



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

PAT MCCRORY  
GOVERNOR

ANTHONY J. TATA  
SECRETARY

April 29, 2015

The Honorable Mark Kleinschmidt  
Mayor, Town of Chapel Hill  
Chair, Durham/Chapel Hill Carrboro  
Metropolitan Planning Organization  
101 City Hall Plaza  
Durham, North Carolina 27701

Dear Mayor Kleinschmidt:

Thank you for your letter submitting your organization's comments on the Draft 2016-2025 State Transportation Improvement Program and Developmental Program. Please find enclosed a listing of your comments that incorporates the Department's response to each.

If you have any questions or comments regarding this response, please contact Mr. Alpesh Patel, Assistant Branch Manager at (919) 707-4613 or Mr. Mike Stanley, STIP Unit Manager at (919) 707-4642 in our Program Development Branch.

We appreciate your taking the time to outline your thoughts and concerns as we work toward adoption of a new STIP.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Calvin Leggett".

Calvin Leggett, PE  
Program Development Branch Manager

Enclosure

cc: Jeff Sheehan, North Carolina Board of Transportation Member  
Cheryl McQueary, North Carolina Board of Transportation Member  
Patrick Molamphy, North Carolina Board of Transportation Member  
Joey Hopkins, PE – NCDOT Division Five Engineer  
Mike Mills, PE – NCDOT Division Seven Engineer  
Rob Stone, PE – NCDOT Division Eight Engineer  
Mark Ahrendsen – DCHC MPO  
Lindsay Smart – DCHC MPO

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT BRANCH  
Room 105, Transportation Building  
1534 Mail Service Center  
Raleigh, NC 27699-1534

Telephone (919) 707-4610

FAX (919) 733-3585



bcc: Nick Tennyson, Chief Deputy Secretary  
Jeff Mann, Deputy Secretary for Transit  
Susan Pullium, Director of Strategic Planning  
Don Voelker, Director of the Prioritization Office  
Paul Worley, CPM, Director of Rail Division  
Jon Dees, Rail Freight Planning Consultant  
Lauren Blackburn, AICP, Director of Bicycle and Pedestrian  
Ed Johnson, RLA, Interim Assistant Director & Safe Routes to School Coordinator  
Debra Collins, Public Transportation Director  
Tamra Shaw, Public Transportation Division  
Patrick Norman PE, Transportation Planning Branch Manager  
Julie Bollinger, PE, Transportation Planning Branch  
Eric Midkiff, PE, Project Development Section Head  
Roger Thomas, PE, Assistant State Roadway Design Engineer  
Brandon Jones, PE, Deputy Division Engineer  
Mike Kneis, PE, Division Project Manager  
Ed Lewis, Division Planning Engineer  
Donnie Huffines, Division Project Manager  
Chuck Edwards, PE, District Engineer  
Darius Sturdivant, Division Planning Engineer  
Alison Kluttz, PE, Division Project Manager  
Chuck Dumas, Jr., PE, Division Operations Engineer  
Rick Lakata, PE, STIP Senior Program Engineer



## GENERAL COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

### 1. Strategic Transportation Investments (STI) law

The DCHC MPO Board appreciates the NCDOT Division Offices for working collaboratively to understand and adhere to the new STI prioritization and scoring process. The DCHC MPO Board recognizes that NCDOT's collaboration was not required through STI, but feels that the collaborative scoring process led to a more effective draft TIP outcome.

The DCHC MPO Board does not necessarily agree that the STI process fully captured the priorities of the DCHC MPO. The DCHC MPO worked closely with NCDOT within the STI process but feels that improvements could be made to the STI process to better reflect the values and priorities of the DCHC MPO region. In the future, it is requested that the DCHC MPO be included in the discussions regarding projects in the Statewide Mobility Category to ensure better consistency with the goals of the DCHC MPO Board and consistency with other adopted long range plans for the DCHC MPO area.

Projects funded in the Statewide Strategic Mobility category were funding based 100% on technical score. This comment may relate to prioritization, and will be shared with the Strategic Planning Office for Transportation (SPOT). The DCHC MPO's input into the Statewide eligibility category programming is reflected through their candidate submittals in this category.

### 2. Projects Programmed in the Developmental Program Years of the STIP

The DCHC MPO expresses concern regarding how many priority projects are programmed for the Developmental Program Years of the STIP. It is understood that many of the priority projects are programmed for later years in the STIP because feasibility studies and/or the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documents need to be completed. The DCHC MPO requests that NCDOT provide a schedule of feasibility studies and NEPA documents for these high priority projects so that the projects can move forward as soon as possible and avoid being subject to reprioritization.

