

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

**November 11, 2015**

**MINUTES OF MEETING**

The Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization Board met on November 11, 2015 at 9:05 a.m. in the City Council Committee on the second floor of Durham City Hall. The following attended:

Mark Kleinschmidt (DCHC MPO Board Chair)	Town of Chapel Hill
Diane Catotti (DCHC MPO Board Vice-Chair)	City of Durham
Jim G. Crawford (Member)	Chatham County
Steve Schewel (Member)	City of Durham
Ellen Reckhow (Member)	Durham County
Bernadette Pelissier (Member)	GoTriangle
Barry Jacobs (Member)	Orange County
Jenn Weaver (Member)	Town of Hillsborough
Eric Hallman (Member)	Town of Hillsborough
Damon Seils (Member)	Town of Carrboro
Jim W. Crawford (Member)	NC Board of Transportation
Lydia Lavelle (Alternate)	Town of Carrboro
Ed Harrison (Alternate)	Town of Chapel Hill
Tom Altieri	Orange County
Bergen Watterson	Town of Carrboro
John Hodges-Copple	Triangle J Council of Governments
Patrick McDonough	GoTriangle
Mark Ahrendsen	City of Durham/DCHC MPO
Dale McKeel	City of Durham/DCHC MPO
Linda Thomas Wallace	Durham County
Felix Nwoko	DCHC MPO
Andy Henry	DCHC MPO
Meg Scully	DCHC MPO
Lindsay Smart	DCHC MPO
Dale McKeel	DCHC MPO
Brian Rhodes	DCHC MPO
Terry Rekeweg	Public Speaker/Citizen
Lauren Horsch	The Herald-Sun
Thomas Swasey	
Judith Swasey	
Dick Ford	
Katharine Eggleton	GoTriangle
Tammy Bouchelle	GoTriangle
Diane Callen	GoTriangle
Don Moffitt	Durham City of Council
Dave Charers	GoTriangle

Albert Amwatey  
Taruna Tayal

DCA  
VHB

Quorum Count: X of 11 Voting Members

Chair Mark Kleinschmidt 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 Board were identified and are indicated above.

#### **PRELIMINARIES:**

##### **Ethics Reminder**

Chair Mark Kleinschmidt read the Ethics Reminder and asked if there were any known conflicts of interest with respect to matters coming before the Board and requested that if there were any identified during the meeting for them to be announced.

There were no known conflicts identified by Board members.

##### **Adjustments to the Agenda**

Chair Mark Kleinschmidt asked if there were any adjustments to the agenda. Chair Mark Kleinschmidt stated that he had an additional item to discuss at the end of the meeting regarding the appointment of the nominating committee.

##### **Public Comments**

Chair Mark Kleinschmidt asked if there were any members of the public signed up to speak. Terry Rekeweg signed up to speak publicly during the meeting.

Terry Rekeweg thanked the DCHC MPO Board for the opportunity to speak before them. Terry Rekeweg stated that he wanted to go over the DEIS comments that he submitted on the D-O LRT. Terry Rekeweg shared a story that he felt related to the D-O LRT project. Terry Rekeweg stated Robert Goddard was the father of modern rocketry. He was ridiculed in the press for suggesting that a manned rocket could escape Earth's gravity and head to the moon and planets. It was commonly

believed that rockets could not possibly work in space, because there was nothing for them to push against. Nevertheless, Robert Goddard continued his research and firmly based on science his work was revolutionary.

Terry Rekeweg stated that people may not believe that it is possible to connect UNC, Duke and downtown Durham with a rail system that is 10 minutes faster and cost \$400 million less compared to the plan the DCHC MPO Board scheduled to vote on today. Terry Rekeweg stated that his proposal would also connect to East Durham and RTP, which eliminated the need to have a second phase and cost maybe another \$1 billion. Terry Rekeweg stated that if the rail system could be built logically from the beginning, the savings would be over \$1 billion. Terry Rekeweg stated that this would be revolutionary and innovative as well a good image for the Triangle Region.

