

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

**TECHNICAL COMMITTEE**

**July 22, 2015**

**MINUTES OF MEETING**

The Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization Technical Committee met on July 22, 2015 at 9:00 a.m. in the City Council Committee on the second floor of Durham City Hall. The following attended:

Mark Ahrendsen (Chair)	City of Durham Transportation
David Bonk (TC Vice-Chair)	Chapel Hill Planning
Bergen Watterson (Member)	Carrboro Planning
Christina Moon (Member)	Carrboro Planning
Kumar Neppalli (Member)	Chapel Hill Engineering
Hannah Jacobson (Member)	Durham City/County Planning
Laura Woods (Member)	Durham City/County Planning
Scott Whiteman (Member)	Durham City/County Planning
Ellen Beckmann (Member)	City of Durham Transportation
Margaret Hauth(Member)	Hillsborough Planning
Bret Martin (Member)	Orange County Planning
Tom Altieri (Member)	Orange County Planning
John Hodges-Copple (Member)	Triangle J Council of Governments
Patrick McDonough (Member)	GoTriangle
Kelly Becker (Member)	NCDOT, Traffic Operations
Than Austin	The University of North Carolina
Linda T. Wallace	Durham County Access
Tammy Bouchelle	GoTriangle
Natalie Murdock	GoTriangle
Donnie Brew	FHWA
Geoff Green (Alternate)	GoTriangle
Lisa Jemison (Alternate)	Research Triangle Foundation
Ed Lewis (Alternate)	NCDOT, Division 7
Darius Sturdivant (Alternate)	NCDOT, Division 8
Dale McKeel	City of Durham/DCHC MPO
Felix Nwoko	DCHC MPO
Andy Henry	DCHC MPO
Lindsay Smart	DCHC MPO
Brian Rhodes	DCHC MPO
Kosok Chae	DCHC MPO
John Kent	Citizen
Lauren Hirsch	Herald Sun

Quorum Count: 18 of 31 Voting Members

Chair Mark Ahrendsen called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. A roll call was performed. The Voting Members and Alternate Voting Members of the DCHC MPO TC were identified and are indicated above. Chair Mark Ahrendsen reminded everyone to sign-in using the sign-in sheet that was being circulated.

**PRELIMINARIES:**

**Adjustments to the Agenda**

Chair Mark Ahrendsen asked if there were any adjustments to the agenda. There were no adjustments to the agenda.

**Public Comments**

Chair Mark Ahrendsen asked if there were any members of the public signed up to speak. There were no members of the public signed up to speak during the meeting.

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

**4. Approval of May June 24, 2015 Meeting Minutes**

Chair Mark Ahrendsen asked if there were any discussion, comments and suggested revisions to the June 24, 2015 meeting minutes. Bret Martin stated that he wanted a correction made on page 7 line 170. Bret Martin stated that clarification was needed regarding the \$40,000 minimum project cost. The \$40,000 minimum cost requirement was just a minimum for public transportation projects and not for other modes. Chair Mark Ahrendsen asked if there were any other corrections to the minutes. Chair Mark Ahrendsen asked for a motion to approve June 24, 2015 meeting minutes as amended. Tom Altieri made a motion to approve the minutes as amended from the June 24, 2015 MPO TC meeting and Patrick McDonough seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

**ACTION ITEMS:****5. 2015-2016 UPWP Amendments Schedule and Grant Reporting Due Dates****Meg Scully, LPA****Felix Nwoko, LPA**

Felix Nwoko spoke in Meg Scully's absence concerning the review of proposed UPWP amendment schedule and grant reporting deadlines for FY2015-2016. Felix Nwoko stated that he was just sharing information with members so that they would be aware of the schedule and due dates. Felix Nwoko stated that Meg Scully will be sending out reminders. Chair Mark Ahrendsen asked if there were any questions concerning the schedules and due dates. Chair Mark Ahrendsen asked Felix Nwoko if the information he gave was just to make everyone aware of the schedule and due dates or if a formal action by the MPO TC was needed. Felix Nwoko replied that the information was provided just for informational purposes and no action was required. There were no more questions.