Projects funded in the draft STIP will not be programmed for a feasibility study but will be scheduled for initiation of environmental studies in consultation with Preconstruction. The more complex a project and/or the less well understood the overall scope for the project, the longer a period of time has been allowed for the planning and design phases to occur. Preconstruction is working on project development schedules based on the draft STIP now and we expect some adjustments to be made to the program as a result.

### 3. Programming of Related Project Schedules

The DCHC MPO emphasizes the importance of appropriately scheduling projects and phases of projects that are related to each other. Appropriate schedules should be communicated to the Transportation Planning Branch. For example, the S. Churton Street widening project (#U-5845) is currently and appropriately scheduled after the Orange Grove Extension project (#U-5848) and this schedule should remain. However, the Hillsborough Passenger Rail Station project (#P-5701) is scheduled before Orange Grove Extension project (#U-5848). The schedule for the Hillsborough Passenger Rail Station should be reviewed and potentially revised depending on whether station access is provided for in the scope for



either project.

Where obvious overlaps or associations between STI projects were noted during the programming exercise, these have been taken into consideration. Tight time constraints in the programming phase precluded an exhaustive review of every project, but this will be closely coordinated as part of the review and scheduling of preconstruction activities. In the case of the above example, the proximity of the 2 roadway projects was noted during programming and a comment regarding coordination placed on each in the draft. A coordination comment will be added to both P-5701 and U-5848 referencing each other in the final STIP.

#### 4. Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) Funding

According to a recent review of the draft FY2016-2025 STIP, specifically performed by the Piedmont Triad Regional Council (PTRC), "\$53 million of bicycle and pedestrian projects have been programmed, of which \$5 million are leftover Safe Routes to School funds from SAFETEA-LU. If annual allotments of \$23 million/yr for Transportation Alternatives continue over the 2016-2025 time period from FHWA, it appears there will be a significant gap of over \$150 million of federal funds that could be prioritized and funded through different methods to fully leverage local match commitments on bicycle & pedestrian projects." (*Memo by Jesse Day, PTRC, dated December 16, 2014 is included with this letter.*)

Related to the memo from PTRC, the NCDOT SPOT presentation dated July 2014 states, "NCDOT may program an estimated \$10 million of TAP funds on bike/ped projects per fiscal year."

The DCHC MPO requests clarification on the programming and availability of TAP funding. If all TAP funding was not programmed in the draft STIP, why was it not all programed? If all TAP funding was not programmed in the draft STIP will additional TAP funding be programmed by NCDOT, or made available on a competitive basis?

TAP funds managed by NCDOT are subject to STI's Division Needs tier. TAP funds were programmed for eligible bicycle and pedestrian projects as part of SPOT 3.0, to comply with MAP-21 requirements for a competitive selection process and in support of the Department's TAP programming plan. The results of SPOT 3.0 do not account for the full TAP budget authority allocated to NCDOT. Median project costs, the numbers of high-scoring bicycle/pedestrian projects, and Division Needs tier funding limits influenced TAP programming outcomes. A portion of Any-Area TAP available to North Carolina (\$6.4 M/yr) is being flexed to STP to support statewide group projects previously supported with STP-Enhancement funding, these being the Division of Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation's statewide program, vegetation/clear zone management activities, and Best Management Practices (BMP) retrofits to comply with National Pollutant Discharge and Elimination System (NPEDS) permit requirements.

#### 5. Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Program Funding

Similar to question #4 above, it is unclear how much SRTS funding was available to be programmed compared to what was actually programmed in the draft STIP, and if not all funding was programmed, what additional funding may be available. According to page six of the report released by the Safe Routes to School National Partnership, North Carolina Writing the Next Chapter of Its Transportation Legacy, "Communities have become discouraged over the state's slow handling of the Safe Routes to School program." Are communities in North Carolina no longer considering SRTS funding for some



projects? The DCHC MPO requests clarification on the programming strategy and availability of SRTS funding. *(The report is included with this letter.)*

The Department has programmed and spent SRTS funding through competitive project solicitations, local Division allocations, and several non-infrastructure programs. The balance of SRTS infrastructure funding is being programmed through the STI process. We anticipate the full balance of SAFETEA-LU SRTS funding will be dedicated to specific projects by late summer 2015.

