution of past findings may warrant a commendation.

**Recommendation** – Addresses technical improvements to processes and procedures that while somewhat less substantial and not regulatory, are still significant enough that FHWA and FTA are hopeful that State and local officials will take action. The expected outcome is change that would improve the process, though there is no Federal mandate, and failure to respond could, but will not necessarily result in a more restrictive certification.

**Corrective Action** – Indicates a serious situation that fails to meet one or more requirements of the transportation planning statute and regulations, thus seriously impacting the outcome of the overall process. The expected outcome is a change that brings the metropolitan planning process into compliance with a planning statute or regulation; failure to respond will likely result in a more restrictive certification.

# Findings

## I. General Comments - MUMPO Staff

During the review, MUMPO staff and the staff of its member jurisdictions shared their opinions regarding the challenges and successes of delivering the Federal-Aid Planning Program, as well as their outlook for delivering the program into the future. They provided the following comments highlighting some of their accomplishments, areas that may need improvement, and areas where more assistance is needed.

- Having the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Coordinator placed locally was a good idea. Staff would like to create more of a balance and better coordination between the MPO and with the Raleigh office.
- Prioritization process has improved coordination with NCDOT and the Strategic Prioritization Office of Transportation (SPOT) office is responsive to local requests and inquiries.
- NCDOT's Complete Streets Initiative is very positive.
- Communications with NCDOT has improved and are better than they were in previous years.
- Due to MUMPOs staff size, the volunteer efforts of the Technical Coordinating Committees (TCC) membership in facilitating the work of the planning process is very helpful and appreciated.
- MUMPO is concerned about the NCDOT's lack of local coordination on the I-77 and I-485 projects. The MPO has been left out of the loop on some project details and they would like to be involved. TCC representative stressed greater involvement from FHWA to ensure better coordination from NCDOT. The MPO would like a clearer definition of the long term goals and desires for both the I-77 and the I-485 projects.
- Staff felt that the Title VI review conducted by NCDOT's Office of Civil Rights came from out of the blue. None of the findings or requirements of the review were thought to be unreasonable, but the process should have been communicated better. Staff would have preferred that the NCDOT reached out to the MPO prior to conducting the review. Again, MUMPO Staff would like the various units at NCDOT to coordinate better.
- MUMPO would like to see improvement in coordination from the NCDOT's program development office. Breakdowns in processes generally have to do with lack of communication and coordination.
- In the areas of design and project implementation, communication has improved with the local presence of NCDOT staff, but there still seems to be a disconnect between the Raleigh office and the MPOs.
- Regarding the Prioritization process – Local priorities don't always sync up with state priorities. The SPOT office focuses on congestion and vehicle movement while the MUMPO focuses on land use and the movement of people. More information is needed on the State's effort to address land use and transportation in the prioritization process. It would be helpful to have a statewide discussion on what role NCDOT can play in addressing land use and transportation.
- MUMPO is very short staffed and this limits what can be accomplished.
- Without Reauthorization, PL funding is uncertain. More responsibilities are being passed to MPOs but there are limitations on what can be done with current manpower levels for MUMPO staff.

- NCDOT MPO Coordinator would like to know if there is a way the billing for planning funds (104 PL) could come from one place rather than separate units. Actual billing comes from CDOT; however, Planning/MUMPO provides the Annual Report. The process of sorting out the billing the way it is currently provided is cumbersome.
- Request that the FHWA representative attend all TCC meetings in person.
- The MPOs think now is a good time to review some of the agreements in place (such as the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or participate in FHWA Peer Review program to identify ways to improve their planning process).
- There is a need for more and better regional cooperation. For example, the Centralina Council of Government (COG) is currently conducting a bi-state regional freight study. Considering congestion on a regional basis with a regional Congestion Management Process (CMP) could be done for the region rather than individual MPOs.
- Regarding the issue of Urban Area Boundaries and MPO areas: The MPO area is growing and there may be some need for the MPOs (Gaston, CRMPO) to consider merging or at least doing more joint planning functions. The growth of the last 5 years has shown that the boundaries can be a problem. It would be good if the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) could provide some guidance or information on how large MPOs handle consolidation while ensuring that local governments are not lost in the process.

### **MUMPO and TCC Board Members**

Two representatives from the MUMPO Board provided feedback into the planning process. The public involvement presentation was given. The following comments were made:

- They were appreciative of staff efforts not just to do their jobs, but to educate the board members.
- Having the MPO staff housed within the City planning department is very appropriate and ensures a high level coordination and integration of land use and transportation.
- Pleased that NCDOT is moving forward with the HOT lane project on I-77 and wants additional consideration on Independence Boulevard. He thanked FHWA for allowing him to participate in HOT lanes education and the training session held in Charlotte.
- Encouraged Federal and State agencies to do a better job of educating the public about the funding implications of having more fuel efficient vehicles and alternative fuel sources, because those options are good for the environment and personal wallets but they deplete Federal and State funding.
- NCDOT could provide more information about where funds come and how they are used in the program.

### **Recommendations**

- FHWA should attend all Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC) meetings in person as oppose to calling in to some meetings.
- MUMPO and Charlotte Department of Transportation (CDOT) should work with North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) to streamline the billing process.

## **II. Unified Planning Work Program/Self-Certification**

**Regulations: 23 CFR 450.308 and 23 CFR 420.111:** sets forth requirements for each MPO, in cooperation with the State and public transportation operators, to develop a Unified

Planning Work Program (UPWP) that documents planning activities, products, funding, roles and responsibilities and a timeline for the completion of each activity.

**Regulation: 23 CFR 450.334:** Self-certifications and Federal certifications are required for all Metropolitan Planning Areas (MPAs), concurrent with the submittal of the entire proposed TIP to the FHWA and the FTA as part of the STIP approval, the State and TMAs shall certify at least every four years that the metropolitan transportation planning process is being carried out in accordance with all applicable Federal requirements

**Regulation: 23 CFR 450.332:** No later than 90 calendar days following the end of the program year, the State, public transportation operator(s), and the MPO shall cooperatively develop and publish a listing of projects (including investments in pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities) for which funds under 23 U.S.C. or 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53 were obligated in the preceding program year.

### **Current Status**

MUMPO develops their Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), annually. In recent years, developing the annual work program has been difficult because of the uncertainty in the amount of Federal funds and when those funds would be available to program. The MPO works with NCDOT to develop the UPWP with the best information available. The FHWA has not experienced any concerns regarding the development of the UPWP. The MPO does have a concern about how some of the towns within the MPO use 104PL funds. FHWA has provided an overview on this topic but the MPO would like more education and information on the use of PL funds.

The MPO annually self-certifies their planning process as they are developing their UPWP. This year was the first time the MPO received and used the checklist for the self-certification process. The checklist was helpful because it helped the TCC and MPO understand the responsibility tied to the certification statement. The staff makes an effort to explain how aspects of the self-certification; Title VI, American with Disabilities Act (ADA), etc. relate to their planning processes. The checklist was provided to the TCC and the MPO as well as an explanation of how the MPO meets the regulations. Staff plans to continue to use this checklist in the future.

The MPO expressed concern that, having the Self-Certification tied to the UPWP approval seems like it is a secondary action and, therefore, it does not receive the recognition it should by the MPO Board. Maybe it could be approved at a different time in the planning process.

The annual list of obligated projects is received from NCDOT and generally covers the funds for all modes. The list is made available to the public by the MPO however the list is not really "user friendly". It does not include project descriptions, project limits, etc. It is basic information that the technical staff understands but would not be understandable to the public. The list is published as it is provided.

### **Recommendations:**

- FHWA and NCDOT should provide more training and information on the various uses of 104PL funds.



- NCDOT Transportation Planning Branch (TPB) should consider revising the submittal time frame for the self-certification process based on 23 CFR 450.334(a).
- FHWA should provide a more detailed description of each Federal regulation of the self-certification process.
- NCDOT Program Development Branch should provide as much information on the annual listing of projects as is provided in the STIP.
- The MPO should use the annual listing of projects provided by NCDOT to prepare a document/list that can be easily understood by their citizens.

### **III. Coordination – Regional and Environmental Agency**

**Regulation: 450.316(b)(c)(d)(e):** The MPO should develop and document consultation procedures that outline how and when during the development of MTPs and TIPs, the MPO will consult with agencies and officials responsible for other planning activities within the MPA that are affected by transportation (including State and local planned growth, economic development, environmental protection, airport operations, or freight movements) or coordinate its planning process (to the maximum extent practicable) with such planning activities, as well the MPO should also include Indian Tribal Governments, and Federal Public Lands, if applicable.

#### **Current Status**

Several initiatives in the area provided for continued regional coordination.

- The Charlotte Regional Area for Transportation (CRAFT) group has been helpful for regional coordination. However, the group has no legal standing. The Technical Committee tries to meet on a quarterly basis, but there is no mandate to meet. CRAFT has been helpful for the purposes of information sharing among the 4-MPOs and the 2-RPOs, transportation staff and TCC members. Unfortunately, CRAFT suffers from not having a greater presence of elected officials.
- The NC 73 Council of Planning is an outgrowth of the “Three Counties” study (Mecklenburg, Iredell, and Cabarrus). This council meets 3 times a year and serves as an information exchange. It is thought that the MOU governing this council “has no teeth” and that though the council exists, it does not foster a strong call to action for its plan. For example, if a jurisdiction’s activities contradict the plan, there are no consequences or repercussions.
- The Lake Norman Transportation Commission meets monthly and requires elected official participation. The City of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County have been added as ex-officio members of the Commission. The Commission has a strong commitment for the Red Line trail and transit projects. This commission has also come to serve as a conduit for I-77 issues.
- The Sustainable Communities Grant applied for and received by the Centralina Council of Governments (CCOG) could provide support for bringing regional partners to the table to discuss regional issues.
- The CCOG has also launched “The Greater Charlotte Bi-State Regional Freight Study”. It is a two phase study. Underway is Phase 1 of the study which will aid in the development of the project scope
- As a result of the 2000 Census portions of MUMPOs urbanized area reached into all three adjoining MPOs, Cabarrus Rowan MPO, Gaston MPO and RFATS MPO (South Carolina).