Terry Rekeweg stated that statistics showed higher injuries and fatalities with 35 or more built grade crossings. Terry Rekeweg asked why do this when a much better alternative existed which would eliminate most of the danger? Terry Rekeweg stated citizens deserved to have this issue debated.

Terry Rekeweg stated that a public official wrote to him and said, "As I understand it, Durham and Orange chose to build the first line in the corridor where the greatest bus ridership now exists – the place that could best support transit."

Terry Rekeweg stated that the data showed the greatest bus ridership existed along I-40, Southpoint and Highway 55 corridor but not along US 15/501. Terry Rekeweg stated that these facts did not show up in the DEIS report; GoTriangle would most likely not study nor confirm the data was sent to them from him. Terry Rekeweg stated that GoTriangle said, "To study an alternative would set the project back a long time." Terry Rekeweg stated that getting it built as soon as possible is not the main goal when serving the public welfare.

Terry Rekeweg stated that it was almost two-years ago, he had spoken to the DCHC MPO Board about the problems with GoTriangle's commuter rail plan and the infeasibility of connecting the D-O

Light Rail from Durham County to Wake County. Terry Rekoweg stated that the Wake County transit consultant had similar findings as he did. Terry Rekoweg stated that it was not about being right, but about facts and researching the problems. Terry Rekoweg stated that the study showed the same for the D-O Light Rail project as his. Terry Rekoweg stated the D-O Light Rail project is heading for failure.

Terry Rekoweg stated that the DCHC MPO Board could go with the flow and vote yes or be proactive, get an independent transit study, revise the transit project, and create greater safety for the citizens.

Chair Mark Kleinschmidt thanked Terry Rekoweg for his comments on the D-O LRT DEIS.

#### **Directives to Staff**

The Directives to Staff were included in the agenda packet for review.

#### **CONSENT AGENDA:**

#### **6. Approval of October 14, 2015 Meeting Minutes**

Chair Mark Kleinschmidt stated that Damon Seils provided the minor editing changes to the MPO LPA Staff; he asked if the revisions were already included in the minutes. Lindsay Smart commented they had not been incorporated into the minutes; however, they will amend the October 14, 2015 minutes.

Chair Mark Kleinschmidt and Damon Seils stated they were very minor corrections. Chair Kleinschmidt stated that was the only item on the Consent Agenda.

Chair Mark Kleinschmidt asked if there were any comments and asked for a motion to approve October 14, 2015, meeting minutes with the amendments from Damon Seils.

A motion was made by Ellen Reckhow and second by Bernadette Pelissier to approve the October 14, 2015, DCHC MPO Board Meeting minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

#### **ACTION ITEMS:**

#### **7. NCDOT SPOT P4.0 New Project Recommendations**

**Lindsay Smart, LPA Staff**

**Dale McKeel, LPA Staff**

Lindsay Smart briefed the DCHC MPO Board on the NCDOT SPOT P4.0 New Project

Recommendations, along with handouts. Lindsay Smart informed the DCHC MPO Board a more readable P4.0 spreadsheet had been provided as requested by the DCHC MPO Board that listed the top new priority projects for submission of NCDOT SPOT for P4.0. Lindsay Smart stated that the action today was the approval of the DCHC MPO Board for the 14 new projects in each mode presented.

Lindsay Smart stated that the DCHC MPO subcommittee and the MPO LPA staff met on Monday, October 26, 2015, to review the P4.0 Top Priority Highway Projects, the DCHC MPO New Public Transit Projects, the P4.0 Top Priority Bike Ped Projects, and the DCHC MPO P4.0 New Rail Projects. Lindsay Smart stated that the group reviewed and discussed 32 highway projects, 31 bicycle and pedestrian projects, 21 transit projects, and 10 rail projects for submission. Lindsay Smart stated that the DCHC MPO subcommittee and MPO LPA staff identified and listed all the 14 top priority projects per mode for the recommendation of the DCHC MPO Technical Committee.