Looking ahead, we plan to obligate the balance of remaining SAFETEA-LU SRTS funds (\$14 million) in the following ways (approximate totals):

- \$6 million toward infrastructure projects identified by previous competitive cycle submissions, Divisions and local governments (pre STI, authorized by end of FFY 15)
- \$5 million toward infrastructure projects identified through the STI bike/ped process (authorized by end of FFY 20)
- \$3 million for existing non-infrastructure activities (NC DHHS Active Routes to School program and NCDOT SRTS program administration, authorized by end of FFY 15)

## 6. NCDOT's Call for CMAQ Projects 2016-2017

On October 12, 2011, the DCHC MPO TAC approved a list of CMAQ projects for FY 2016 and 2017 (see bulleted list below). This action was taken in response to a CMAQ call for projects initiated by NCDOT. Subsequently, the DCHC MPO received a letter from Ms. Terry C. Arellano, NCDOT Systems Planning Group, dated February 25, 2014, stating that NCDOT "has postponed programming additional CMAQ projects until Federal funding uncertainty can be addressed." Since this correspondence, at the request of Durham and the DCHC MPO, NCDOT has agreed to amend the STIP to add one of the 2011 approved projects, the West Ellerbe Creek Trail. The amendment is scheduled for approval by the NC Board of Transportation in March 2015.

The other projects approved in 2011 are not in the current STIP or the draft FY2016-25 STIP. Derry Schmidt, NCDOT Systems Planning Group, told DCHC MPO staff in December that "in the next couple of weeks, we will begin a process to schedule the previously-submitted CMAQ proposals for funding in FY 2016 & 2017."

The MPO requests any additional updates that may be available for the CMAQ funded projects listed below. While several of the projects remain a priority, other projects may need to be reconsidered due to changed conditions or priorities. The MPO requests the following:

That NCDOT hold a new Call for Projects or provide the MPO an opportunity to review the previous proposals and re-submit CMAQ project priorities for the MPO area.

That NCDOT provide clarification regarding the amount of CMAQ funding that is available to be programmed. Are the CMAQ funding estimates used in 2011 still accurate?

Transportation Planning Branch (TPB) has been working the past few months to develop the schedule and process to program additional years of CMAQ funding. The schedule/process is undergoing its final review with TPB management and will be released to our planning partners within the next two weeks, barring any unforeseen circumstances. The process will include a review/validation of previously submitted, yet currently unprogrammed, CMAQ proposals, along with an opportunity to submit new proposals in the event that MPO priorities/desire have shifted since 2011 when applications were last submitted. The information to be released to



our planning partners will also contain CMAQ target allocations and explain the standing “blanket” projects that are currently reflected in the draft STIP.

The FY 2016 and 2017 CMAQ projects approved in 2011 are:

Triangle Travel Demand Management Program – continuation of CMAQ funding for the MPO’s share of this regional program administered by TJCOG

TPB approved addition the DCHC portion of funding to existing project C-4924. The amount of funding was to be deducted from DCHC’s CMAQ target allocation for future years. This addition will be reflected in the final STIP.

West Durham Station Pedestrian Enhancements – sidewalk planning, R/W, and construction on Georgia Ave. (Club Blvd. to Hillsborough St.), Green St. (Carolina Ave. to Oakland Ave.), Oakland Ave. (Club Blvd. to Hillsborough St.) to increase access to proposed West Durham commuter rail and light rail stations

Durham Station Pedestrian Enhancements – sidewalk planning, R/W, and construction on Pettigrew St. (Blackwell St. to Mangum St.) and Morehead Ave. (Duke St. to Blackwell St.) to increase access to proposed downtown Durham commuter rail and light rail stations

Carrboro Downtown Multi-use Path – trail planning, R/W, and construction connecting Greensboro and Lloyd streets (within 3 mile bike-shed of UNC Hospitals Station)

Durham Alston Avenue Station Pedestrian Enhancements – sidewalk planning, R/W, and construction on Pettigrew St. (Fayetteville St. to Driver St.) to increase access to proposed Alston Avenue commuter rail and light rail stations

Durham Area Transit Authority – purchase of two replacement buses

Chapel Hill Transit – purchase of two replacement buses

## **SPECIFIC PROJECT-RELATED COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS**

### **DIVISION 8**

#### **SR 1008 Mt. Carmel Church Road (#EB-5738) & SR 1532 Manns Chapel Road (#EB-5739)**

The DCHC MPO requests guidance regarding the role of local governments in administering these two projects. The DCHC MPO requests confirmation of project costs including costs for right-of-way acquisition for these two projects from the NCDOT Program Development Branch. Are the project costs shown in the draft STIP final costs or estimated costs? These projects are programmed for construction within the first five years of the draft STIP. How soon after the adoption of the STIP will local governments be expected to pay the local match?