**6. SPOT 4.0 Existing Projects, New Interchanges/Intersections and DCHC PMO Local Ranking****Methodology Recommendations from Subcommittee****Lindsay Smart, LPA Staff**

Lindsay Smart gave a presentation on the state's Project Prioritization Process (aka SPOT) for the FY2018-2027 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Lindsay Smart started with a review of the key project types, explaining how the Prioritization 3.0 (P3.0) projects carried over to the 4.0 process in the SPOT database. Lindsay stated that in the SPOT 4.0 database, there are some projects listed as "Committed" projects, which means that right-of-way or construction for the projects are programmed in the STIP through year 2020. "Holding Tank" projects are projects that will be removed from the database at a later date, unless the MPO decides to make a modification to one of those projects and resubmit it as a "New" project. Lindsay Smart stated that Holding Tank projects will permanently be deleted from the database at a later date.

Lindsay Smart stated that there are five criteria NCDOT SPOT offices uses to determine and define the “Existing” projects. The Existing projects are programmed in the STIP after year 2020. If the project is a sibling of a Committed project, it is considered an Existing project. The NCDOT SPOT office further clarified that a project is classified as a sibling project if it can be included in the same environmental document as a Committed project. The project will also be considered an Existing project if an environmental document was underway or if the project was actively being worked before the draft FY2016-2025 STIP was released in December 2014. Finally, a project would be considered an Existing project if the project received local input points during P3.0. Patrick McDonough asked for clarification as to if a project had to meet one or all of those criteria. Lindsay Smart stated that a project only had to meet one of the criteria. Lindsay Smart asked if there were any questions about the four definitions of projects that she would be discussing.

Lindsay Smart stated that the DCHC MPO's subcommittee met on July 13, 2015 to review and to discuss several topics related to the commencement of P4.0. During the meeting, the subcommittee reviewed the NCDOT's P4.0 schedule and determined a tentative schedule of subcommittee meetings at key decision-making points during the P4.0 process. The subcommittee reviewed, discussed, and prepared a draft list of modifications to Existing projects and proposed deletions of Existing projects. Subcommittee meeting follow-up actions items included each jurisdiction preparing a preliminary a list of new intersection/interchange projects and the subcommittee discussing the MPO's proposed methodology for internally prioritizing projects for submission to P4.0. The SPOT 4.0 subcommittee recommendation was for the MPO TC to review and discuss the proposed list of project modifications and deletions and new interchange/ intersection projects. The subcommittee also recommended that the MPO TC review and discuss the DCHC MPO's proposed methodology for internally prioritizing projects for submission to P4.0.

David Bonk asked if the preliminary lists are to be prepared and submitted by September 1st, when will the final lists be submitted? Lindsay Smart stated that the preliminary list of intersections and interchanges will be submitted by September 1st and any New intersection or interchange projects will be submitted in October as part of the New highway project submittal. David Bonk asked if any New submittals will be counted against the fourteen highway projects that the MPO is allotted and Lindsay Smart said yes. Ed Lewis stated that NCDOT was told that modifications would not count as part as the fourteen new projects. Ellen Beckman requested a deletion of Blackwell and Magnum grade separation from the intersection project list. Bergen Watterson asked if we can submit new highway projects after September 1st. Lindsay Smart stated yes, and that official new projects would be submitted in October, but no specific date has been set yet by NCDOT. David Bonk stated make that we should say interchange improvements in I-40 project, not intersection changes to I-40 so that it would be clear. Chair Mark Ahrendsen stated that the project description should be changed to interchange/intersection. Bret Martin asked if the project could be split and would that count as two New projects. Ellen Beckman stated splitting a project into two segments is just a modification and does not count as a New project submittal.

Lindsay Smart asked if the interchange for I-85 and South Churton Street should be split out of the Existing project and evaluated as a separate project. Ed Lewis stated that the proposed four-lane divided highway will continue under the interchange and will impact the interchange. Whether or not NCDOT improves the whole interchange will impact the budget for the highway project. NCDOT is looking at interchange projects on I-85 as well. Projects in that vicinity need to be coordinated. Patrick McDonough asked when a cost estimate will be needed for the interchanges. Ed Lewis stated that if there is no reliable estimate, the SPOT Online system will create a cost estimate. David Bonk asked if there will be a modification to the Fordham Blvd corridor description. Ellen Beckmann stated that it is already a standalone project.