Lindsay Smart stated the DCHC MPO Technical Committee reviewed and discussed the 14 top priority projects per mode that the DCHC MPO subcommittee recommended on Wednesday, October 28, 2015. Lindsay Smart stated that the DCHC MPO Technical Committee approved all the new top priority projects as recommended by the DCHC MPO subcommittee.

Lindsay Smart explained to the DCHC MPO Board the process, and the top priority projects per mode approved by the DCHC MPO Technical Committee for the recommendations of NCDOT SPOT P4.0 online tool.

Lindsay Smart stated that the top priority projects per mode listed were based on not just how well the project would score in SPOT P4.0 online tool, but also how the project aligned with the goals of the DCHC MPO Board. Lindsay Smart stated that there were not any surprises to the list. Lindsay Smart

147 stated that every jurisdiction was represented on the list and had provided feedback on the process of  
148 the highway projects.

149 Lindsay Smart stated that the 14 new projects were entered into the NCDOT P4.0 SPOT online  
150 tool which generated a summary of the data entered. Lindsay Smart stated that the projects were  
151 submitted to NCDOT's SPOT office for evaluation and believed the DCHC MPO Board would receive the  
152 evaluations on January 2016 to find out how well the projects did. Lindsay Smart stated that there  
153 would be an opportunity to work with NCDOT's SPOT office to review some of those projects before  
154 they scored them, and she also stated that another review will be done to confirm the highway  
155 information provided was acceptable. Lindsay Smart stated the summary reports on these projects  
156 were circulated to staff and to their jurisdictions. Lindsay Smart stated a summary of each highway  
157 project is being reviewed by local staff; and also the MPO LPA staff is making minor adjustment. Lindsay  
158 Smart stated that they have communicated and coordinated with NCDOT's SPOT office to discuss with  
159 them any projects that cannot be manually adjusted to the SPOT P4.0 online tool, just because of its  
160 limits to what can be reviewed in terms of entering data.

161 Ellen Reckhow asked that in the SPOT P4.0 online the version of the new highway project  
162 summary appeared to be from Durham County; a project she did not recall. Ellen Reckhow stated that  
163 she did not see Farrington Road in the top priority, but what was the project structure of the new  
164 roadway alignment. It was discussed it might be an extension of the Falcon Creek Road; it was the new  
165 Farrington Road. Ellen Reckhow stated it was not the extension.

166 Ed Harrison stated that the Chapel Hill project showed the construct extension of existing  
167 roadway on new location extension of Ellis Road which was a town Street. Ed Harrison asked if it would  
168 stay in the town Street with funding or be a reimbursement. Mark Kleinschmidt stated it was  
169 reimbursement because it was the last process of the intersection; it was an advanced project with a  
170 hotel. Lindsay Smart stated if it scored high enough; they would find out in the spring that it could be

171 funded. Lindsay Smart stated that or if the DCHC MPO Board decided to put local input points on it to  
172 get it funded then they would start a conversation on funding sources.

173 Barry Jacobs said he did not see the derivation of the first Hillsborough project of widening the  
174 roadway to four lanes with a median and improve the intersection at US 70 Bypass and NC 57. Lindsay  
175 Smart stated it was NC 86. Lindsay Smart stated that Margaret Hauth had requested to include close to  
176 500 feet north of the intersection as well. Barry Jacobs said of all the road projects he does not  
177 remember discussing it.

178 Some of the members of the DCHC MPO Board stated they were not familiar with the project.  
179 Lindsay Smart stated the DCHC MPO Board could withdraw it from the list and await at the result of the  
180 Hillsborough project that did not rank as highly and move it up into the list. Barry Jacobs stated  
181 personally he was not arguing against it, but requested additional info on the project.

182 Ellen Reckhow stated that the process is so long that by the time it would be built, it may very  
183 well be necessary Chair Mark Kleinschmidt said he did not want the DCHC MPO Board to remove  
184 something and in three months realize that it was needed.