If the county contracts with NCDOT for program management, what is the process/cost to contract with NCDOT for right-of-way acquisition? Both Chatham County and the DCHC MPO are very interested in the process and timing of agreements and contracts.

These projects will be managed by Division 8. The costs shown in the draft STIP reflect the extent of the Program Development Branch’s knowledge regarding costs, which are strictly estimates at this point. The municipal agreement with the County will address local match requirements including timing of payments. No payment is due prior to full execution of the municipal agreement by all parties.



## DIVISION 7

### **Durham-Orange Light Rail Transit (#TE-5205)**

The total project cost submitted through SPOT was \$1.8 billion, however the total project cost shown in the draft STIP is \$977,986,000. Why is only \$443,003,000 shown in the Post Year Unfunded category, and not the total remaining project cost? The DCHC MPO strongly recommends the programming for the construction phase be thoroughly reviewed with the DCHC MPO and Triangle Transit to ensure that the construction schedules for the part of the project in REG A and the part of the project in REG B reflect a rational construction schedule for the project. REG A is defined as, "UNC Hospitals in Chapel Hill to Durham County Line." REG B is defined as, "Orange County Line to NC 55 (Alston Avenue) in Durham."

A summary of the programming approach for this project is included as an appendix herein. The main reason for the cost estimate differential is that the project was submitted to SPOT for prioritization using year-of-expenditure dollars instead of current dollars. Triangle Transit has since provided updated cost information by project phase, and these data are being reviewed to see what adjustments can be made to programming that remain consistent with STI constraints and intent.

### **US 70 Bypass Bridge (#B-4962)**

The area around the US 70 Bridge is a crucial connection for the Mountains-to-Sea Trail and for connecting to the Eno River State Park. As bridge design begins, coordination with the efforts to extend the Mountains to Sea Trail is needed. Specific comments on this project were sent to Ms. Brenna Poole, NDOT PDEA Branch from the Orange County Planning & Inspections Department in a letter dated October 27, 2009. It is requested that these comments be reviewed before design of the bridge begins.

Mr. Bret Martin of Orange County and Ed Lewis of Division 7 have discussed this project with the project manager, Mr. Ted Walls of PDEA. An on-site scoping meeting was conducted in August 2013, and the field notes from that meeting were forwarded to Mr. Martin. Mr. Martin requested that Orange County be given the opportunity to review and update their comments as needed. Mr. Walls indicated that he would be getting in touch with Mr. Martin early in the development of the CE document for further discussion.

### **Jones Creek Greenway (#C-5181)**

The DCHC MPO requests guidance on any opportunities that may exist to increase the amount of funding for this project. Are TAP, SRTS, or CMAQ (State or MPO) funds available?

There is no CMAQ funding available for programming earlier than FFY 2016. DCHC is welcome to include additional funding for this project as part of their request for future funding from their target CMAQ allocation. Otherwise, the MPO may program STPDA or TAPDA funds to cover the additional cost if they wish.

### **Orange County Bicycle Route 1 (#EB-5721)**

The DCHC MPO requests that the funding for this project be reprogrammed for earlier years in the STIP. It is funded with SRTS funding and is currently scheduled for PE in FY2021 and Construction in FY2022.



The DCHC MPO and the Town of Chapel Hill do not understand why SRTS funding would be programmed for FY2021 of the STIP if there is an unobligated balance of SRST funding available today. If the project is managed locally, could it be scheduled earlier?

EB- projects were scheduled in the draft STIP according to relative score as a starting point, with the higher-scoring projects being scheduled sooner. Based on review by the Division of Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation, this project will be accelerated to reflect PE in FY 17 and construction in FY 18.

#### **Morgan Creek Greenway (#EL-4828)**

The DCHC MPO requests that the funding for this project be programmed for FY2016 in the STIP. NCDOT is aware of the additional engineering work related to the creek crossings that is causing the delays in the project. The DCHC MPO requests clarification on NCDOT's approach to project phasing related to allocation of funding and how or when funding would be shifted between phases of a project.

This request will be reflected in the final STIP. Any subsequent adjustments that may be necessary to funding allocations across project phases can be handled through amendment upon notification of TAC approval of amendment of DCHC's TIP.