141 Lindsay Smart stated that the next project to discuss was the changing of the termini for the  
142 US 70 highway project. Lindsay Smart presented the proposed changes and asked if there were any  
143 questions or discussion about the modification. There were no questions asked.

144 Lindsay Smart moved on to the next project, NC 54 modifications and improvements.  
145 Lindsay Smart asked if the NC 54 project should be split into two projects. David Bonk stated that  
146 they do not have the BRT report yet, so it is hard to describe transit accommodations and could  
147 make changes later. Bret Martin asked when Chapel Hill will know more details about the transit  
148 accommodations. Lindsay Smart stated that DCHC MPO Board needs to know for August meeting.  
149 David Bonk and Patrick McDonough agreed to discuss appropriate language for the transit  
150 accommodations description and provide the language to Lindsay Smart. Bret Martin stated the NC  
151 54 project should not be split. Ellen Beckmann stated that rail will not maintain grading. Patrick  
152 McDonough stated that it would be a part of Piedmont Improvements. John Hodges-Copple stated  
153 that we should see how it gets scored and process wise, why remove the project if there is no need  
154 to remove it. Ellen Beckmann stated to use a rail submission that deletes it to see how it scores.

155 Lindsay Smart continued to discuss the list of projects. David Bonk stated the MPO TC and  
156 Board would ultimately have to decide which projects to submit and which projects should not be  
157 submitted. Lindsay Smart stated that the MPO has until the September MPO Technical Committee  
158 meeting to make the determination. David Bonk stated that the NCDOT should tell us the  
159 preliminary scores for at least the intersection and interchange projects before we decide. Ed Lewis  
160 stated that submitting the intersection and interchange projects now gives NCDOT a head start but  
161 not enough time to completely score so NCDOT would not be able to provide preliminary scores  
162 before the September TC meeting. David Bonk asked Patrick McDonough if the Gateway TIA have  
163 any significant traffic improvements. Patrick McDonough stated that he did not believe that traffic  
164 improvements were listed.

Lindsay Smart went over proposed process to select New projects. Lindsay Smart stated that the submission of the New projects in each mode would be broken down into allotments for each jurisdiction. Each jurisdiction would be allowed to submit four New projects and Durham County and the City of Durham would be able to submit eight. Ellen Beckmann stated that Durham plus Durham County represent more than 60% of the MPO population. And if there are four small jurisdictions of Orange County which gets four submissions, that would make sixteen projects. If the City of Durham gets eight and Durham County gets four that would only be twelve projects. That would be geographically unequal against the population share. Ellen Beckmann suggested that Durham County and Durham City both should get eight projects, so Orange County does not have more; being that Durham City is 60% of population. David Bonk stated that this issue has always been bounced around. Chair Mark Ahrendsen takes a consensus to go forward with giving the City of Durham eight and Durham County eight. There were no objections. Lindsay Smart stated that once MPO staff receives New projects from each jurisdiction and agency, MPO staff will attempt to score the projects based on P4.0 criteria.

Lindsay Smart stated that MPO subcommittee members should bring project lists to the subcommittee meeting on August 17<sup>th</sup> to discuss and exchange if there are any available, unused slots. There was a question regarding how many projects were given per mode. John Hodges-Copple stated that each Division may submit seven new projects in each mode and the DCHC MPO may submit 14 new projects in each mode.

Patrick McDonough asked how do non-highway technology projects get STIP funding. Lindsay Smart stated that she would have to ask SPOT office that question. Ellen Beckmann asked how the MPO will do the preliminary scores next month, since we do not have data right now. Lindsay Smart stated that they would rely on getting the data from the jurisdictions. Ellen Beckmann stated that some on the criteria has completely changed, not so much for the highways but for

transit. Ellen Beckmann stated that this would be a lot of work in such a short timeframe. David Bonk asked several questions on transit scoring that Patrick McDonough answered. Patrick McDonough advised that they would need to meet with Craig Hughes to answer most of the questions. Ellen Beckmann discussed the DCHC MPO having twenty-five transit project submittals for internal scoring to cover the 14 SPOT submittals and the Divisions will have seven each so perhaps each transit operator should submit 10 projects. Bret Martin stated that Orange Public Transit (OPT) will not submit this time, but will keep their five slots for future use. Patrick McDonough stated that the GoTriangle should be included with the P4.0 discussions for new rail projects.

