

CHARLOTTE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION
Remote Participation Only
April 21, 2021 Meeting
Summary Minutes

Members Attending (via remote participation):

Julie Eiselt (Charlotte), Michael Miltich (Cornelius), Jane Campbell (Davidson), Brian Hines (Huntersville), Marcus McIntyre (Indian Trail), Paulette Blakeney (Marshville), Joe Pollino (Marvin), Renee Garner (Matthews), Pat Cotham (Mecklenburg County), John Higdon (Metropolitan Transit Commission), Frederick Becker (Mineral Springs), Bobby Kilgore (Monroe), Lisa Qualls (Mooresville), Jack Edwards (Pineville), William Morgan (Statesville), David Williams (Union County), Ron Pappas (Waxhaw), Elizabeth Callis (Weddington), Stephen Rosenburgh (NCBOT – Division 10), Brad Lail (NCBOT – Division 12)

Non-Voting Members Attending (via remote participation):

Victoria Nwasike (Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission), Jim Walker (NC Turnpike Authority), Loretta Barren (FHWA)

1. Call to Order

Chairman Michael Miltich called the April 2021 CRTPO meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. He explained that this meeting would be conducted virtually, and then he reviewed the virtual meeting guidelines and etiquette. CRTPO Delegates and Alternates as well as residents were able to participate in the virtual meeting by using a combination of online meeting software, conference call, and live stream from the CRTPO’s Facebook Page.

Chairman Miltich reminded the Board that usage of the chat box function within the online meeting software is part of the Board public record.

Chairman Miltich directed Mr. Burke to conduct a roll call to determine if the following Bylaw requirements had been met for a quorum:

Section 3 – Quorums

A quorum of the MPO shall be constituted by the presence of:

- *at least ten (10) of the eligible voting members at the beginning of the meeting; and*
- *who together represent a minimum of 51% of the weighted votes; and*
- *that qualified voting members from jurisdictions representing at least two counties must be present.*
- *Only members physically present shall count toward establishing a quorum. (Suspended by CRTPO Board chairman due to North Carolina State of Emergency Declaration)*

Mr. Burke conducted the roll call and determined that a quorum of the Board had been met based upon the bylaws, and with the Chairman’s omission of the clause for members to be physically present due to the State of Emergency declaration.

Chairman Miltich polled the Board to determine if votes can be cast by acclamation unless opposition (“nay” vote) from at least one Board member is made. The purpose of the vote by acclamation would be to minimize confusion if the votes were unanimous and to run the virtual meeting as efficiently as possible.

If an opposing vote to approve the particular vote by acclamation was cast, then the Chairman would direct the Secretary to conduct a roll call vote of each attending jurisdiction. If no opposing vote is cast a second time, then the motion will be recorded as “approved unanimously by acclamation.” No opposition was voiced with this voting method from the Board for the meeting tonight.

2. Adoption of the Agenda

Summary:

Chairman Miltich asked if any changes to the agenda were necessary. No changes were identified.

Motion:

Chairman Miltich made a motion to the Board to adopt the agenda by acclamation unless at least one opposing vote is cast. No opposing vote was cast. Upon being put to a vote, the motion to adopt the agenda as presented was approved by acclamation.

3. Public Comment Period

Michael Kubinieć of Iredell County addressed the Board regarding a proposal to prohibit heavy trucks (greater than three axles) from travelling in the left lane of Interstate 77 between Statesville and the South Carolina State Line. Mr. Kubinieć explained that the concept of left lane truck restrictions is commonly used along highway corridors throughout Europe as a means to optimize safety and efficiency. Currently, heavy trucks create safety issues by causing smaller vehicles to frequently change lanes to avoid these vehicles. Heavy trucks that are towing commodity cannot operate safely at the posted speed limit in the left lane which causes congestion along the I-77 corridor. Mr. Kubinieć requested that the concept is studied further to determine if it would be a feasible, low-cost benefit to improve safety and reduce congestion along I-77.

4. Ethics Awareness & Conflict of Interest Reminder

Mr. Burke read the ethics awareness and conflict of interest reminder. No conflicts were identified.

5. Consent Agenda

Summary:

Chairman Miltich requested action on the following consent agenda item:

1. Revised April 21, 2021 CRTPO Board Meeting minutes

Motion:

Chairman Miltich made a motion to the Board to approve the consent agenda item by acclamation unless at least one opposing vote is cast. No opposing vote was cast. Upon being put to a vote, the motion to adopt the consent agenda was approved by acclamation.

6. 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan

Presenter: Neil Burke

Summary:

Mr. Burke provided information to the Board via a Power Point presentation, the contents of which are incorporated into the minutes.

The presentation’s purpose was to update the Board regarding the activities of the Roadway Ranking Review Committee’s (RRRC) effort to develop the draft fiscally constrained roadway project list. He explained that the RRRC is a subcommittee of TCC members. The RRRC has met three times thus far to validate the Tier I scores, determine the cutoff for Tier II scores, and begin the Tier II scoring process. Mr. Burke explained that the Draft Tier I scores for roadway projects were attached to the Board agenda and can be viewed [here](#).

He also discussed the Active Transportation element of the plan. He stated that this is a new element of the MTP and is used to identify corridors and not specific projects that may benefit from active transportation

enhancements based upon the draft criteria. He explained feedback from the Bicycle and Pedestrian Work Group informed the draft criteria.

He concluded the presentation by stating that the RRRC will work to develop a draft fiscally constrained roadway project list that will be presented to the Board during the June meeting for consideration of opening a public comment period.