#### **I-40 Widening (#I-3306)**

The DCHC MPO requests clarification on the scope of improvements proposed in this project. The DCHC MPO requests confirmation that the requested interchange improvements at NC 86 are included as part of the project. The DCHC MPO also requests an explanation for why right-of-way is scheduled for 2023 if the CE will be completed in 2016. The DCHC MPO is concerned that the NEPA document could expire prior to 2023 and requests that the right-of-way and mitigation phases be scheduled during the first five years of the STIP.

Only the cost of minor improvements was reflected in the cost submitted for P3.0 scoring. The planning and environmental process will establish the needed improvements in the vicinity of the interchange. The schedule for the project reflects its relatively low prioritization score, with the result that the project could only be partially funded from the remaining regional category budget available. No acceleration can be accommodated at this time without displacing a higher-scoring project.

#### **I-40 Pavement Rehabilitation (#I-5822)**

The DCHC MPO requests that this project be coordinated with I-3306 to avoid duplicative paving and repaving costs.

Where obvious overlaps or associations between STI projects were noted during the programming exercise, these have been taken into consideration. Tight time constraints in the programming phase precluded an exhaustive review of every project, but this will be closely coordinated as part of the review and scheduling of preconstruction activities.

#### **South Greensboro Street (#U-4726 DX)**



The DCHC MPO requests that the funding for this sidewalk project be programmed as PE in FY2016 and Construction in FY2017 in the STIP. Currently, the schedule is PE in FY2015 and Construction in FY2016.

U-4726 is a group project in the STIP, meaning individual project scopes are not broken out therein. As long as the applicable project phases are funded in FFY 2016 and FFY 2017 in the STIP on the group, the MPO may proceed with the DX project on that schedule.

#### **US 15/501 (Fordham Boulevard) (#U-5304)**

Break D of this project is described as NC 54 (Raleigh Road) Interchange Improvements. However, Break A of the NC 54 project (#U-5774) is the NC 54 and US 15/501 interchange upgrade. The DCHC MPO requests clarification for the costs of the NC 54 and US 15/501 interchange. Are the costs of the NC 54 and US 15/501 interchange included in both projects and therefore duplicated? There continues to be a need for further evaluation of the impacts a superstreet would have on this area.

The costs are not duplicated. U-5304D reflects minor interchange improvements of unidentified scope that scored sufficiently high to be funded in the Regional Impact category. U-5774A reflects an interchange upgrade (partial cloverleaf redesign) identified in the City of Durham's NC 54 corridor study; however this project was not submitted for scoring under P3.0 and is not funded in the draft STIP.

#### **SR 1009 South Churton Street (#U-5845)**

This project calls for the widening of S. Churton Street at the interchange with I-85 (exit 164). The Town of Hillsborough had previously been advised that I-85 widening project needed to be scheduled first and that the interchange improvement could not be constructed independently. Has there been a change of opinion on this or is there some other way that the interchange improvement will be incorporated into the widening project?

The Interstate 85 widening project did not score sufficiently high to merit funding in any category. Since under STI the above project did get funded, it is being programmed in the current (2012-2018) STIP for planning and environmental study only, so that some initial scoping can proceed. Improvements to Churton Street will need to accommodate the probable full build-out cross section for I-85, so this will be taken into account as U-5845 is developed.

#### **SR 1772 Greensboro Street (#U-5846)**

Are there local match requirements or other local requirements for this project? Will NCDOT design and manage this project? The DCHC MPO requests more details on the scope of this project. It is described as a roundabout at the Greensboro Street and Estes Drive intersection and additional details are requested.

The match for the base project will be State funds. The cost of any betterments requested by the Town and included in the scope will be the responsibility of the Town. Division 7 will administer the project, with assistance from PDEA. The Division and PDEA should be able to advise on scope details as the project is developed.



**SR 1010 West Franklin Street/East Main Street (#U-5847)**

Are there local match requirements or other local requirements for this project? Will NCDOT design and manage this project? The DCHC MPO requests more details on the scope of this project. The project description states "Merritt Mill Road/Brewer Lane intersection improvements in Chapel Hill and Carrboro" and additional details are requested.

The match for the base project will be State funds. The cost of any betterments requested by the Town and included in the scope will be the responsibility of the Town. Division 7 will administer the project, with assistance from PDEA. The Division and PDEA should be able to advise on scope details as the project is developed.