David Bonk made a motion to recommend that the MPO Board approve the modifications, proposed deletions, intersection and interchange projects and the MPO's internal methodology for prioritizing projects with the revisions from the Technical Committee incorporated. The motion was seconded by Margaret Hauth and carried unanimously. Lindsay Smart ended the discussion by reminding subcommittee members to come to the subcommittee meeting on August 17, 2015 with lists of new projects already prepared. This will help MPO staff prepare preliminary scores and have a tentative list of prioritized projects ready for September meeting.

**7. Resolution to Request Transfer of STP-DA Funds from FHWA to FTA**

**Meg Scully, LPA**

**Felix Nwoko, LPA**

Felix Nwoko discussed the TC's approval and recommendation that the MPO Board approve the resolution to transfer STP-DA funds from FHWA to FTA. This request is made on behalf of transit agencies; the Lead Planning Agency is requesting the transfer of STP-DA funds from FHWA to FTA for use on transit projects. This resolution supports the transfer for the Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro urban area.



Chair Mark Ahrendsen asked for a motion for the approval of flexing the requested funds.

David Bonk made the motion to approve the flexing of STP-DA funds and Patrick McDonough

seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

#### **8. 2015 FHWA and FTA TMA Certification Review**

**Felix Nwoko, LPA Staff**

**Lindsay Smart, LPA Staff**

Felix Nwoko discussed the 2015 FHWA and FTA TMA Certification Review. The 2015 review consisted of a desk audit, a public comment session was conducted on Thursday, May 21, 2015, and an on-site review was conducted on May 21 - 22, 2015. 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 provides a major source of information upon which to base certification findings. After the on-site review was completed, a draft report was prepared by FHWA to document the findings and then provided to the DCHC MPO staff for review and comment. Felix Nwoko stated that August 27, 2015 is the final deadline to submit factual verification corrections and comments to FHWA. Felix Nwoko would like for the MPO TC to submit their comments to Lindsay Smart by Monday so that there will be time for follow-up.

#### **9. Public Involvement Schedule & Activity Coordination for D-O LRT**

**Andy Henry, LPA Staff**

**Tammy Bouchelle, GoTriangle**

Andy Henry stated that DCHC MPO will need to conduct public involvement activities to review and approve the draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Durham-Orange Light Rail Transit Project (D-O LRT). Andy Henry reviewed the schedule of the different tasks and key discussion points from a recent meeting. Andy Henry discussed the key points about the 45-day comment period. Simultaneously, GoTriangle will implement a public involvement process for the DEIS in fall 2015. The activities of these agencies, as well as those of the local governments, will need to be coordinated to

239 avoid confusing the public and creating barriers or delays in the Federal Transit Administration (FTA)  
240 review process. Andy Henry stated that the public should be reminded that during the 45-day comment  
241 period meetings, that the public comments must be submitted to GoTriangle to be incorporated into the  
242 final EIS.

243 Chair Mark Ahrendsen asked for clarification about the proper channels. Tammy Bouchelle,  
244 GoTriangle, led a brief discussion on public comment versus public hearing and explained the FTA  
245 requires GoTriangle to follow specific channels for receiving public comment. The public comment  
246 period will be open for 45-days instead of the typical 30-day period to get robust participation from  
247 the public. GoTriangle will use email, the project website, and public hearings which will be held in  
248 Durham and Chapel Hill to solicit public input. MPO Board comments are for MPO member  
249 comments only and should be separate from the public's comments on the D-O LRT. The processes  
250 will have to be kept separate so that there will be no confusion in the official channels. The functions  
251 sponsored by GoTriangle will be considered hearings and the MPO Board meetings will be open for  
252 the public comments. Citizens will be reminded about the DEIS process. Andy Henry discussed the  
253 support of the MPO for the alignment and maintenance facility. David Bonk stated some of his  
254 concerns about the alignment and maintenance facility. Patrick McDonough and Tammy Bouchelle  
255 offered additional clarification on the process. Andy Henry stated that there will be no major issues  
256 with coordinating the simultaneous processes for the DEIS and he noted the handout of the D-O LRT  
257 Review Process.