7. CRTPO Strategic Plan

Presenter:

Robert Cook

Summary:

Mr. Cook provided information to the Board via a Power Point presentation, the contents of which are incorporated into the minutes. The presentation's purpose was to provide an update on the Strategic Plan development process. He began by explaining the origin of the plan was based upon a recommendation within the CRTPO Staffing and Resources Study (2019). Mr. Cook then discussed the purpose of the plan and how it will be utilized within the CRTPO. The Strategic Plan elements were reviewed which include the development of a mission statement, vision statement, goals and strategies. The first staff workshop was held on April 7 to review the survey results to develop potential strategies. A second staff workshop will be held on May 4 to develop the draft strategies. A steering committee workshop will also be held in May to review and consider the draft strategies. Mr. Cook concluded his presentation by stating that the Board will be requested to adopt the Strategic Plan in the summer of 2021.

8. Beyond 77 Corridor Study

Presenters:

Agustin Rodriguez

Adam Howell, Atkins

Summary:

Mr. Rodriguez and Mr. Howell provided information to the Board via a Power Point presentation, the contents of which are incorporated into the minutes. The presentation's purpose was to provide an update to the Board on the Beyond 77 corridor study.

Mr. Rodriguez began his presentation by reviewing the past milestones and upcoming project phases. The project is currently in Phase III and this phase of the study is focused on the identification of transportation solutions and soliciting comments on those proposed options.

Mr. Howell stated that Phase III of engagement for the Beyond 77 Corridor study began on April 1 and will conclude on May 15. Residents are encouraged to take the Phase III [survey](#). A Beyond 77 virtual public meeting was held this morning that featured former U.S. Department of Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx as a keynote speaker and over 70 residents participated. A second Beyond 77 public workshop is scheduled for May 13 and will feature Mayor Pro-Tem William Morgan of Statesville and Charlotte Council Member Braxton Winston.

Mr. Howell reviewed the public engagement goal tracking by stating that nearly all of the engagement strategies have exceeded their goals set at the beginning of the planning effort. Mr. Howell concluded the presentation by stating that the next steps will be to review the engagement feedback, finalize analyses on funding alternatives, and the development of an implementation plan.

9. Upcoming Agenda Items

Presenter:

Neil Burke

Summary:

An overview of the May 19, 2021 agenda was provided. The May 2021 Board agenda will include an update on the 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan.

Mr. Burke provided the following announcements:

- April 15 was the annual filing deadline for the State Ethics Commission documents for the voting members of the Board. 36 of the 45 voting members have successfully filed the documents prior to the deadline. Board members that have not filed their forms have a grace period until June 15 before the State Ethics Commission can levy fines.
- Theo Thomson was thanked for her contributions as today is Administrative Professionals Day.

10. Board Member Comments

Presenter:

Michael Miltich

Chairman Miltich asked Loretta Barren about the process for evaluating the left lane truck restriction along I-77 as mentioned during the public comment period by Mr. Kubiniec. Ms. Barren responded to explain that the number of lanes and traffic volume would need to be analyzed to determine if this concept is feasible in this location. Ultimately, the heavy truck restriction would require approval of the FHWA. Ms. Barren referenced the I-40 corridor near Raleigh that currently has a left lane truck restriction, however; this segment has at least three lanes in each direction. North of I-485, I-77 only has two general purpose travel lanes in each direction. Warren Cooksey of the NC Turnpike Authority explained that there is currently a heavy truck restriction in the left lanes of I-77 between uptown Charlotte and the South Carolina State Line. This segment has three lanes in each direction. Mr. Cooksey suggested that NCDOT study this concept north of uptown Charlotte in conjunction with FHWA.

Mayor Higdon expressed frustration with NCDOT regarding a proposal to hire a consultant to value engineer the Independence Boulevard project (U-2509/U-6103) following the presentation to the Board during the March meeting regarding the corridor improvement strategy that assumed project segmentation and a completion date of 2038. He stated that the Matthews and Charlotte have been reserving right-of-way for this project throughout the past 30 years. He explained that this project will do more than improve vehicular traffic flow. It will also enhance the corridor by providing complete streets components. Mayor Higdon questioned how NCDOT made the decision to pause the project, and the number of other projects throughout North Carolina that are being considered for value engineering. He encouraged NCDOT to keep the stakeholder staff involved in this project moving forward.

Stephen Rosenburgh stated that NCDOT is considering value engineering concepts for all of its 1,700 active projects. He explained that NCDOT lacks the funds to deliver these projects as they are currently scoped today. Mr. Rosenburgh reminded the Board that the project is not being shelved; rather, NCDOT will look at a level of service that improves the road in a more efficient way.

Brett Canipe explained that NCDOT's finances are plateauing if not decreasing. He stated that NCDOT would rather not continually delay project schedules but re-evaluate the purpose and need of the project relative to the scope and address the most critical issues. Mr. Canipe confirmed that the staff stakeholder committee will be included in the re-evaluation of the U-2509 project.

Mayor Pro-Tem Eiselt stated that she was a member of the NC First Commission and explained that she has not seen any feedback from the General Assembly on the recommendations from the commission. She referenced

the recommended increase of NCDOT's revenue by \$2 billion. Mayor Pro-Tem Eiselt suggested that the Board may want to consider developing recommendations on increased revenue generation for the members of the General Assembly to consider.

Mr. Rosenburgh explained that members of the NC Board of Transportation have met with the transportation chairs of the General Assembly to discuss the issue of increasing revenue for transportation projects this week. He reassured the Board that the General Assembly is discussing the issue of additional revenue, but he doesn't expect them to approve a \$2 billion increase. Mr. Rosenburgh stated that he doesn't believe that the General Assembly will want to raise taxes this year.

11. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 7:37 p.m.