**Orange Grove Road Extension (#U-5848)**

In addition to overlapping with U-5845, this project overlaps with P-5701. The timing and scope of all three projects are connected and needs to be considered in the scheduling of these projects. Additionally, there is a small project the town and county have identified at the intersections of Eno Mountain Road and Mayo Streets with Orange Grove Road that would ideally be added to this project scope. This is an off-set intersection that cannot accommodate signalization in its current configuration. The town and county have funded and completed some preliminary investigation to identify a realignment. Any ability to pursue the realignment further and discuss this project scope would be greatly appreciated.

Where obvious overlaps or associations between STI projects were noted during the programming exercise, these have been taken into consideration. Tight time constraints in the programming phase precluded an exhaustive review of every project, but this will be closely coordinated as part of the review and scheduling of preconstruction activities. In the case of the above example, the proximity of the 2 roadway projects was noted during programming and a comment regarding coordination placed on each in the draft. The offset intersection project did not score well enough to merit funding under P3.0, and it did not appear the project received any local input points. The project scope is outside that of either U-5845 or U-5848, and so would not be combined with either of those projects.

**Norfolk Southern H Line (train station) (#P-5701)**

The DCHC MPO requests details on the exact scope of work for this project. This project relates directly to #U-5848 (Orange Grove Road extension). These projects may overlap or create the opportunity to shift costs to different sources as the extension of Orange Grove Road is intended to provide access to the train station. It is the intent and desire of the Town of Hillsborough to go under the railroad due to site topography. This concept has been shared with the North Carolina Railroad Company on multiple occasions.

Subsequent to release of the draft STIP, the Rail Division and the Town of Hillsborough provided information regarding the station, proposed roadway network, and details related to crossings of the railroad. The scopes for P-5701 and U-5848 will be coordinated during the respective project development phases.

**Chapel Hill Transit Project (#TA-4726)**



The DCHC MPO requests that the project description to be changed from articulated to regular buses.

The Public Transportation Division will make this change for the final STIP.

#### Chapel Hill Transit Bus Rapid Transit (#U-5119A)

The DCHC MPO requests that the second phase of the BRT project be programmed into the STIP. Near the end of 2015 the North-South Corridor Study will be completed and a potential Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) will be recommended by the Chapel Hill Transit Partners and then further adopted by the Town of Chapel Hill and the DCHC MPO. The next steps in the planning process would be to forward this LPA to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) for acceptance into the Small Starts Project Development Program and for environmental work to proceed on the LPA. This work would be the second phase of the project of ultimately designing and constructing a Bus Rapid Transit project in the North-South Corridor. The second phase would include the environmental work and engineering, with a total cost estimate of about \$3.5-\$4million. Work and the associated costs for implementing the project would include the following major task items.

In 2016 – submission of a Small Starts Project Development Application to the FTA at the cost of \$20,000

In 2016 – starting and completing an Environmental Assessment under Federal NEPA rules with the expected outcome of a signed Findings of No Significant Impact (FONSI) by the FTA at the cost of \$550,000 to \$700,000 depending on the level of transportation analysis and Cultural Resource Analysis

In 2016 and until the project is constructed (assume 2020) – annual required planning and FTA submittals including the update of Small Starts documentation and required documents including (but not limited to) Project Management Plan, Public Involvement Plan, BRT Comprehensive Operations Analysis, BRT Fleet Management Plan, Basis of Design, and Work Breakdown Structure at the cost of \$100,000 to \$200,000 annually

The NCDOT PTD sent Chapel Hill Transit a STIP template to fill out regarding the phase 2 they wanted to show in the draft STIP as **unfunded**. They returned the template and it is shown below. CHT did submit an STI project request for BRT, but it was not processed because the scope was only for landscaping type work. There was a “phase 1” of this BRT project. It was funded with 5339 funds and is shown in the current STIP in FY 2015. CHT already has an approved FTA grant for the 5339 funds.

ADDITIONS to the Transit 2012-2018 STIP

STIP #	Transit Partner	DESCRIPTION	match	FUND	FY15 (000)	FY16 (000)	FY17 (000)	FY18 (000)	FY19 (000)	FY20 (000)	FY21 (000)
U-5119A	Chapel Hill Transit	Phase 2 – Alternatives Analysis	FED	TBD		736	1160	1160	160	160	
			Local	L		184	290	290	40	40	

## DIVISION 5

#### NC 54 (#U-5774)

The DCHC MPO requests additional time to review the impacts of converting the existing at-grade intersection of NC 54 and Barbee Chapel Road to a grade separated interchange before expressing support for this improvement. There is concern that this project would impact transit service in the project area.