With the 2010 Census results approaching MUMPO is concerned about the implications of further boundary expansion.

- If their future boundary crossed into Lincoln County it could bisect the Lake Norman RPO boundary, creating problems based on State legislation.
- The MPO asked, if growth among the adjoining MPOs continues to draw the MPOs together would the Census or USDOT require the MPOs to merge, and are there any requirements for when merging should occur or make sense?
- MUMPO has not approached either adjoining MPO about developing a joint Congestion Management Process (CMP). It was noted that FHWA does not preclude this. If this were pursued, it was noted that FHWA would need to provide guidance and financial support.
- Most coordination with Federal agencies is with FHWA. Sometimes there is coordination on environmental documents with other federal partners. Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS) is the primary agency that works with FTA. The interagency conformity process requires involvement with EPA.
- Development of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan requires consultation. Consultation for the last plan update was documented. There was interaction with Department of Water Quality (DWQ), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Ecosystem Enhancement Program (EEP) etc. These agencies are kept on the distribution list for MUMPO. Due to the requirement that these agencies participate in all the MPO processes in the region, staff size (of the agencies) doesn't permit extensive involvement. The MPO hopes that more regional cooperation will take place in future planning activities. MUMPO has had good coordination with the Gaston MPO and expect to improve as the process moves forward.

#### **Recommendation**

- MUMPO should continue to improve upon the consultation process with Federal and State agencies.

### **IV. Public Participation/Title VI/Environmental Justice (EJ)**

**Regulation: 23 CFR 450.316(a)**: The MPO shall develop and use a documented participation plan that defines a process for providing citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of public transportation employees, freight shippers, providers of freight transportation services, private providers of transportation, representatives of users of public transportation, representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, representatives of the disabled, and other interested parties with reasonable opportunities to be involved in the metropolitan transportation planning process.

#### **Current Status**

As discussed in the Desk Review the MPO had a recommendation in the 2008 Certification Review to complete a more comprehensive public participation and EJ analysis of the planning process. With the hiring of a consultant and extensive public outreach the recommendation from their 2008 Certification Review was been successfully completed. The MPO is in the process of soliciting additional public comment to make further changes to their public participation plan. The 2010 evaluation was conducted on the effectiveness of the public participation program. Some successful activities included:

- Clean and Green Event: Staff put out a set of plans and map for a high profile project (the Independence project). Flyers were provided on MUMPO as a take-

away. Staff shared literature and explained what the MPO is and what they do. A sign in sheet was used and names collected were added to MPO mailing lists and newsletter distribution list.

- Indian Trail's Earth Day/Arbor Day event
- Latin American Coalition Cinco De Mayo Festival: Staff provided information in Spanish and English. A Spanish interpreter was present and staff conducted a survey to identify ways to engage citizens in transportation planning.

MUMPO does not currently use social networking for outreach or information sharing. YouTube videos of project flyovers have been posted on the website providing project information but MUMPO does not have a YouTube page. All meeting agendas and minutes are posted to the MPO website and presentations from meetings are embedded in those documents. Public comments are accepted at and during TCC and MPO meetings, from the website, at events, mail, e-mail, and other numerous ways. When comments are received they are passed on to the decision makers. Generally, the MPO does not receive many comments on plans and programs. Most comments are received on specific projects. Responses are provided when required but many don't warrant or require a response. Some comments (and responses) are captured in the minutes of meetings when appropriate.

The MUMPO does not have a person solely dedicated to public involvement. Staff has had some training on public involvement, and participated in training sessions on Social Media and Environmental Justice (EJ). Staff has also gathered information about the "Mind Mixer" web based tool that can be used for public outreach but found it to be too expensive. Staff has found that piggy-backing on other events is the most effective means of reaching a captive audience. Newspaper ads do not lead to a high degree of participation at their public meetings. Going out to events sponsored by other groups tends to be the best way to get information to a lot of people. MUMPO staff will continue to piggyback on events held by others (i.e. festivals, city meetings, etc.) since this mechanism has been successful in reaching a large number of citizens in the past. Staff is considering having the MPO go to a more frequent meeting schedule, but this is only an item of consideration. The MPO currently maintains an e-mail and mailing list that continues to grow. The MPO recently upgraded its website to be more user-friendly and to provide more information. Since the upgrade there has been an increase in comments received. A counter is used to keep up with the number of times the website is visited. The MPO produces a bi-monthly newsletter that can be found on the website in addition it is distributed to approximately 1,000 people on the mailing list. The current public participation plan suggest the MPO investigate the use of a citizens advisory committee, but due to staffing limits the MPO has not pursued this effort.

Most recently, the NCDOT Office of Civil Rights initiated by e-mail a Title VI review requesting that the MPO participate via questionnaire. There was no context provided for the questionnaire. Most questions were very close-ended and there was not an opportunity to elaborate on activities under way. The survey resulted in a report finding the MPO's Title VI program in non-compliance. There was no outreach to the MPOs prior to or after the review. The MPO had to initiate contact with NCDOT Civil Rights staff. It was stated that the MPO needed to produce a Limited English Proficiency (LEP) plan, which was being developed, but there was no way to share that information at the time of the NCDOT review. It was also found that the MPO did not have a Title VI complaint process, which the MPO was not aware it needed to have one. Additionally, the Office of Civil Rights requested that the Title VI

compliance issues be addressed by mid-January, but since the MPO does not meet every month there was no way this could be accomplished, again no direct communication from the Office of Civil Rights. In general, the MUMPO staff and TCC believe that this process should have been handled better. This speaks to the MPOs concerns regarding coordination and communication with NCDOT.

### **Noteworthy Practice**

- MUMPO development of their Title VI/EJ plan and subsequent updates to the Public Participation Plan is commendable. The outreach efforts to both the Hispanic and African American communities will be invaluable to future planning processes.
- Attending local, pre-planned events as a means of soliciting feedback, especially from traditionally underserved populations is a very good use of staff time and limited resources.

### **Recommendations**

- NCDOT Office of Civil Rights staff should coordinate Title VI reviews better with FHWA, TPB and MPOs in the future.
- Use staff at Spanish language newspapers or CATS to help determine the integrity of translated documents.
- Staff should seek out opportunities to share information via radio and venues such as those listed above. Radio can be an effective means of communicating with both African American and Spanish communities.
- Provide adequate staffing to accomplish objectives of public participation, Title VI/EJ and LEP plans.

## **V. Urban Area Boundary/Census**

**Regulation: 23 CFR 450.321(a):** The boundaries of a metropolitan planning area (MPA) shall be determined by agreement between the MPO and the Governor. At a minimum, the MPA boundaries shall encompass the entire existing urbanized area (as defined by the Bureau of the Census) plus the contiguous area expected to become urbanized within a 20-year forecast period for the metropolitan transportation plan.

### **Current Status**

The Metrolina Region received a presentation from a Census representative that indicated possible growth of the MUMPO urban area further into South Carolina, the Lancaster region, into Lincoln County, NC, but possibly not into Iredell County as the MPO has been anticipating. Considering the MPO currently has urbanized area in other MPOs, staff is concerned about how to deal with these challenges in the future. The MPO is requesting some guidance from NCDOT and FHWA on how to proceed if the Census data does indeed show the MUMPO boundary expanding. Should the MPO expand into Lancaster County there is a concern with how coordination will be conducted given that there is no local government structure in that area of the county. Planning in that area of South Carolina could also involve the Catawba Nation Tribe. The MPO is concerned that their current staffing level is too small to handle a large increase in planning area. FHWA indicated that MUMPO is the largest MPO in the state and compared to the other MPOs MUMPO has the smallest staff.

Staff indicated that as a result of the 2010 Census, the MPO will reexamine their Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and their by-laws. Their by-laws review will include a look at voting structure. The MPO requested that FHWA share any information or best practices regarding MPO voting structure. Unwanna Dabney agreed to provide material from the Hampton Roads MPO study.

### **Recommendations**

- FHWA should provide information regarding the voting structure of other MPOs.
- The MPO should work with NCDOT Transportation Planning Branch and FHWA to evaluate and determine the adequate level of staffing needed to implement the planning program and the appropriate umbrella in which to operate.
- FHWA and NCDOT should examine the MPO options for redesignation after the 2010 Census boundaries are released.

### **Resolution**

- FHWA forwarded via e-mail the Hampton Roads voting structure study.

## **VI. Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)/Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)/Planning Factors**

**Regulation: 23 CFR 450.322 and 306:** Development of a transportation plan addressing no less than a 20-year planning horizon. The transportation plan shall include both long-range and short-range strategies/actions that lead to the development of an integrated multimodal transportation system to facilitate the safe and efficient movement of people and goods in addressing current and future transportation demand. The metropolitan transportation planning process shall be continuous, cooperative, and comprehensive, and provide for consideration and implementation of projects, strategies, and services that will address the 8 planning factors.

### **Current Status**

In North Carolina Metropolitan Transportation Plans (MTPs) are development and referred to as Long Range Transportation Plans (LRTP).

### **Land Use**

The MPO makes every effort to develop a transportation plan that is linked to the local land use plans of its member jurisdictions. As part of the plan update the MPO does a land use inventory to identify changes since the previous update. As a result of some land use changes the MPO reviews and makes recommendations regarding the potential impacts to the transportation system. The MOU for the MPO allows for the jurisdictions with oversight to make the motion for approval/denial on any transportation changes that come before the MPO. The Charlotte Mecklenburg Planning Department keeps a score card of how well they are implementing their land use plan. The MPO plans to work with and use the outcomes of the Housing and Urban Development Grant the CCOG received to help feed future transportation plan updates.