258 **10. Mobility Report Card**

259 **Andy Henry, LPA Staff**

260 **Kosok Chae, LPA Staff**

261 Andy Henry stated that the action item is to receive the 2014 Mobility Report Card, provide any  
262 comments, and recommend that the MPO Board release the document for a minimum 21-day public  
263 comment period. We usually do a full 30-day period to allow a month timespan between the MPO

Board meetings. The draft would be on the August MPO Board meeting agenda for review and release for public comment. The MPO Board can have a public hearing in mid-September for the Report and make any changes. The final draft would be on the October MPO Board meeting agenda for adoption.

Andy Henry stated that the DCHC MPO released the Congestion Management Process - System Status Report 2014 for public comment in January 2015 and adopted the report in March 2015. The report provided the state of system performance and recommendations for future policy decisions. MPO staff have also been developing the 2014 Mobility Report Card with significant input from local partners. The Report Card provides detailed performance, safety, and activity data on the specific vehicle, transit, and bicycling and pedestrian facilities in the MPO area. In cases where consistent historical data is available, the Report Card provides a comparative analysis of the facility. A subcommittee met in May 2015 to provide comments on the draft Mobility Report Card. This draft of the Report Card includes changes based on the feedback from that subcommittee. Chair Mark Ahrendsen asked if there were any further questions or discussion. There was no further discussion. David Bonk made a motion to approve the recommendation that the MPO Board release the Mobility Report Card document for a minimum 21-day public comment period. The motion was seconded by Bret Martin. The motion carried unanimously.

## **REPORTS:**

### **11. Reports from the LPA Staff**

#### **Felix Nwoko, LPA Staff**

Felix Nwoko discussed the a recent MPO staff initiative to develop an image bank. MPO staff interns will be working on this project. They will develop a file bank that includes photos of the MPO activities in transportation. It will include photos of activities during the different months. The images will also capture the different groups and agencies that represent the MPO members. The image bank photos will tell the story of the MPO.

Felix Nwoko stated that the MPO staff needs feedback on the small locally managed projects to find out the status. Felix Nwoko stated that an STP-DA funded project update report will be shared with the TC and Felix Nwoko asked that people return the report with any updates. Felix Nwoko stated that the MPO policy is to spend the money within two years (two year grace period). The MPO staff will be providing updated information on project statuses more consistently to the MPO TC so that delays in project delivery can be discussed and overcome. Felix Nwoko stated that there would be a Freight Plan Kickoff meeting on Monday and that everyone was invited. It will start at 1:30.

Lindsay Smart stated that the MPO is developing an on-line database to help make up-to-date project-related information accessible to MPO members. Lindsay Smart showed the MPO TC members how to access the database through the MPO's website. Lindsay Smart asked that the local staff give feedback on their projects in the database so that if there are inaccuracies, MPO staff can make updates.

## **12. Report from the DCHC MPO TC Chair**

**Mark Ahrendsen, DCHC MPO TC Chair**

No report was offered by the TC Chair.

## **13. NCDOT Reports**

NCDOT Division 5 - No Report was offered by Division 5.

Ed Lewis, NCDOT Division 7, asked the TC to refer to handouts and stated that projects were all moving along pretty well. Ed Lewis asked if there were any questions. There was a question from the TC regarding the how long it would take to replace the traffic signal with the roundabout at the intersection of Rock Haven Road and Smith Level Road. Ed Lewis stated that work would start during September 2015 and work is expected to be completed in the summer of 2016.

NCDOT Division 8 - No Report was offered by Division 8.

312 Julie Bollinger, NCDOT Transportation Planning Branch – No report was offered by TPB.

313 Kelly Becker, NCDOT Traffic Operations – No Report was offered by Kelly Becker.

314 **INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:**

315 **14. Recent News, Articles, and Updates**

316 Drive Act summary. There was no discussion on this item; informational handouts are available  
317 on the MPO website.

318 **ADJOURNMENT:**

319 There being no further business before the DCHC MPO Technical Committee, the meeting was  
320 adjourned at 10:12.