A grade separation at this location is identified in the City's NC 54 corridor study. The project planning and environmental process will determine the appropriate configuration for construction.

#### **Durham-Orange Light Rail Transit (#TE-5205)**

The total project cost submitted through SPOT was \$1.8 billion, however the total project cost shown in the draft STIP is \$977,986,000. Why is only \$443,003,000 shown in the Post Year Unfunded category, and not the total remaining project cost? The DCHC MPO strongly recommends the programming for the construction phase be thoroughly reviewed with the DCHC MPO and Triangle Transit to ensure that the construction schedules for the part of the project in REG A and the part of the project in REG B reflect a rational construction schedule for the project. REG A is defined as, "UNC Hospitals in Chapel Hill to Durham County Line." REG B is defined as, "Orange County Line to NC 55 (Alston Avenue) in Durham."

A summary of the programming approach for this project is included as an appendix herein. The main reason for the cost estimate differential is that the project was submitted to SPOT for prioritization using year-of-expenditure dollars instead of current dollars. Triangle Transit has since provided updated cost information by project phase, and these data are being reviewed to see what adjustments can be made to programming that remain consistent with STI constraints and intent.

#### **US 501 Bypass (North Duke Street) (#EB-5715)**

The DCHC MPO requests that the PE for this sidewalk project be scheduled for FY2016 and Construction be scheduled in FY 2019. Currently, the schedule is PE in FY2019 and Construction in FY2020.

EB- projects were scheduled in the draft STIP according to relative score as a starting point, with the higher-scoring projects being scheduled sooner. Based on review by the Division of Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation, this project will be accelerated to reflect PE in FY 17 and construction in FY 19.

#### **Bryant Bridge Trail (#EB-5720)**

The DCHC MPO requests that the PE for this trail project be scheduled for FY2016 and Construction be scheduled in FY 2019. Currently, the schedule is PE in FY2019 and Construction in FY2020.

EB- projects were scheduled in the draft STIP according to relative score as a starting point, with the higher-scoring projects being scheduled sooner. Based on review by the Division of Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation, this project will be accelerated to reflect PE in FY 18 and construction in FY 19.

#### **US 70 Glenwood Avenue (#U-5518 from page 5 of CAMPO draft STIP)**

This project is currently located in Wake County but in the future the US 70 and SR 3067 TW Alexander Drive intersection may be located in an area that is annexed by the City of Durham. REG B of this project is the conversion of the at-grade intersection to an interchange with cost participation by the City of Durham. Would cost participation by the City of Durham result in a bonus allocation or some kind of



reimbursement through STI? If it would result in a bonus allocation, which jurisdiction would receive the bonus allocation? When would the bonus allocation be received and what is the process and related timeline for applying it to a future project?

Information on the bonus allocation was provided to the MPO on 1/16/2015. The bonus would apply to the entity providing funds for the catalyst project, and would be made available upon construction authorization for the catalyst project.

#### **Woodcroft Parkway Extension (#U-5823)**

The existing portion of Woodcroft Parkway is classified as a Collector. Would the extension also be classified as a Collector? If the extension project is classified as a Collector, would it be eligible for federal funding? Would the extension project be a state-maintained roadway or a locally-maintained roadway? Given that this extension would attract traffic away from a highly congested major roadway, i.e., NC 751, can federal funding be used for the extension? If not, what other options (if any) exist for using federal funds to fund the extension project?

Because the extension is a new-location facility, the FHWA does not recognize a classification status. In order to be eligible for Federal funds the project would need to be funded in the STIP, and the MPO would then need to request the project be added to the existing network as "committed". Inquiries and requests regarding functional classification changes should be directed to the Transportation Planning Branch. In order to be eligible for State Highway Trust Funds, the project would have to be on the State-maintained system. Given that existing Woodcroft Parkway is a municipally-owned roadway, it is not anticipated the new-location section would be a part of the State system. Therefore the project will be programmed in the final STIP with a combination of Federal (STP Any Area) funds and local match. This project will also be programmed to be administered by the City of Durham.