### **Financial Planning**

MUMPO uses cost estimates provided by the City of Charlotte and NCDOT and applies federal fiscal constraint criteria for financial planning for the MTP. The MPO met Federal requirements by fiscally constraining the 2035 LRTP, including Year of Expenditure (YOE) cost and revenues,

and addressing operations and maintenance cost. The YOE is reflected using an average increase for horizon years but YOE costs and revenues are not developed for each year. Inflation was used for year beyond 2015. Future revenue planning assumed that voters would continue to support the local bond referendums for future transportation funding. The current plan did not assume any changes in State and Federal revenue or a change in the equity formula. Operations and Maintenance (O&M) were accounted for using trend data. Additional assistance from the NCDOT Division office regarding O&M is needed, because this is weakest aspect of the financial plan. A consultant was hired to develop a cost estimating process that the MPO could use for future updates. The MPO used the process to develop cost for over 300 projects. When factoring in year of expenditure cost it was determined that the 2035 LRTP could only fund one third of the previous (2025) plan. The MPO did not believe it could support other new funding sources that had not recommended or supported by the NCDOT. It is anticipated that the outcomes of the State Transportation Plan, which is currently being updated could provide the MPO with some financial guidance for the future. For the next update of the MTP the MPO will also have to consider aging subdivision streets, Powell Bill funds, STPDA and other sources to support the maintenance and preservation of the system.

#### Bicycle/Pedestrian

Bicycle and pedestrian planning is primarily handled by CDOT staff but coordinated with the other member jurisdictions. The Bicycle coordinator is a voting member of the TCC. MPO staff ensures that the bicycle and pedestrian planning efforts are integrated into the overall planning process. MUMPO has committed to use at least 10% of STPDA funds for non-SOV related projects. As a part of NCDOT's prioritization process bicycle and pedestrian projects are now prioritized the same as highway projects. The bicycle and pedestrian planning staff worked with the TCC sub-committee to develop and document a ranking process. Of use to the MPO are the City of Charlotte's records for measuring bicycle and pedestrian travel habits, crash statistics, and the bicycle and pedestrian facility inventories. CDOT is in the process of developing a Pedestrian Safety Action Plan through the Highway Safety Research Center. The CTP will be the first opportunity for the MPO to have a comprehensive bicycle and pedestrian map for the entire MPO area.

#### Freight

Freight (intermodal connectivity) is considered in the MPO project ranking criteria. Additional points are given based on proximity to terminals and intermodal facilities.

The Centralina COG (CCOG) is developing a Bi-State Freight Study. Phase 1 of the study is designed to aid in the development of the project scope. Phase 1 is underway and once it is complete the COG will look for funding opportunities to complete Phase 2, the actual freight study. MUMPO hopes to build on this effort (Bi-State Freight Study) and to further develop good relationships with Norfolk Southern and CSX Railroad as well as the trucking industry and other freight providers.

#### Livability/Climate Change

The City of Charlotte's Urban Street Design Guidelines predates NCDOT's Complete Streets Policy. The City and MPO are pleased that NCDOT will plan for more livable communities with a Complete Streets Guidelines. Staff from the City of Charlotte has co-chaired the development and implementation process of the NCDOT's Complete Streets Guidelines. The TCC continues to review and provide feedback into the development of the guidelines. Additionally, the

development of MPOs Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) which is a long-term vision that goes beyond the life of the MTP. It is not financially constrained, nor does it require a transportation conformity analysis or environmental coordination as the MTP does. The development of the 2035 MTP/LRTP integrated all modes (bicycle, pedestrian, transit, freight) and examine implications on the environment, low income and minority populations, and was fiscally constrained. The development of the MTP and the CTP has helped the MPO develop a transportation plan sensitive to needs of their individual communities.

Climate change was only mentioned briefly in the existing MTP, since there were no Federal or State requirements or guidance on how to address it in the planning process. Staff anticipates that the next Federal transportation bill will require more consideration of climate change in the planning process. The MPO staff believes all their planning efforts have adequately integrated and considered livability and climate change. As mentioned earlier the MPO coordinated with as many environmental agencies as could participate in their process. The information provided by agencies was used to enhance development of the 2035 Plan. Additionally, the MPOs project ranking process gives a lower ranking to projects that impact known environmental features. Mitigation activities listed in the plan have not been used because most projects in the pipeline have already gone through NEPA or design.

#### Safety and Security/ITS Planning

The 2035 Plan addresses Safety and Security and establishes goals for safety. The AASHTO key areas of emphasis for safety as well as the Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) goals are addressed in the plan. The MPO also considers safety as a part of the project ranking process, in planning for sidewalks (buffer separation), bicycle lanes, and transit.

An Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) component is included in the CMP portion of the transportation plan. MUMPO is not actively using the Regional ITS Strategic Deployment Plan to provide input into the development of the LRTP, nor other planning processes. The MPO has supported 2-CMAQ projects that address safety of the transit system and its riders for preemptive signal projects for fixed route and the passenger rail line.

#### Recommendations

- MUMPO should participate in the update to the Regional ITS Strategic Deployment Plan.
- MUMPO should include ITS as a separate project or integrated into other projects in their MTP.
- The NCDOT Division Office should provide assistance with the development of the financial plan, especially for operations and maintenance funding.

## **VII. Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)/State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)**

**Regulation: 23 CFR 450.324:** The MPO shall cooperatively develop a TIP that is consistent with the MTP and is financially constrained. The TIP must cover at least a four-year horizon and be updated at least every four years. Additionally, the TIP must list all projects in sufficient detail outlined in the regulations, reflect public involvement, and identify the criteria for prioritizing projects.

### **Current Status**

The TIP development process is generated by NCDOT. The Strategic Prioritization Office of Transportation (SPOT) project selection process is relatively new and primarily data driven. For the MPO, the MTP is the underlying basis for prioritizing projects. There has been consistency in the MPO ranking of projects for P1.0 and P2.0. Once the ranking process is complete the NCDOT Program Development Branch applies funding and produces the draft STIP. The NCDOT then provides the MPO with their draft TIP and the MPO begins to prepare their comments to the draft TIP. Because of the SPOT process the TIP development process has also been revised and the process is providing a clearer path for MPO participation in development of the TIP. The TCC is heavily involved in the project ranking and selection process. Their technical expertise is used so that the MPO knows that it is not the staff making decisions on project selection. There is a separate process for project selection by mode. The CATS handles transit project selection, the bicycle/pedestrian committee handles bicycle and pedestrian project selection and there is a separate CMAQ project selection process. In 2006-2007, the MPO developed a ranking process to determine how to program STPDA funds, a portion of which is used for planning. MUMPO staff relies on the public involvement activities of NCDOT for TIP development and approval. MUMPO advertises in local newspapers and holds public meetings to receive comments on the draft TIP. Advertisements are in both Spanish and African American newspapers. All of the prioritization information is posted on the MPO website. Banner ads have also been used on the web. These activities primarily focus on the initial draft document. Approximately one year after this draft TIP is produced and final TIP is produced and the MPO will again seek public comment on the revised or final TIP. Fiscal constraint for the final TIP is dependent upon information provided by NCDOT. Often the financial data is not provided soon enough to be shared as a part of the public outreach process. MUMPO staff fiscally constrains projects for which STPDA funds will be used. MUMPO has not shown local bond projects in the TIP. Regionally significant projects are shown regardless of funding source. Other local funded projects are not shown in TIP.

There is coordination with the NCDOT Program Development Unit on TIP development. Staff is currently not clear on the direct link between the prioritization process and the actual development of the TIP. The one-on-one meetings with the NCDOT Program Development Unit and NCDOT Board of Transportation member are a vital tool for coordination in the TIP development process. These meetings allow the MPO chair and others to be directly involved in project negotiations and discussions, and it is an important step in the process. In addition to these meetings, there is also constant interaction between staff and NCDOT behind the scenes.

The TIP/STIP amendment process is working well. There have been times when the MPO would find out about amendments late in the process but the "new" process should be helpful in addressing this issue. Following staff changes at NCDOT, "smaller" amendments are now being shared with MPOs whereas they were not in the past. It was noted that an updated STIP/TIP amendment/ modification process is being formalized. The guidelines will outline modification and amendment actions, as well as, identify when MPO action and public involvement is required. NCDOT will be presenting the guidelines to the MPOs. NCDOT will continue to coordinate with the MPO before making changes to the program that affect transportation conformity. There has been a good relationship between the MPO and NCDOT Program Development Office. There may be a need for some education of the MPO Board on the new



process. There needs to be some clarity on the Transit TIP amendment process and hopefully the new amendment process will include transit actions.

The MPO pointed out some concerns:

- With CMAQ projects - NCDOT is trying to fold these projects into the P2.0 process but timing has been an issue. The MPO staff feels that NCDOT has not considered the MPO process when deadlines are set. Timing has historically been the issue because the project ranking/selection process cannot be accomplished in one month's time. Because local dollars provide the match it is difficult for small towns to commit the matching funds projects in the out years.
- The prioritization goal of developing a more technical, less political project selection methodology is a good thing. However, the criteria used by NCDOT are not always consistent with the MPOs criteria. NCDOT considers congestion and travel time savings while the MPO considers land use and coordinated planning. However, the MPO appreciates the complexity of considering land use in a statewide prioritization effort.
- Staff believes it would be helpful to track the results of the prioritization process over time to see how local priorities fair.
- Staff discussed how NCDOT has implemented a 5 year work program and 10 year plan but the STIP is a 7 year document. It would be helpful to clear up the overlap of these documents.
- NCDOT doesn't plan to make any additional changes to the time frame for the STIP. The legislation has been changed so that NCDOT can develop a schedule to suit its needs. Currently there are 4, 5, 7, and 10 year horizons. The NCDOT Program Development Unit primarily deals with the 10 year horizon.
- The MPO is looking for ways to improve the administration of their Surface Transportation Program-Direct Allocation (STPDA) funds. Staff is reviewing the Locally Administered Process (LAPP) process used by CAMPO as an effort to improve the current process.

**Recommendation:**

NCDOT Program Development Branch should provide the MPO with the necessary financial data to support the development of the MPOs TIP when the draft TIP is developed.

