

CHARLOTTE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center, Room 267
April 24, 2024 Meeting
Summary Minutes

Members Attending:

Michael Osborne (Cornelius), Rusty Knox (Davidson), Nick Walsh (Huntersville), Ernestine Staton (Marshville), Jamie Lein (Marvin), Renee Garner (Matthews), Leigh Altman (Mecklenburg County), John Higdon (Metropolitan Transit Commission) Fredrick Becker (Mineral Springs), Surluta Anthony (Monroe), Lisa Qualls (Mooresville), Tony Lathrop (NCBOT-Division 10), Brad Lail (NCBOT-Division 12), Amelia Stinson-Wesley (Pineville), Brad Richardson (Stallings), Teross Young (Troutman), Robert Murray (Waxhaw), Jim Bell (Weddington)

Non-Voting Members Attending:

Chuck Travis (NC Turnpike Authority)

1. Call to Order

Chair Lisa Qualls called the April 2024 CRTPO Board meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. She acknowledged the lack of a quorum and stated that no vote will be taken on the consent agenda items, but the meeting will proceed as usual otherwise if enough members are agreeable. No members objected.

2. Adoption of the Agenda

Summary:

Chair Qualls stated that NCDOT has requested to add an I-77 Corridor Update to the agenda. The agenda was approved by affirmation of the existing members with the addition of the NCDOT I-77 Corridor update as item #12. A vote to formally ratify the amended agenda will be placed on the consent agenda for the May 15 Board meeting.

3. Public Comment Period

There were no public comments.

4. Ethics Awareness & Conflict of Interest Reminder

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

5. Consent Agenda

Summary:

Chair Qualls deferred action on the following four consent agenda items to the May 15 Board meeting provided a quorum is achieved.

- a) March 20, 2024 CRTPO Board Meeting Minutes
- b) 2024-2033 TIP Amendments
- c) Transfer of Planning Responsibilities Memorandum of Agreement – Cabarrus Rowan MPO
- d) Transfer of Planning Responsibilities Memorandum of Agreement – Gaston-Cleveland-Lincoln MPO

6. Project Spotlight: East-West Connector

Presenter:

Lisa Qualls and Jonathan Young, Mooresville

Summary:

Information was provided to the Board via a Power Point presentation, the contents of which are incorporated into the minutes.

Chair Qualls stated that the presentation's purpose was to inform the Board of the project development process for the first phase of the East-West Connector in Mooresville. Mr. Young stated that the Town began construction of the first phase of the East-West Connector project between Langtree Road and NC 115 in January. The planning process began in 2009 when the Town completed an alignment study for the roadway. The East-West Connector project is included within the CRTPO's CTP and 2050 MTP as a fiscally constrained project in the 2025 horizon year. Mr. Young explained that the town has obtained a combination of \$39 million in project funding from CRTPO, federal and state funding sources. The project consists of 1.7 miles of three new roadways, bicycle/pedestrian improvements, and intersection improvements at NC 115 and the new East-West Connector intersection. Mr. Young stated that it is anticipated that the project will be complete in the fall of 2026.

7. 2026-2035 TIP Development Process (NCDOT Prioritization 7.0)

Presenters:

Travis Johnson and Neil Burke

Summary:

Information was provided to the Board via a Power Point presentation, the contents of which are incorporated into the minutes.

Mr. Burke began the presentation by providing an overview as to how the CRTPO is involved in the NCDOT Prioritization 7.0 (P7.0) process to develop the 2026-2035 STIP. He stated that the CRTPO Board had approved the submission of roadway, bicycle/pedestrian, transit, rail and aviation projects in August 2023 for evaluation by NCDOT in the P7.0 process. The next phase of P7.0 will be for CRTPO to allocate its local input points to projects based upon an approved methodology.

Mr. Johnson provided an overview of the P7.0 local input point public engagement processes for Regional Impact (May-August) and Division Needs (September-November) tier projects. He then presented educational information to demonstrate the allocation of local input points within the P7.0 process. NCDOT will initiate this process in late May with the release of the programmed Statewide Mobility projects in the Draft 2026-2035 TIP, and the quantitative scores for all projects submitted in P7.0.

An overview of the CRTPO's local input points methodology was provided. Highway projects are prioritized in consideration of local input points primarily by its MTP score and horizon year, with a secondary measure being the NCDOT quantitative score. Non-Highway projects are prioritized by its NCDOT quantitative score. Mr. Johnson concluded the presentation by reviewing an inventory of the locations of the CRTPO projects that are under evaluation in P7.0

8. 2055 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 provide the Board with an overview of the efforts to prepare the 2055 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). It was noted that since the 2050 MTP was adopted in March 2022, there had been a significant change to the board's membership. Background on the basic elements of an MTP was provided. In addition to adopting the plan in March 2022, the board will be asked to take action on components leading up to adoption, including changes (if any) to the roadway ranking methodology, goals and objectives, a financial plan, etc. An Advisory Committee has been established to provide input on critical issues.