#### **Acquisition of rail corridors for use as bicycle and pedestrian trails, Durham (Previous STIP #EL-4999)**

The DCHC MPO requests a determination on whether the Federal HP earmark would be considered competitive or discretionary and therefore exempt from STI prioritization. If the earmark is exempt from STI prioritization, the DCHC MPO requests that it be reprogrammed in the draft STIP. It is understood that #EL-4999 was removed from the FY2012-FY2018 STIP because after several years of on-going negotiations for right-of-way acquisition, a cost could not be agreed upon by all parties and there was no longer county or statewide interest in the new project extents that were limited to downtown Durham. This project has remained a priority for the residents and City of Durham. The City of Durham was recently awarded 2014 TIGER VI planning grant funds to develop a Duke Belt Line Trail Master Plan for the approximately two-mile inactive rail corridor in downtown Durham.

Information regarding the SAFETEA-LU earmark was provided to the MPO on 1/14/2015. It is the Department's understanding that the High Priority earmarks under SAFETEA-LU do not meet the definition of competitive/discretionary for STI purposes, because of how the enabling legislation was crafted by Congress. Therefore the project would need to be submitted in P4.0 for prioritization and score competitively, in order to be able to be programmed in the STIP.



## Appendix: Durham-Orange Light Rail Project (TE-5205)

### PROGRAMMING APPROACH

The Durham-Orange Light Rail (DOLR) project was submitted for P3.0 prioritization as a single project with a cost of \$1.82 billion total, and a cost to NCDOT of \$455 million. No information was provided regarding cost by phase/activity.

Information was provided by Triangle Transit via NCDOT Public Transportation Division (PTD) indicating that the total project cost in current dollars was actually \$1.38 billion. Of that total, \$115 million was for right of way and \$863 million was for construction only (not including vehicle acquisition, finance charges and contingency). No additional information was provided to establish the specific allocation of the difference of \$400 million. Planning and design is currently underway, and Division 5 indicated an understanding that PE was already funded, although it was possible additional PE funding might be requested at some point.

PTD indicated that the funding protocol for DOLR would follow the FTA formula of 50% Federal, 25% State and 25% local shares. Based on a total project cost of \$1.38 billion, the net cost to NCDOT for full funding would be \$345 million.

DOLR scored sufficiently high in the 4% non-highway/Regional Impact exercise to be partially funded. STI law stipulates that no more than 10 percent of any region's allocation may be applied toward a single transit project. Clarification was provided by the Fiscal Research Division of the GA that, in the case of multi-regional projects, the intent was no more than 10 percent of each affected region's allocation, rather than of any one affected region. On this basis, it was determined that approximately \$79 million of Region C funds and \$61 million of Region D funds could be applied to DOLR, for a combined total of \$140 million in State funds.

In order to meet programming deadlines for release of the draft STIP, the decision was made to apply available funding to right-of-way and construction only, since PE was in progress and apparently funded, and other cost elements had not been identified for prioritization purposes. Triangle Transit recommended following the percentage splits specified in the DOLR implementation agreement for cost-sharing on capital expenditures. Those figures were 77% for Durham County and 23% for Orange County.

For the programming exercise, these percentages were applied to 25% of the combined right-of-way and construction cost of \$978 million based on current dollars. This yielded a cost allocation of \$188 million for Region C and \$56 million for Region D. Applying the statutory caps, 42% of the Region C portion of the project could be funded, while 100% of the Region D portion could be funded. The programming allocation is shown on the following page.

It is anticipated that the phasing and cost allocation will be revised, once the draft programming has been reviewed by the Division, the Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro MPO and Triangle Transit, probably resulting in different schedules than those presented in the draft STIP. Any revisions will need to reflect 5-year-window funding constraints as well as statutory caps.



Durham-Orange Light Rail  
STI FUNDING ALLOCATION PROPOSAL

Total project cost (PV)	\$1,370,000,000	
PE	\$0	(understood to be already funded)
Right-of-way cost (PV)	\$115,000,000	
Construction (PV)	\$863,000,000	

	<b>Total</b>	<b>Federal</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Local</b>
PE	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Right of Way and Utilities	\$115,000,000	\$57,500,000	\$28,750,000	\$28,750,000
Construction	\$863,000,000	\$431,500,000	\$215,750,000	\$215,750,000

PE	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	Durham
Right of Way and Utilities	\$88,550,000	\$44,275,000	\$22,137,500	\$22,137,500	
Construction	\$664,510,000	\$332,255,000	\$166,127,500	\$166,127,500	

PE	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	Orange
Right of Way and Utilities	\$26,450,000	\$13,225,000	\$6,612,500	\$6,612,500	
Construction	\$198,490,000	\$99,245,000	\$49,622,500	\$49,622,500	