## **VIII. Congestion Management Process (CMP)**

**Regulation: 23 CFR 320:** TMAs shall develop a CMP to address congestion through a process that provides for safe and effective integrated management and operation of the multimodal transportation system, based on a cooperatively developed and implemented metropolitan-wide strategy, of new and existing transportation facilities.

**Current Status**

Developing and implementing a Congestion Management Plan (CMP) was a corrective action in the previous certification review and it has not been completed. A consultant was hired and a portion of the process was completed, but the MPO staff was not satisfied, and the consultant contract was terminated. Another consultant has been hired to outline future steps to complete the CMP. The current consultant has worked with the TCC to identify approximately 25 possible performance measures that can be used for the CMP. Performance measures were not adopted by the TCC only provided for information. It is expected that performance measures for the CMP will probably be more reflective of local needs and not exactly what SPOT uses for

prioritization. The MPO plans to hire another consultant to complete the CMP possibly by the end of December 2012. If FHWA has sample RFPs for CMP development the MPO would appreciate seeing them. The MPO may need assistance to help determine how to use the CMP in the project select and ranking process for the MTP. The next update of the plan will include a more significant role for using the information from the CMP to rank projects.

#### **Corrective Action**

- MUMPO must complete and implement the CMP by March 1, 2013.
- MUMPO must develop an action plan by April 13, 2012, documenting key milestones that will lead to completion.

#### **Recommendation:**

- FHWA should send the MPO any RFPs that will provide assistance for developing the CMP.

#### **Resolution:**

- FHWA forwarded a sample Request for Proposal (RFP) for CMP development to MUMPO via e-mail.
- MUMPO has drafted a sample action plan for the CMP and will complete it once the consultant has been selected and work tasks have been agreed upon.

## **IX. Modeling Process**

**Regulation: 23 CFR 450.322(e):** The MPO, the State(s), and the public transportation operator(s) shall validate data utilized in preparing other existing modal plans for providing input to the transportation plan.

#### **Current Status**

Model development and maintenance for the MPO is handled by Charlotte Department of Transportation (CDOT) staff. In the past NCDOT provided consultant assistance to aide in this process.. There are several committees connected to the modeling process. There is a Land Use sub-committee, a model team, a planning and oversight sub-committee and an Executive Committee. Coordination for the modeling process is improving. There are 4-MPOs, 2-RPOs, and 2-State DOTs which creates the need for added coordination. CDOT and NCDOT have had staffing and consultant turnover, but new team members have been hired. The NCDOT coordinator for MUMPO is actually in the City of Charlotte government building and he will likely begin providing some model assistance. There is a model maintenance agreement that covers maintaining and funding maintenance of the model. There is no regional agreement in place for model production – only for model maintenance. There have been issues surrounding who pays for model runs or requests from the partners. When there are project changes that involve MUMPO and any of the others partners then MUMPO pays. Since, there are separate SIP budgets for all the non-attainment counties this could allow the partners to request a transportation conformity process separate from MUMPO and it is not clear who would pay if MUMPO is not involved. The switch to the MOVES model will further complicate this issue, because the MOVES model is complex and the model runs take longer to complete. Staff would like some guidance from FHWA on how other areas handle this issue.

NCDOT-TPB will provide additional assistance by developing a post processor for MOVES. There is not an agreement for model production and there should be. Additional model enhancements include the use of INRIX travel time data, application for HOT/Toll lanes, updates for light rail transit line, and parking scenarios. Model development includes land use data that is gathered from all model partners. Each MPO/RPO in the region is responsible for collecting data for their area and allocating it to the appropriate traffic analysis zone (TAZ). Staff is trying to achieve a more unified way to update base year data to help maintain a better set of data moving forward. The Land Use sub-committee is working on improving data for the model. Freight data has also been incorporated in the model. The model is calibrated on vehicle classification counts. CDOT staff is working with Parsons Brinkerhoff and NCDOT in an effort to move toward calibration at the TAZ level to result in a more area specific freight model. However, specific truck routes are not identified in the model. For development of the 2040 model, the area is collecting regional socio-economic, household travel survey, external station and land use data as well as using 2010 Census data. A household travel survey is being conducted, with 4,000 households included in the household travel survey. The survey will use a combination of data collection methods including mail-in and phone survey as well as a real time geo-coding component. The model for the 2040 LRTP will have a base year of 2010 and include 2020, 2030 and 2040 horizon years. Staff has the ability to aggregate the model by non-attainment, MPO boundary, county, etc., so that no matter how MPOs areas grow or how the nonattainment area is defined the model can continue to address the needs of the partners.

#### **Noteworthy Practice**

As in the previous review, MUMPO and Model Team continue to provide excellent and cooperative service for planning and conformity processes.

#### **Recommendation**

FHWA should provide some information regarding how model production is funded when multiple MPOs are included in a regional model.

## **X. Transportation Conformity Process**

**Regulation: 23 CFR 450.322(I):** In nonattainment and maintenance areas for transportation-related pollutants, the MPO, as well as the FHWA and the FTA, must make a conformity determination on any updated or amended transportation plan in accordance with the Clean Air Act and the EPA transportation conformity regulations (40 CFR part 93).

#### **Current Status**

The MUMPO currently has a conforming 2035 LRTP (*The USDOT LRTP approval date is May 3, 2010*). The USDOT transportation conformity determinations were made on both the MUMPO amended 2035 LRTP and the FY 2012-2018 TIP on December 16, 2011. The approved TIP is effective for 4-years, unless the NCDOT updates the STIP sooner at which time a new transportation conformity determination will be required. The socioeconomic data for the 2035 LRTP was adopted by MUMPO on May 3, 2010. MUMPO is working on their 2040 LRTP update due May 3, 2014, and they are collecting new socioeconomic data to be approved in early 2014 when the MUMPO Board will adopt the 2040 LRTP and the transportation plan conformity determination. The kick-off meeting for the transportation conformity interagency consultation (IC) process for the 2040 LRTP update will take place in May 2013. It is anticipated that the

MUMPO will have a list of projects so the transportation conformity process work can begin. The transportation conformity work is expected to take approximately one year with a completion deadline of May 3, 2014.

The Interagency Consultation process has greatly improved for the Metrolina Region. The regional coordination has been good and all MPOs and RPOs in the region have met their transportation conformity deadlines. FHWA recommended in the past that the Metrolina Region needed a person to coordinate the conformity work for the region but there has not been one person who has taken on this role. For the last couple of years this role has rotated among the Metrolina MPO's and NCDOT. To date this approach it has worked well for this region.

Air quality monitoring data shows that the Metrolina Region is attaining the 1997 8-Hour Ozone Standard. The NC Division of Air Quality (DAQ) requested that EPA redesignate the Charlotte-Gastonia-Rock Hill nonattainment area to attainment. The Metrolina Redesignation and Maintenance Plan was submitted to EPA on November 3, 2011, and contains MPO based motor vehicle emissions budgets (MVEBs). In the past the MVEBs were county based. Even though the area is attaining the 1997 8-hour standard it is expected that the Metrolina area will be designated nonattainment for the 2008 Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standard. Final designations are expected in the spring of 2012. Transportation conformity would be required one year after the effective date of the designation.

#### **Recommendation**

MUMPO needs to continue working to meeting their task deadlines associated with the 2040 LRTP update, anticipated TIP and TIP amendment schedules and associated transportation conformity process work.

## **XI. Transit Planning**

**Regulation: 49 USC 5303:** It is in the interest of the United States, including its economic interest, to foster the development and revitalization of public transportation systems, in acquiring, constructing, supervising, or inspecting, equipment or a facility for use in public transportation, and to encourage and promote the safe and efficient management, operation, and development of surface transportation systems that will serve the mobility needs of people and freight and foster economic growth and development within and between States and urbanized areas, while minimizing transportation-related fuel consumption and air pollution through metropolitan and statewide transportation planning processes.

#### **Current Status**

Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS) reports moving over 90,000 riders each day (Sept. 2011), with more than 24,897,000 trips made by CATS in FY2011. According to CATS, ridership has doubled since 1999, but annual ridership declined slightly from 2009 to 2010. However, ridership is up about 5% in 2011. CATS has an extensive network of transit routes in the core of the Charlotte Region and rapidly growing express and regional express routes into surrounding counties. CATS operates a new 11.0 mile light rail line from I-485 on the south to Uptown Charlotte and is planning another 9.3 mile light rail extension to the northeast (2016 opening). CATS' regional transit plan also includes trolleys, van pools, street car, bus-rapid transit and planned commuter rail lines. CATS recently received a Federal grant to build a 1.3

mile Streetcar Starter Project, and CATS plans an eventual 10 miles of cross town streetcar service.

#### Types of Local and State Funding for Transit and Likelihood of Continued Support

Local funding is made up of the following sources: (1/2 cent sales tax, fair box recovery, maintenance of effort payments which requires that after the 1/2 cent sales tax in 1998 is maintained and other capitol income which is other source agreements with other municipalities). CATS maintains an approximately \$100 million minimum balance in reserve and a high commitment with local funding. On Nov. 6, 2007, the citizens of Charlotte-Mecklenburg Co. approved a continuation of its one-half of one cent regional sales tax that funds CATS operations in a "landslide" of 70% in favor of retaining the transit sales tax.

#### Planning and Operational Improvements

CATS has dramatically improved the operating frequencies on local routes and developed a 5 year transit services plan to guide the development of new bus service. CATS is working closely with the Planning Departments in each of the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) member towns to develop a coordinated Transportation and Land Use strategy in support of the Integrated Transit/Land Use Plans and the recently adopted Transit Corridor System Plan. This plan and these strategies define the local vision of Rapid Transit prioritization over the next 30 years and are incorporated into the MPO adopted Long Range Transportation Plan and TIP.