185 Lindsay Smart stated today is the drop dead date for the DCHC MPO Board to make a decision  
186 on the top 14 projects as the SPOT P4.0 online tool closes on November 20, 2015. Lindsay Smart stated  
187 that approval for the projects is needed today because there is not time to reorganize. Damon Seils  
188 stated that he is presuming that the town of Hillsborough staff or other staff presented this project  
189 believing it would score well.

190 Barry Jacobs requested Orange County staff to provide input. Tom Altieri stated he would do his  
191 best; nevertheless, he was not prepared for a complete answer as to why this project has risen to the  
192 top. Tom Altieri stated that he can testify that it has been a long process and they had reviewed all  
193 these projects. Tom Altieri stated that it is a competitive scoring process and it is very likely other  
194 Hillsborough projects had been culled out in the process, but when they look at the scoring standpoint

195 staff realizes and recognizes they would not be funded because they did not score well enough as part  
196 of the equation.

197 Diane Catotti commented if this moves forward and gets scored well what future opportunities  
198 are there to modify the priority later. Lindsay Smart stated yes, in the spring when NCDOT starts rolling  
199 out the scores for each category statewide, regional and division there will be opportunities to find out  
200 how this project does and then assign local points and work with division staff to assign points too. Tom  
201 Altieri stated this project was scored previously as part of SPOT 3.0. Tom Altieri stated that it is not  
202 something that just materialized here recently.

203 Chair Mark Kleinschmidt said that it does not seem it has to be removed from the list at this  
204 point. Chair Mark Kleinschmidt said that it's time to review other objections as suggested. Steve  
205 Schewel questioned what order the projects are listed on the chart is there some rhyme or reason with  
206 it. Lindsay Smart stated, no.

207 Bernadette Pelissier questioned the highway project - Chapel Hill SR 1009 (Old NC 86) to NC 86  
208 (Widen to include Bicycle Lanes, Sidewalks, Transit Accommodations, and Safety Improvements). Steve  
209 Schewel stated it is not in Chapel Hill. Lindsay Smart stated it is Homestead Road between the Old NC86  
210 and new NC86 and listed as Orange County. Bernadette Pelissier wanted to know if the project was  
211 listed twice. Chair Mark Kleinschmidt stated the project is not listed twice; it is listed with the other 14  
212 projects on the first page, only as informational on one page. Ed Harrison asked if they will still able to  
213 do modernization. Lindsay Smart stated yes.

214 Chair Mark Kleinschmidt asked if there were any updates on the P4.0 Top Priority Bike Ped  
215 Projects. Lindsay Smart stated they received confirmation that Division 5, Division 7 and Division 8  
216 would assist with submitting bike and ped projects. Lindsay Smart stated that the DCHC MPO Board  
217 would take the top 14 projects; Division 5 would submit 4; Division 7 would submit 3; and Division 8 in  
218 Chatham County would submit 1.



219 Diane Catotti commented that she was glad that the Duke Belt Line trail was on the list;  
220 however, sorry it had to be scored and hoping for another alternative process, but pleased to see the  
221 way it came out on the scoring. Diane Catotti commented also that the Duke Belt Line trail's cost  
222 effectiveness may improve since an effort is underway to raise private dollars.

223 Chair Mark Kleinschmidt asked if there were any questions; there were no questions. Chair  
224 Mark Kleinschmidt asked for updates on the DCHC MPO New Public Transit Projects. Lindsay Smart said  
225 staff received 21 transit projects and the DCHC MPO Board can submit 14. Lindsay Smart stated that  
226 staff has been working closely with NCDOT Divisions 5 and 7 and transit operators on their priorities,  
227 and that all 21 of the DCHC MPO New Public Transit Projects at this point will be submitted. NCDOT  
228 Divisions 5 and Division 7 will submit the seven projects that the DCHC MPO cannot submit.