Because of the scope and complexities of developing an MTP, a consulting firm was selected to assist in the plan's preparation. Mr. Burke concluded his presentation by stating that a public engagement campaign is scheduled to begin next month for the MTP.

9. **CRTPO Safe Streets & Roads for All (SS4A) Application**

Presenters: Will Snyder and Brian Elgort

Summary:

Information was provided to the Board via a Power Point presentation, the contents of which are incorporated into the minutes.

Mr. Elgort began the presentation by stating that the purpose was to provide information on the process for CRTPO staff to prepare an application for an Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act (IIJA) 2024 Safe Streets & Roads for All (SS4A) grant. The focus of the SS4A program is to Improve roadway safety for all users by reducing and eliminating serious-injury and fatal crashes. An overview of the three SS4A grant types designed to focus on planning, safety, and implementation were reviewed.

Mr. Snyder stated that a grant strategy survey was distributed to TCC members in November 2023 with the goal of identifying eligible IIJA grant programs. In total, 28 responses were received from 19 jurisdictions, with bicycle/pedestrian safety and traffic safety identified as the top two priorities. Mr. Elgort highlighted the benefits that the SS4A grant application would have for member jurisdictions which include compatibility with the RAISE grant submitted by CRTPO in February, allowance for demonstration projects, cost savings by having CRTPO as the applicant and linkages to Vision Zero plans throughout the planning area.

Mr. Elgort stated that the total grant request was \$5 million, with \$4 million (80%) representing the federally funded share; a commitment from NCDOT of \$500,000 (10%), and the remaining match (10%) consisting of in-kind match from the member jurisdictions based upon the cost share formula within the CRTPO MOU. Local in-kind match can consist of staff time, facility rates, and material costs. Mr. Elgort concluded the presentation by stating that action will be requested of the Board to endorse a resolution in support of the SS4A application during the May 15 meeting.

10. **CONNECT Beyond**

Presenter:

Jason Wager & Andy Grzymiski, Centralina Regional Council

Summary:

Information was provided to the Board via a Power Point presentation, the contents of which are incorporated into the minutes.

Mr. Wager shared key updates on the CONNECT Beyond project with a focus on current implementation activities, including an update on the Advancing the Plan Committee and the Committee's 2024 goals and workplan.

The Advancing the Plan Committee is an official ad-hoc Centralina advisory committee to advance the implementation of the CONNECT Beyond plan. Throughout 2023, the Committee met to develop a regional model for how our region can coordinate on mobility issues. They engaged on implementation activities, developed guiding principles for regional collaboration, and identified a preferred model for regional collaboration. Committee goals for 2024 include refining the regional coordination model to strengthen broader support and incorporate local input; championing short-term wins for regional collaboration and support CONNECT Beyond implementation; and advocating and collaborating with local, state, federal, and business community partners to advance the next steps for regional coordination.

The presentation concluded with updates on Transportation Demand Management, seamless connections for transit, and the establishment of the Centralina Integrated Mobility Center. Mr. Wager introduced Andy Grzynski to discuss his role with the Centralina Integrated Mobility Center and how they plan to move major regional priority projects forward to implementation.

11. Beyond 77 Alternative Funding Report

Presenters:

Brian Powers, RS&H

Summary:

Information was provided to the Board via a Power Point presentation, the contents of which are incorporated into the minutes.

Mr. Powers began the presentation by stating that the purpose of the Beyond 77 funding report was to further investigate one of the highest prioritized strategies and solutions identified by the implementation task force. The objectives were to gain familiarity and understanding of the sources identified in the study, identify most feasible funding sources based upon feedback and develop documentation for the Beyond 77 Funding Alternatives Strategies Tool (FAST).

Mr. Powers provided an overview of the engagement efforts which included focus group and task force meetings as well as presentations to the TCC and Board throughout 2023. Next, he provided an overview of the four recommended funding alternatives; their current rates; and revenue generation potential throughout the planning area. The four recommended funding sources are: Sales tax; Motor Fuels Sales tax; Motor Vehicle Sales tax; and Vehicle Registration Fee. Implementation of these funding alternatives would require legislative, county, and voter approval. Mr. Powers concluded his presentation by providing an overview of the proposed Beyond 77 Regional Coalition.