#### Planning & Transit Systems

The Metropolitan Transit Commission (MTC) is the policy body for CATS. The MTC sets the priorities for short and long term investment in the Transit System through the adoption of short and long range plans. CATS utilizes these priorities and policies to evaluate transit system needs and to prepare the transit portion of the LRTP and the TIP for adoption by the MPO. The MTC adopted CATS Financial Policies govern the development of the transit portion of the fiscally constrained LRTP and TIP. These policies require the establishment of a balanced budget that anticipates future revenues and estimates year of expenditure costs for capital and operating costs. CATS utilizes a financial model to test various implementation scenarios for financial capacity.

#### Division of Federal and State funds for Transit

The Transit Plan is adopted by the MTC and then the MPO for setting priorities then assigning funding categories. CATS is a direct recipient of FTA formula funds and budgets these federal funds and state matching funds annually toward the MTC approved long and short term transit programs. These funds are applied first to eligible debt service payments and second to the purchase and maintenance of infrastructure and related assets and then for additional service. CATS applies for project specific grants for numerous projects and applies the grants and any state matching funds as approved. Flexible funding is used for CMAQ funds which are transferred from highway to transit uses.

#### New Starts Process for Fixed Guideway Transit Projects

Federal and State New Starts funds are an integral part of CATS budget and the future funding of rapid transit including Light Rail Transit (LRT) in the region. CATS utilizes the priorities established by the MTC to guide the development of financial plans and applications for Federal and State New Starts grants for the 2030 Transit Corridor System Plan.

### Other Capital Improvements

The Countywide Transit Services Plan (CTSP) is a five year planning document which identifies and prioritizes specific transit service enhancements, on a year-by-year basis, for implementation in Mecklenburg County and the region. The document makes recommendations for transit capital facilities such as community transit centers, park and rides, as well as for transit amenities such as shelters, benches and waiting pads. The CTSP is updated every five-years

### Comprehensive Operational & Route Analysis

CATS' reports three route change reviews each year. Currently, CATS fastest growing market segment is the Express Bus Service. Specifically one area of deficiency relating to Regional Express Routes which originate in other counties is the leverage for financial participation. The participation from the local governments outside of the county is necessary in order to increase service and provide permanent park-and-ride facilities to meet growing demand. In addition to the CTSP, CATS conducts quarterly and annual performance reviews of all routes.

### Fare Structure

The fare structure is determined by the Metropolitan Transit Commission (MTC). The MTC has adopted a fare policy which establishes the fare structure and scheduled fare increases. The adopted MTC policy recommends a modest increase in fare levels every two years to ensure that fare revenues keep pace with inflation and reflect a fair-share contribution by riders to the costs of operating a transit system.

### Public Involvement & Environmental Justice (EJ) and Other Communities

CATS identifies routes that are primarily serving EJ communities. These routes are monitored and routinely evaluated versus the system to identify any discrepancies in service between these communities and the system as a whole. CATS core services are well aligned with the EJ communities and provide mobility and accessibility to these populations, many of which have no other means of private transportation.

### Continuing, Cooperative and Comprehensive Planning Process

CATS is an integral part of the MUMPO LRTP and TIP development process and is an active member of the Transportation Coordinating Committee (TCC). CATS plans are integrated with the member jurisdictions of the MPO and are continuing, cooperative and comprehensive. CATS works closely with NCDOT in the development of the LRTP and TIP and is proactive in efforts to coordinate transit and roadway improvements.

### Modeling and Air Quality Conformity and LRTP Update

The regional travel demand model is maintained by the Charlotte Department of Transportation (CDOT) for the MPO. CDOT utilizes this model and consultant services provided by CATS to develop project level forecasts and ridership to address regional service issues. The transportation conformity work is handled by CDOT and includes transit elements of the LRTP. CATS works cooperatively with CDOT to collect data and evaluate model enhancements to improve the quality of transit ridership projections. On board surveys are also used.

### Linking Planning, Land Use and the Environmental Process

CATS has a strong commitment to the integration of land use and rapid transit planning. The Transit Corridor System Plan is a product of the adopted Center and Corridors Plan and the Integrated Transit/Land Use Plan previously developed. CATS has worked closely with the MPO member jurisdictions in our core service area to develop Joint Development Principals and Policies that have been adopted by Charlotte, Mecklenburg County, Huntersville, Cornelius, Davidson and Matthews – especially along the proposed Red Line.

#### Public involvement (PI) for Transit

CATS conducts about 45 transportation fairs each year at area businesses, organizations and community events. These events and other outreach opportunities engage citizens in a one-on-one manner to inform them of our services and gain valuable feedback to improve our system.

#### ADA & Paratransit & Targeted Populations

CATS provides ADA complementary paratransit service through Special Transportation Service (STS). STS provides door-to-door transit services within Charlotte city limits, including the towns of Pineville and Matthews. Individuals must undergo a functional assessment and certification process to be eligible for STS services. CATS also provides STS II, an extended paratransit service to certified individuals in the remainder of Mecklenburg County. The fare for STS II is mileage based (Monday through Friday 7:00 am to 6:00 pm). CATS participates with a number of advocacy agencies to educate the elderly, disabled and special populations on transit services. Travel training programs have been established to assist people with disabilities and seniors learn how to navigate fixed route services. Also, bus schedules are available in alternate formats.

#### Coordinated Mobility

CATS staff initiated the coordinated human services transportation planning effort along with the MPO. CATS is the designated recipient of Federal transit funds within MUMPO. CATS has a locally coordinated plan for New Freedom, United We Ride, and JARC programs and funding with Mecklenburg Co. Dept. of Social Services and other interested stakeholders.

#### Security

CATS has a System Safety Program Plan (SSPP), System Security Plan (SSP), and Emergency Action Plan. CATS has a Transit Security budget, with funding for security training. All CATS fixed-route buses and light rail trains are equipped with camera systems. All major transit centers, rapid transit stations, transit centers, park and ride lots all CATS major facilities are equipped with cameras. TS does not have its own “transit police force;” however CATS does have full-time Charlotte Mecklenburg Police Officers assigned to the “Transit Unit” at this time. CATS also uses private armed and sworn officers. All transit assigned police officers, CMPD and Company Police, are based at CATS facilities.

#### Coordination

When asked, CATS provided the following suggested areas for improving the transit “partnership”:

- Increased Federal financial support for capital investment is critically needed to assist transit agencies to serve the needs of a changing market. CATS has recently won Tiger 3, ARRA and New Starts grants.

- Federal guidance in New Starts may need to recognize the potential economic development stimulate of Streetcar and Rapid Transit investment in the evaluation process for these projects.
- The opening of the LYNX Blue Line Extension is scheduled for 2016, with entry into final design in 2012.
- SCLRP construction is complete and the daily ridership is about 14,000 per day (well ahead of projections) and can exceed 25,000 per day for special events.
- CATS needs to make improvements to the South Corridor and expand from two car to three car platforms to serve customer demand.
- CATS reports the following challenges including its neighborhood transit services and connections; primarily radial route and service network (operating from the Uptown Charlotte Transportation Center, CTC). CATS has experienced an increase in demand for cross-town services and has responded to customer demand by opening three Community Transit Centers to serve as transfer centers outside of Uptown and has introduced several new cross-town and community circulators. These services create more direct travel patterns, allowing customers to complete their transit trip without traveling to CATS downtown center and CATS does not have Smart Card technology nor Wi Fi on its buses at the present time.

#### **Noteworthy Practices**

- CATS provide exemplary local, express and regional transit service. Its regional rail and streetcar plan, with Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) for some corridors is well-supported locally and regionally.
- CATS, the MUMPO and the City of Charlotte have developed exemplary local transit oriented development (TOD) land use policies and plans.
- CATS reports more than one-half billion dollars in new TOD investment around the South Corridor Light Rail Project (SCLRP) stations. In addition, NCDOT has provided considerable State capital support in the range of 25% of all capital costs for the SCLRP (about \$ 120.0 million of the \$ 499. million total cost for the SCLRP to date) and proposes a similar percentage of capital cost for the proposed Blue Line Extension and the Red Line North Corridor commuter line.
- CATS, which is a unit of Charlotte's consolidated government within Mecklenburg County, takes advantage of the highest bond rating of the City of Charlotte to issue debt service to back transit capital improvements (low rates of interest).
- CATS and MUMPO exhibit a high degree of coordination in their planning and operations efforts.
- Indeed, a special tax district and land use plans are under consideration for the proposed 32 mile Red Line through four towns north of the city of Charlotte.





## **Appendix A**

## **Team Members/Participants**

### **Team Members**

Loretta W. Barren, FHWA,  
Unwanna Dabney, FHWA  
Edward Dancausse, FHWA  
Joseph Geigle, FHWA  
Keith Melton, FTA

### **Participants**

Van Argabright, NCDOT  
Stuart Basham, MUMPO  
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Bill Coxe, MUMPO TCC, Chairman  
Sara Familian, CDOT  
Anna Gallup, CDOT  
Andy Grzymiski, CDOT  
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Jason Lawrence, CATS  
David McDonald, II, CATS  
Martin Kinnamon, CDOT  
Malisa McCreedy, CDOT  
Anil Panicker, NCDOT  
Nick Polimeni, MUMPO  
John Rose, CATS  
Ken Tippette, CDOT

**Appendix B****Certification Review Agenda**

December 5-6, 2011

December 5, 2011	
9:00 am - 9:15 am	Introduction and Overview
9:15 am - 10:15 am	MPO Overview/Update – Process Accomplishments/concerns/assistance
10:15 am - 10:45 am	UPWP/Self-Certification
10:45 am - 11:30 am	Coordination: NCDOT/Regional and Environmental Agency Partners
11:30 am - 1:00 pm	Lunch (on your own)
1:00 pm - 2:00 pm	Public Involvement /Title VI/EJ Planning
2:00 pm – 2:30 pm	Regional Agreements/Boundary/Census
2:30 pm – 3:00 pm	Break
3:00 pm - 5:00 pm	Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) including:
	Financial Planning
	Integration: by Mode - Freight/Bike/Pedestrian/livability
	Integration: Environment/climate change/safety/ITS
6 pm – 8 pm	Public Involvement Meeting
Tuesday, December 6, 2011	
9:00 am - 9:45 am	TIP/STIP
9:45 am - 10:30 am	Congestion Management Process
10:30 am - 10:45 am	Break
10:45 am – 11:30 am	Modeling Process
11:30 am - 12:45 pm	Lunch
12:45 pm - 1:30 pm	Air Quality Planning
1:30 pm – 3:00 pm	Transit Planning
3:00 pm - 3:30 pm	Break – Review Team Meeting
3:30 pm to 4:00 pm	Review Team - Preliminary Report Out
4:30 pm – until	MUMPO Board and TCC one-on-one session

**Corrective Action**

- MUMPO must complete and implement the Congestion Management Plan (CMP) by March 1, 2013.
  - MUMPO must develop an action plan documenting key milestones that will lead to completion by April 13,, 2012.