229 Chair Mark Kleinschmidt asked if there were any updates on the DCHC MPO P4.0 New Rail  
230 Projects. Lindsay Smart stated that the DCHC MPO plans to submit the 12 rail projects that are listed on  
231 the spreadsheet, which include the two additional projects that John Hodges-Copple submitted to the  
232 DCHC Technical Committee. She stated that staff is working with Jonathan Dees, NCDOT Rail Division, to  
233 finalize some of the details of the original 12 projects and coordinate with them on the additional two  
234 projects.

235 Steve Schewel asked how staff felt about their online SPOT P4.0 online tool experience in terms  
236 of was it better this year. Lindsay Smart stated she was not involved with the SPOT P3.0 last year since  
237 she was not engaged at that time with the City of Durham. Mark Ahrendsen stated we are not aware if  
238 SPOT.04 is an improvement to SPOT.03 because we do not know how well the DCHC MPO projects have  
239 scored. Lindsay Smart thanked everyone for their assistance and cooperation during the SPOT.04  
240 process.

241 Lindsay Smart stated that the action is to approve all 21 of the DCHC MPO New Public Transit  
242 Projects. The strategy is to have NCDOT Division 5 and 7 submit the seven additional projects.

The proposed additions and alteration to the NCDOT SPOT P4.0 New Project Recommendations were listed and included in a memorandum in the agenda item attachments.

A motion was made by Damon Seils and seconded by Steve Schewel to approve all the proposed new highway, bicycle and pedestrian, transit and rail projects for submittal to SPOT P4.0. The motion was passed unanimously.

**8. Durham-Orange Light Rai; Transit (D-O LRT) Project**

**Mark Ahrendsen, DCHC MPO TC Chair**

**Patrick McDonough, GoTriangle**

**Lindsay Smart, LPA Staff**

Patrick McDonough discussed and reviewed the slides for the Durham Light Rail Project.

Patrick McDonough gave a presentation on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) Process Review. He stated that on August 28, 2015, the DEIS was published in the Federal Register, and then there was a Public Comment period, which was opened until October 13, 2015. Patrick McDonough stated that he received the preliminary results; GoTriangle was still churning through most of the information for the first time. Patrick McDonough stated GoTriangle had to share that information with the FTA (Federal Transit Authority) and obtain a sufficiency for how they had appropriately responded to the comments.

Patrick McDonough stated that the presentation had some modifications since the information was originally prepared and that he was presenting a rough draft. The comment count as of November 11, 2015, was 1,390 and included 575 unique people. Some people had commented more than once and one individual commented 37 times (that was rare); most people may have commented a maximum of two or three times. There were 36% in favor of the project, 33% neutral about the project and 32% opposed the project. The most often stated concerns from the comments included: 1) Purpose and Need; 2) NEPA Preferred Alternative; 3) ROMF, Farrington Road; 4) Safety and Security; 5) Transportation, Traffic; 6) Ridership, Cost overall; 7) Little Creek Alternative and 8) Cost/Funding.

269 After receiving all the comments, GoTriangle had their consultant team go through the public  
270 comments and group them. When GoTriangle put the comment in the FEIS (Final Environmental  
271 Impact Statement), people would then have the individual responses and comments associated with  
272 the questions.

273 Patrick McDonough discussed that the FTA (Federal Transit Authority) would review the  
274 responses from the consultant team and GoTriangle to see if they are sufficient. In addition, the FTA  
275 determines if a comment is substantive, and whether or not the comment has been adequately  
276 addressed.

277 Patrick McDonough stated that the document was 700 pages long with 8,000 pages of  
278 appendixes. He stated that the public asked for the document to be improved and the subsequent  
279 improvements generated the amendments and updates to the document.

280 Patrick McDonough stated that GoTriangle would have a draft of the Record of Decision (ROD).  
281 There was a notice to publish the Record of Decision (ROD) in the Federal Register and this would  
282 include the Notice of Availability (NOA) of the Combined FEIS/ROD. Patrick McDonough stated  
283 GoTriangle would like conclude the Environmental Review by February 25, 2016, with full approval  
284 from the FTA (Federal Transit Authority).