12. NCDOT I-77 Corridor Update

Presenters:

Brett Canipe, NCDOT

Summary:

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

He began the presentation by providing an overview of the history of the express lanes project along the I-77 South corridor between Uptown Charlotte and the South Carolina State Line. He explained that this project has been included in the CRTPO's 2050 MTP and is a current project (I-5718) in NCDOT's 2024-2033 STIP. Within the STIP, the I-5718 project is funded for preliminary engineering only. The corridor cap provision within STI was explained, and the limit for any Statewide Mobility corridor in the 2024-2033 STIP is approximately \$630 million.

Mr. Canipe stated that the CRTPO Board approved NCDOT undertaking a comparative analysis to analyze a traditional project delivery method within the STIP against a public-private-partnership delivery during the February 15, 2023 meeting. He reviewed the steps of the comparative analysis and subsequently provided an overview of the traditional toll delivery and public-private-partnership delivery methods.

An overview of the existing I-77 North express lanes was provided. This corridor is a P3 with the I-77 Mobility Partners (I-77MP) for 26-miles of Express Lanes from Exit 11 (Brookshire Freeway) to Exit 36 (NC 150). The total project cost was \$647 million with approximately \$100 million cost to NCDOT. Construction began in November of 2015 throughout the corridor. The section of express lanes north of I-485 opened in June 2019, and the section south of I-485 opened in November 2019.

He explained that I-77MP plans to issue private debt to repay total outstanding balance of the Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) loan. The Remaining proceeds will be used to pay a one-time distribution to shareholders. Refinancing results in the I-77MP waiving any rights to the Developer Ratio Adjustment Mechanism (DRAM) in the amount of \$75 million. Mr. Canipe stated that the potential refinancing gain may be shared with NCDOT.

Mr. Canipe provided an update on the extended vehicle pilot program along the I-77 express lanes north of Uptown Charlotte. He explained that a three-year pilot program has recently ended, and NCDOT has negotiated a short-term extension of the pilot with the I-77 Mobility Partners (I-77MP) for seven months. The short-term extension will allow time to negotiate a long-term agreement with the I-77MP. Mr. Canipe explained that allowing extended vehicles to use the express lanes makes additional capacity available within the I-77 general purpose lanes.

He concluded the presentation by stating that I-77MP have responded to CRTPO Board member's questions regarding the use of heavy vehicles and tractor trailers within the express lanes. The I-77MP would be open to the inclusion of tractor-trailers and other heavy vehicles of more than two axles in the future; however, another managed lane in each direction may need to be constructed in order to increase the safety and functionality of the entire corridor.

13. Upcoming Agenda Items

Presenter:

Neil Burke

Summary:

The May 15 CRTPO Board agenda will include the following items:

Action items:

- 2055 MTP Open Public Comment Period on Updates to Goals and Objectives
- SS4A Application – Endorsement of In-Kind Matching
- April 24 2024 Consent Agenda Items
- Ratification of actions taken to amend agenda for NCDOT I-77 Corridor Update during tonight's meeting in absence of a quorum

Information Reports:

- CRTPO Memorandum of Understanding Update
- Project Spotlight – Troutman Mobility Plan
- NCDOT Update/I-77 Corridor

Announcements:

The June Board meeting date has been moved from the third to the fourth Wednesday in observance of the Juneteenth holiday. Board members are advised to make Mr. Burke aware of any conflict that would prevent them from attending the June 26 CRTPO meeting.

April 15 was the annual filing deadline for the State Ethics Commission documents for the voting members of the Board. 32 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.

Brian Elgort has been appointed as an emerging professional with the Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (AMPO) Technical Committee. The AMPO Technical Committee addresses the technical needs of

MPOs through sub-committees and research programs. It works with the US DOT to identify MPO training needs and disseminate information on new technology, planning tools, and design concepts.

Theo Thomson was thanked for her contributions as today is Administrative Professionals Day.

14. Board Member Comments

Presenter:

Lisa Qualls

Summary:

Brad Richardson announced that an MOU subcommittee comprised of Chair Qualls, David Jones, Renee Garner, and Ed Driggs will meet on April 30 to review the preliminary recommendations from Attorney Mujeeb-Shah Khan regarding technical amendments to the CRTPO's MOU. He anticipates that an information item on Attorney Shah-Khan's findings will be placed on the May 15 Board meeting.

Tony Lathrop announced that the finance committee of the North Carolina Board of Transportation met today to discuss project cost escalation. The finance committee will present its final recommendation NCBOT on a 3-7% per project inflation rate to be applied to each project in the upcoming 2026-2035 STIP during the May meeting.

Lisa Qualls announced that staff is preparing funding allocation letters for each jurisdiction to identify the projects and total amount of discretionary grant funding awarded between 2019 and 2023.

15. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 8:41 p.m.