**Noteworthy Practices**

- MUMPO development of their Title VI/EJ plan and subsequent updates to the Public Participation Plan is commendable. The outreach efforts to both the Hispanic and African American communities will be invaluable to future planning processes.
- Attending local, pre-planned events as a means of soliciting feedback, especially from traditionally underserved populations is a very good use of staff time and limited resources.
- As in the previous review, MUMPO and Model Team continue to provide excellent and cooperative service for planning and conformity processes.
- CATS provide exemplary local, express and regional transit service. Its regional rail and streetcar plan, with Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) for some corridors is well-supported locally and regionally.
- CATS, the MUMPO and the City of Charlotte have developed exemplary local transit oriented development (TOD) land use policies and plans. CATS reports more than one-half billion dollars in new TOD investment around the South Corridor Light Rail Project (SCLRP) stations. In addition, NCDOT has provided considerable State capital support in the range of 25% of all capital costs for the SCLRP (about \$ 120.0 million of the \$ 499. million total cost for the SCLRP to date) and proposes a similar percentage of capital cost for the proposed Blue Line Extension and the Red Line North Corridor commuter line. CATS, which is a unit of Charlotte's consolidated government within Mecklenburg County, takes advantage of the highest bond rating of the City of Charlotte to issue debt service to back transit capital improvements (low rates of interest).
- CATS and MUMPO exhibit a high degree of coordination in their planning and operations efforts.
- Indeed, a special tax district and land use plans are under consideration for the proposed 32 mile Red Line through four towns north of the city of Charlotte.

**Recommendations**

- FHWA should attend all TCC meetings in person as oppose to calling into some meetings.
- MUMPO and CDOT should work with NCDOT to streamline the billing process.
- FHWA should provide more training and information on the various uses of 104PL funds.
- NCDOT Transportation Planning Branch (TPB) should consider revising the submittal time frame for the self-certification process based on 23 CFR 450.334(a).
- FHWA should provide a more detailed description of each Federal regulation of the self-certification process.
- NCDOT Program Development Branch should provide as much information on the annual listing of projects as is provided in the STIP.
- The MPO should use the annual listing of projects provided by NCDOT to prepare a document/list that can be easily understood by their citizens.

- MUMPO should continue to improve upon the consultation process with Federal and State agencies.
- NCDOT Office of Civil Rights staff should coordinate Title VI reviews better with FHWA, TPB and MPOs in the future.
- Use staff at Spanish language newspapers or CATS to help determine the integrity of translated documents.
- Staff should seek out opportunities to share information via radio. Radio can be an effective means of communicating with both African American and Spanish communities.
- Provide adequate staffing to accomplish objectives of the public participation, Title VI/EJ and LEP plans.
- FHWA should provide information regarding MPO voting structure.
- The MPO should work with NCDOT TPB and FHWA to address staffing needed to implement the planning program and the appropriate umbrella in which to operate.
- FHWA and NCDOT should examine the MPO options for redesignation after the 2010 Census boundaries are released.
- MUMPO should participate in the update to the Regional ITS Strategic Deployment Plan.
- MUMPO should include ITS as a separate project or integrated into other projects in their MTP.
- The NCDOT Division Office should provide assistance with the development of the financial plan, especially for operations and maintenance funding.
- NCDOT Program Development Branch should provide the MPO with the necessary financial data to support the development of the MPOs TIP when the draft TIP is developed.
- FHWA should send the MPO any RFPs that will provide assistance for developing the CMP.
- FHWA should provide some information regarding how model production is funded when multiple MPOs are included in a regional model.
- MUMPO needs to continue working to meeting their task deadlines associated with the 2040 LRTP update, anticipated TIP and TIP amendment schedules and associated transportation conformity process work.

### **Resolutions**

- FHWA forwarded via e-mail the Hampton Roads voting structure study.
- FHWA forwarded a sample RFP for CMP development to MUMPO via e-mail.





**Media Advisory  
December 5, 2011**

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**Public Comments for MUMPO Certification Review  
November 21 through December 23, 2011**

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Public comment period is open regarding the certification review. The Public comment period begins Monday, November 21 and will conclude Friday, December 23.

**What:** Public Meeting for Comments

**When:** Monday, December 5, 2011  
6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

**Where:** Room 266, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center  
600 East Fourth Street  
Charlotte, NC

**Why:** Public comments are strongly encouraged for a review of planning activities and procedures of the Mecklenburg-Union Metropolitan Planning Organization (MUMPO). Every four years, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) conduct a certification review to determine whether MUMPO follows a continuing, cooperative and comprehensive transportation planning process.

Anyone unable to attend the meeting can send comments to Loretta Barren of the FHWA at [Loretta.Barren@dot.gov](mailto:Loretta.Barren@dot.gov).

For more information, visit [www.mumpo.org](http://www.mumpo.org) or call 704-336-8643.

###

122892



# advertising agreement



Charlotte: 10100 Park Cedar Drive, Suite 150 • Charlotte, N.C. 28210 • Phone: 704.849.2261 • Fax: 704.849.2504  
Lake Norman: 501 S. Old Statesville Road • Huntersville, N.C. 28078 • Phone: 704.766.2100 • Fax: 704.849.2504

## Account Information

\_\_\_\_\_ Date

\_\_\_\_\_ Company Name

\_\_\_\_\_ Contact

\_\_\_\_\_ Complete Billing Address of Advertiser, or Agency if Applicable

\_\_\_\_\_ City State Zip Code

\_\_\_\_\_ Phone

\_\_\_\_\_ Fax

\_\_\_\_\_ Contact Email

\_\_\_\_\_ Billing Email

## Ad Specifications

### Carolina Weekly (all 6 Weeklies)

- South Charlotte Weekly
- The Herald Weekly
- Ballantyne
- Mooresville Weekly
- SouthPark
- Denver Weekly
- Union County Weekly
- Mountain Island Monitor
- Matthews-Mint Hill Weekly

Issue Start Date: 11/25 End Date: 11/25

Ad Size:  Full  Jr.  1/2  1/3  1/4  1/6  1/8

Ad Layout:  Horizontal  Vertical  Standard

Ad Color:  B&W  Color

Frequency Rate: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Publication) (Per Insertion)

Weekly Rate \_\_\_\_\_ \$ 173

\_\_\_\_\_ \$

\_\_\_\_\_ \$

# of Weeks Contracted 1

Total Agreement \$ 173

### New Account

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

## Agreement

The undersigned agrees to purchase advertising at the published agreement rate in effect at the time of insertion. Should the Advertiser not fulfill or deviate from the terms of this agreement, the rate will revert to the applicable rate established and eligible for that period of time the Advertiser's agreement was in effect. In addition, any discounts on color charges will revert to the full color charge as published on the rate card per insertion should the Advertiser not fulfill or deviate from the terms of this agreement. All previous billings will be adjusted accordingly.

The Advertiser acknowledges receiving a copy of the newspaper's current rate card and agrees to all terms and policies therein. The Publisher reserves the right to revise rates and terms under this agreement upon 30 days written notice to the Advertiser.

The undersigned, as either owner, principal, or an authorized agent, hereby authorizes the newspaper to publish advertising under the terms of this agreement and also guarantees payment, both as a business and an individual, in accordance with the newspaper's credit terms.

The undersigned agrees that the Advertiser and its agents, if any, have the full legal right to publish, in their entirety, all advertisements submitted for publication hereunder, and that by publishing any of such advertisements the Publisher will not violate the rights of any person or federal, state, or local statutes or rules or regulations of any applicable federal, state or local authority.

Furthermore, the Advertiser and its agents, if any, assumes all liability for advertisements published and assumes any and all responsibility for any claims occurring against the Publisher. The Advertiser and its agents, if any, indemnify and hold the Publisher harmless from and defend it against any losses, expenses, suits or claims arising out of publishing such advertisement, including, but without limitation, those resulting from claims or suits for libel, violation of rights of privacy, plagiarism, unfair competition or trade practices, and copyright/trademark infringements.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Advertiser Or Authorized Agent (Print Name)

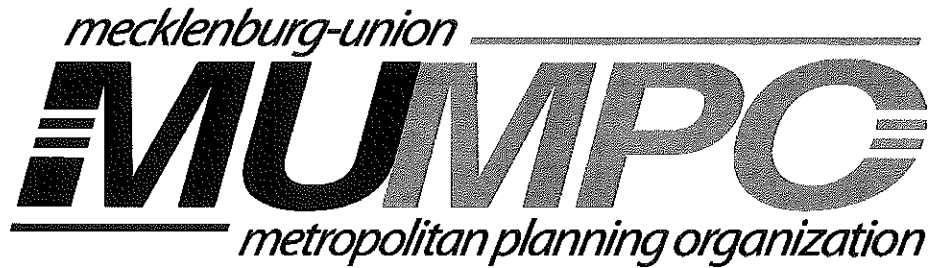
\_\_\_\_\_  
Cathy Kowalski  
Newspaper Representative (Print Name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Advertiser Or Authorized Agent (Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Newspaper Representative (Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date





Public comments are strongly encouraged for a review of planning activities and procedures of the Mecklenburg-Union Metropolitan Planning Organization (MUMPO). Every four years, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) conduct a certification review to determine whether MUMPO follows a continuing, cooperative and comprehensive transportation planning process

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**A public meeting regarding the certification review is scheduled for:**

**Monday, December 5**

6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Room 266

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center

600 E. Fourth St.

Charlotte, NC 28202

For more information, visit **[www.mumpo.org](http://www.mumpo.org)**  
or call **704-336-8643**.



Accounting 12 FEB 16 10:51 AM

**Winston-Salem Office**  
 4003 W. Hightown St  
 Suite G  
 Winston Salem, NC 27107  
 Tel. (336) 784-9004  
 Fax (336) 784-8337

**Triangle Office**  
 4600 New Bern Ave  
 Unit 101  
 Raleigh, NC 27610  
 Tel. (919) 645-1680  
 Fax (919) 345-2503

**Charlotte Office**  
 7508 E Independence Blvd  
 Suite 109  
 Charlotte, NC 28227  
 Tel. (704) 319-5044  
 Fax (704) 319-5040

**INSERTION ORDER / CONTRACT**

Customer Code: MECK12 Type: In House

Date: 11-22-2011

Sales Associate: Ofelia Rodriguez - C/OR Sales Associate 2: \_\_\_\_\_ %:

Customer Name: MUMPO/City of Charlotte #2 Phone: (704) 353-1157 Ext \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Individual, Corporation, Partnership)

Billing Contact or Dept: Michelle L. Gutt Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: mgutt@charlottenc.gov Business Category: Bids, auctions

Physical Address: 600 East Fourth Street City: Charlotte State: NC Zip: 28202

Billing Address: 600 East Fourth Street City: Charlotte State: NC Zip: 28202  
 Same

<b>Ad Color</b>	<b>Piedmont</b>	<b>Triangle</b>	<b>Charlotte</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> B&W	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Full Color	<b>Newspaper</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>Reven</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Stickers</b> <input type="checkbox"/>
		<b>Inserts</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	

Contract Type: Standard

Size of Ad 4.9 X 6.0  
 Width X Height (inches)

Base Price per Ad \$ 395.00

Charge for Color \$ 0.00

Discount per Ad -\$ 70.00

Price per Ad After Discount \$ 325.00

Beginning Date 11 21 2011 **EW**   
 Month Day Year

Charge for Guaranteed Position \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**EOW**

Ending Date 11 21 2011 **SD**   
 Month Day Year

**Guaranteed Position**

Page: \_\_\_\_\_ Section: \_\_\_\_\_ Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

Guaranteed Position Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Price per Ad \$ 325.00

Number of Times Ad will Run 1

**Total Value of Contract** \$ 325.00

<b>Payment Information</b>		Amount Received (Deposit) or To Charge: \$ _____		Cash <input type="checkbox"/>	Visa <input type="checkbox"/>	MC <input type="checkbox"/>	Amex <input type="checkbox"/>	Pre-Charge <input type="checkbox"/>
Name on Credit Card: _____		Credit Card Number: _____		Check <input type="checkbox"/>	Weekly <input type="checkbox"/>	2 Weeks <input type="checkbox"/>	Monthly <input type="checkbox"/>	Total Value <input type="checkbox"/>
Exp. Date (MM/YY): _____	CVV#: _____	CC Billing Address #: _____	CC Billing Zip: _____	CC Billing Phone: _____				

I have read and understood the contract printed on both sides of this document, and agree to adhere to the policies set forth as part of this contract. In addition, I agree to abide by any other terms and conditions that shall arise from any provision of this contract.

For: City of Charlotte Company Name 52-1333483  
 SS#  Federal Tax ID #  ITIN  Agency Order #

By: \_\_\_\_\_ Michelle L. Gutt  
 Authorized Signature and Title Date Print Name

**This Contract is NOT VALID until it is Approved and Signed Below by Que Pasa's Management AND Credit Departments**

<b>Q U E P A S A U S E O N L Y</b>		
<b>Management:</b> Approved <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Credit:</b> Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Denied <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Billing:</b> Weekly <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Weeks <input type="checkbox"/> 4 Weeks <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly <input type="checkbox"/>
Authorization #: _____	Credit Limit: _____ Customer Type: _____	Other Billing Cycle _____
Authorized Signature _____	Program By ODT <input type="checkbox"/> # of Weeks _____ Reason _____	Payment Terms
	Authorized Signature _____	Prepay <input type="checkbox"/> 7 Days <input type="checkbox"/> 15 Days <input type="checkbox"/> 30 Days <input type="checkbox"/>

71674.eps



Los comentarios públicos son extremadamente recomendables para una revisión de las actividades de planificación y los procedimientos en el Mecklenburg-Unión Metropolitan Planning Organization (MUMPO). Cada cuatro años, la Administración Federal de Carreteras (FHWA) y la Administración Federal de Tránsito (FTA) llevan a cabo una revisión de la certificación para determinar si MUMPO sigue un proceso de planeamiento de transporte continuo, integral y cooperativo.

La reunión pública para comentarios empezará en lunes 21 de noviembre y concluirá el viernes 23 de diciembre.

Cualquier persona interesada en proveer comentarios por escrito deben de enviarlos a Loretta Barre de la FHWA al correo **Loretta.Barren @dot.gov**.

71674-ms

**Una reunión pública acerca de la revisión del certificado está programada para:**

**Lunes, diciembre 5**

6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Salón 266

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center

600 E. Fourth St.

Charlotte, NC 28202

Para más información, visítanos en el **www.mumpo.org**

O llama al **(704) 336-8643**

3cl x 6"/corrMs

# THE Mecklenburg TIMES

1611 East 7th Street • Charlotte, NC 28204 • 704-377-6221 • 704-377-4258 (Fax)

## Advertising Agreement

Company Name: City of Charlotte

Agency Name:

Contact Name: Michelle Gutt

Agency Contact:

Address: 600 East 4th Street

City: Charlotte

State: NC Zip: 28202

Email: mgutt@ci.charlotte.nc.us

Phone: 704-353-1157

Fax:

Frequency Rate: 1x

Issue Date	Size	Placement	Gross Rate	Color	Agency %	Net Rate
Nov. 21, 2011	1/4	ROP	200	na	na	\$200
					total	\$200

I have the authority to execute this Advertising Contract on behalf of the above named company to contract advertising in The Mecklenburg Times, and to publish advertising as outlined above within a 12-month period beginning with the Publisher's issue dated 11/29/11

Company acknowledges that any changes in the specifications and/or schedule must be in writing and must arrive at the Publisher's office prior to the closing date for the issue in which the next insertion is scheduled to run. If this contract is not fulfilled for any reason, the Company will be charged the highest applicable earned rate, which means the rate on past and subsequent insertions will be readjusted to conform with the actual space used when it is less than the space originally contracted by the advertiser. Frequency discounts will be determined by the number of issues in which insertions appear during 12-month period starting from the day of the first insertion.

Credit applications, submitted by the Company or its advertising agency along with space reservations, may be required at the Publisher's discretion. All charges are due and payable within 30 days of statement date. Publisher reserves the right to hold the Company and/or its advertising agency jointly and severally liable for such monies as are due and payable to the Publisher, including all costs, attorney's fees and expenses incurred in collection thereof, without relief from valuation and appraisal law. Claims for omissions, errors or incorrect insertions will not be honored beyond the first date of publication.

A fifteen percent commission will be allowed to recognized agencies on display ads, excluding directory and classifieds. Commission will be allowed on all charges for space, color and position premiums. No agency commissions will be allowed on production charges or any charges over 45 days past due. Agency billings, 45 days or more past due, will be adjusted to reflect unearned commissions.

Signed by: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# THE Mecklenburg TIMES

1611 East 7th Street • Charlotte, NC 28204 • 704-377-6221 • 704-377-4258 (Fax)

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Company Name: City of Charlotte

Agency Name:

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State: NC Zip: 28202

Email: mgutt@ci.charlotte.nc.us

Phone: 704-353-1157

Fax:

Frequency Rate: 1x

Issue Date	Size	Placement	Gross Rate	Color	Agency %	Net Rate
Nov.29, 2011	1/4	ROP	200	na	na	\$200
					total	\$200

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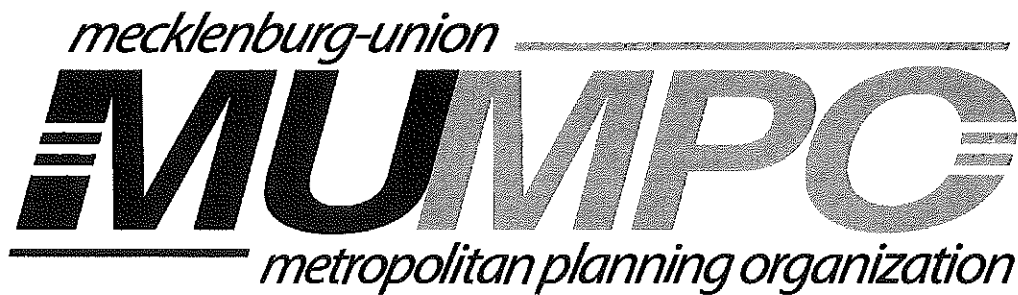
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Signed by: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



Public comments are strongly encouraged for a review of planning activities and procedures of the Mecklenburg-Union Metropolitan Planning Organization (MUMPO). Every four years, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) conduct a certification review to determine whether MUMPO follows a continuing, cooperative and comprehensive transportation planning process

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**A public meeting regarding the certification review is scheduled for:**

**Monday, December 5**

6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Room 266

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center

600 E. Fourth St.

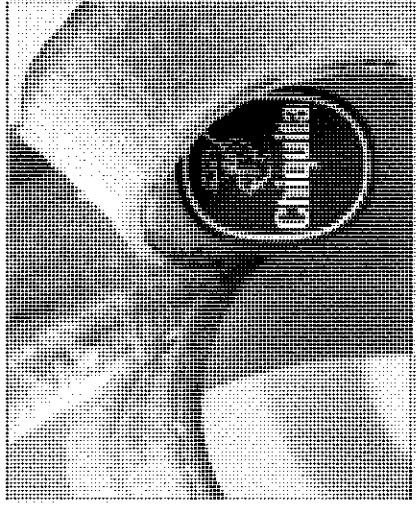
Charlotte, NC 28202

For more information, visit **[www.mumpo.org](http://www.mumpo.org)**  
or call **704-336-8643**.



# The Mecklenburg Times | mecktimes.com

**Chiquita's move could bear fruit for Charlotte's real estate market**



In all that talk this week about Chiquita's planned relocation to Charlotte, there's been a lot of focus on job creation. But observers say the real estate

**LATEST NEWS**



**Extreme networking: Striking up conversation helped Bellamy land 'Extreme Makeover'**

At just 3 years old, Bellamy Homes is pretty much a newcomer when it comes to Charlotte homebuilders. That didn't stop it from being on the lips of officials in the local industry last month when it was picked to be featured in "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition," the ABC show in which host Ty Pennington and [...]

**Charlotte Council votes down PCCO**

The Charlotte City Council has rejected a proposed change to the Post Construction Controls Ordinance that would remove what city staff members says is a duplicative natural area requirement. The vote was 7-2 against, with Councilmen David Howard and Andy Dulin opposing the measure. Staff members said the PCCO's natural area requirement is duplicative of the city's [...]

**Henderson Properties signs 2 management**

Public comments are strongly encouraged for a review of planning activities and procedures of the Mecklenburg-Union Metropolitan Planning Organization (MUMPCO). Every four years, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) conduct a certification review to determine whether MUMPCO follows a continuing, cooperative and comprehensive transportation planning process.

A public comment period will begin on Monday, November 21 and conclude on Friday, December 23. Anyone wishing to provide written comments should send them to Loretta Barren at [Loretta.Barren@dot.gov](mailto:Loretta.Barren@dot.gov).

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## Appendix E

## Previous Review

The last certification review for the Mecklenburg Union Metropolitan Planning Organization (MUMPO) was signed February 28, 2008. This desk review provides an update to recommendations and corrective action that was documented in the review. The site visit for the February 28, 2012 Certification Review is scheduled for December 5 -7, 2011. Some information covered in the desk review may not be revisited during the on-site visit unless the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) desires to provide additional information or clarity.

### **Corrective Action**

The MUMPO must develop and implement a Congestion Management Process (CMP) that meets the requirements of 23 CFR 450.320 by May 3, 2009.

The MPO hired a consultant to complete the CMP. The MPO had completed substantial work and analysis to satisfy the Corrective Action. The consultant contract to complete the CMP was suspended because MUMPO was not satisfied with the work being produced and new consultant has been hired. A frame work to complete the CMP along with potential performance measures is currently being reviewed by the MPO. Additional work is needed to complete the CMP and satisfy the corrective action. We will discuss this further during the site visit.

### **Recommendations**

- MUMPO should establish and implement a process for evaluating the effectiveness of the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). The MPO has completed an evaluation of their needs and determined how best to address them over a 5-year period. The MPO also provides a proposed 5-year calendar to the NC Department of Transportation (NCDOT) with the development of their annual UPWP. The NCDOT, FHWA and FTA will monitor the UPWP program and accomplishments on an annual basis. One of the largest impediments to developing an effective program is the uncertainty of Federal reauthorization. Developing the annual and especially the 5-year program is very difficult when the annual funding allocation to MPOs is not provided in a timely fashion. While the FHWA acknowledges this concern they do not have the ability to directly address this issue, because the responsibility for Federal reauthorization rests with Congress.
- The MPO should document the evaluation process for the project rankings for each project in the LRTP and include that documentation in the plan. The MPO has updated the project ranking process and used it for the 2035 LRTP, adopted May 3, 2009, by the MPO. The MPO has been evaluating criteria to rank non-highway projects and smaller local projects, especially those funded with Surface Transportation Program-Direct Apportionment (STPDA) funds. Since the NCDOT's now uses a strategic prioritization process to rank all projects for inclusion in the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) the MPO is considering whether or not to revise their ranking criteria to more closely resemble the NCDOT's criteria. These discussions are still underway. We will discuss this further during the site visit.
- The MPO should review the goals and objectives of North Carolina's Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) and document how the 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)



can help implement the SHSP. MUMPO reviewed the goals and objectives of the SHSP and identified how the 2035 LRTP could help North Carolina reach the goals of the SHSP.

- The MPO should expand their efforts to involve the freight industry in the planning process. The 2035 LRTP includes recommendations to expand freight's presence in the MPO planning process by inviting the freight industry to join the MPO Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC), so that there is a continuous opportunity for dialog and feedback. Thus far no one has joined. MUMPO expanded upon freight in the LRTP by including future projects for the region for all freight modes, especially in supporting both Norfolk Southern and CSX in the relocation and improvement of their intermodal facility's, respectively. We will discuss this further during the site visit.
- The resource agencies should be contacted and a consultation process developed cooperatively with the appropriate environmental resource agencies for use with the next LRTP update due by May 3, 2009. As part of the development of the 2035 LRTP the MPO invited resources agencies to participate in the LRTP development process at the beginning of the process. The MPO held open house meetings to provide plan information and solicit feedback, 3 agencies attended. The MPO followed up with them during the development process and during scheduled public comments opportunities. Comments received from agencies were considered in the plans development and are included in the appendix to the plan. We will discuss these coordination efforts further during the site visit.
- To meet the Final Transportation Planning Rule, per Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act – A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), the MPO needs to include inflation and year-of-expenditure dollars in the 2035 LRTP. With the help of Charlotte Department of Transportation MPO staff developed a financial plan for the 2035 LRTP that included projected revenue and cost estimates inflated to future year dollars. The use of YOE dollars meant that fewer projects could be fiscally constrained in the 2035 LRTP. Staff did note that, revenues have typically kept up with project costs. The economic climate of the past few years have shown marked reductions in project costs. FHWA/FTA will continue to monitor the MPOs financial strategy as they move forward. We will discuss this further during the site visit.
- MUMPO should develop more detailed model protocol agreements that address future LRTP, Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), amendments to the LRTP and TIP and conformity processes in the future. While no one has specifically, been identified to manage the conformity process the responsibilities are being shared and the process is working smoothly. We do not believe this is still an issue.
- MUMPO is encouraged to continue regional efforts for model management and coordination. Since the approval of the 2035 LRTP the MPO has began preparing for their next model update. The MPO and the model members have contracted to have the socio-economic data, housing travel data updated. This process is continuing and we will discuss it further during the site visit.
- MUMPO should begin communications with the Metrolina regional partners to lay out the roles and responsibilities of the 09-15 TIP, 2035 LRTP update and for future TIP/LRTP amendments. This process was successfully completed.

- MUMPO should keep the transportation conformity interagency partners informed during the transportation conformity process especially when deadlines are not going to be met. Information such as updated schedules should be shared with the transportation partners. The City of Charlotte Department of Transportation (CDOT) provided a staff person to monitor, schedule needed meetings and provide frequent updates. This responsibility has been shared between the regional partners to avoid putting the burden on just one single agency. The current process of sharing this responsibility is working very well.
- MUMPO should share air quality information (State Implementation Plan (SIP) or transportation conformity) with the Metrolina Area transportation partners prior to submission to the North Carolina Division of Air Quality (NCDQAQ). The CDOT modelers are e-mailing all partners with model information during the conformity process. The NCDOT has a model team that works with the CDOT modelers to assist not only with modeling, but keep NCDOT and the other MPOs RPOs informed about model outcomes.
- MUMPO should develop a dispute resolution process for regional efforts such as air quality and modeling. This has not been done. No problems have arisen in the past. Eddie is following up with regional partners. The process as outlined in the update to the Memorandum of Understanding for SIP and the process the MPO currently uses for regional model development are adequate. This recommendation has been successfully completed.
- The NCDOT should share the inflation rate and year-of-expenditure estimation process with the MPOs. NCDOT provided STIP inflation information to the MPO via the previously adopted STIP. Staff at NCDOT has financial forecasts available that are provided by the NC Office of Management and Budget. The MPO developed their own process based a previous process developed by a consultant used for previous LRTP updates. Due to a review of the NCDOT's STIP development process an enhanced financial chapter for the STIP has been developed and it is on their website. NCDOT will be sharing the STIP financial data with all the MPOs as future drafts STIPs are developed.
- MUMPO should develop goals, strategies and performance measures for the Public Participation Plan (PPP) and base future public involvement plan updates and annual reports on how well they are performing. Goals and strategies for the PIP were developed and used with the LRTP update. Performance measures are still being developed. As part of the update to the Title VI/Environmental Justice (EJ) plan update the MPO considered how the EJ enhances the overall PIP and it more robust. This will be discussed further during the review.
- It is recommended that MUMPO update its demographic profile and that they consider using other data sources as appropriate in addition to census data.
- It is recommended that MUMPO develop a database/ mailing list that is specific to the MPO's minority and low-income populations.
- MUMPO must develop a process to determine how minority and low-income (MLI) communities are impacted by the long range transportation plan. The process must be completed by May 3, 2009, and include:
  - Measures/analytical methods to determine overall transportation system equity in an effort to identify both burdens and benefits;

- Identification of any negative impacts on minority and-low income populations; and
- Avoidance and/or mitigation measures as appropriate.)

This address the recommendations for the PPP and Title VI/EJ the MPO hired a consultant to develop an EJ plan including public outreach that would be suitable for particular populations. Demographic profiles for minority populations were collected and mapped. The MPO worked with NCDOT to get an historical list of completed projects to better determine past system equity. The LRTP and MTIP projects were mapped and analyzed as part of the LRTP. The consultant developed the base EJ program. The consultant established focus groups, contacts with local minority leaders and MLI citizens. Two or three drop-in type meetings were held to solicit public input. This plan has taken time to development, but I believe the plan and process adopted by the MPO more than adequately addresses the Federal requirements. We will discuss it further during the site visit.