285 Patrick McDonough discussed and recapped that in the last few months several of the boards  
286 in the jurisdictions and counties of the DCHC MPO Boards have taken action. The Town of Chapel Hill  
287 and Durham City Council had a unanimous endorsement of the preferred alternative. In addition,  
288 support letters contain a variety of comments about the interest that were important to the  
289 community and the councils. These include: Durham County letters in October 2015; a letter from the  
290 manager in Orange County back in April 2015; and, a letter from David Andrews, the Town Manager of  
291 the Town of Carrboro on October 13, 2015.

Chair Mark Kleinschmidt thanked Patrick McDonough for his presentation and asked whether all of the resolutions and comments from the local jurisdiction were provided in the circulated material. Lindsay Smart stated “yes,” as well as a resolution to the DCHC MPO Board from with the MPO Technical Committee that recommends approval of the endorsement for the NEPA Preferred Alternative for the D-O LRT (Durham Orange Light Rail Transit) project.

Chair Mark Kleinschmidt asked if there were any comments or questions for Patrick McDonough.

Ellen Reckhow stated that in the September evening meeting, she suggested that the DCHC MPO Board get as many answers to public comments as possible before they voted. She stated that three huge notebooks were handed over to her home on Thursday evening and she spent roughly eight hours over the weekend looking through the notebooks, completing two of the three notebooks. It was a good sample because the notebooks were organized alphabetically. She stated that some the comments were from members of the DCHC MPO Board and she wanted to thank the citizens who took the time to provide comments. Ellen Reckhow stated that in general the answeres were sufficient, although some seemed generic and lacking in specificity. She spent a couple of hours meeting with the MPO Staff on Monday, November 9, 2015 and found that a key point that would have been helpful as she went through the notebooks would have been to know the context, “they are not done yet.” She drew some comfort from knowing that it was the first cut and that the staff would go back and look at some of the particular flash point issues that were getting lots of public comments. She believes that it is important for citizens who may not feel that the comments are not satisfactory to know this. More work is going to be done.

Ellen Reckhow stated that she would like to recommend one amendment to the resolution. Ellen stated that in the last whereas at the bottom of page 1; there was a reference to the governing bodies adopting resolutions of support. Ellen Reckhow stated that she would like to add at the end of

316 that: “with letters that include comments that should be addressed prior to finalizing the DEIS, and  
317 whereas see attached the letters.” Ellen Reckhow read the section from the projector and she sent the  
318 letter to the staff so that they would have the correct wording to add to the document.

319 Tammy Bouchelle had two suggestions. She stated that the DEIS was in its final form and that  
320 there would be no other variation of the DEIS. She stated that some of the issues in the letters may  
321 involve engineering solutions that GoTriangle may not be able to address in the right amount of time.

322 Ellen Reckhow asked if that included remarks that should be responded to prior to the  
323 finalizing of the EIS, not the DEIS. Tammy Bouchelle stated “yes,” you could say the FEIS. Ellen  
324 Reckhow stated that the amended language would then be, “with letters that include comments that  
325 should be responded to prior to finalizing the FEIS; see attached letters.”

326 A motion was made by Ellen Reckhow to amend the resolution as stated and was seconded by  
327 Diane Catotti. The motion was carried unanimously.

328 Chair Mark Kleinschmidt asked if there were any other discussions about the proposed  
329 amendment.

330 Bernadette Pelissier stated that her question was related to the comments from the City of  
331 Durham that are related to the group Durham Area Designers. She just wanted to know if engineering  
332 changes can be made. Bernadette Pelissier stated that she knew that it had been proposed to the FTA  
333 that this was the alignment, these were the alternatives and that was what we prefer, but can those  
334 actual changes be made.

335 Patrick McDonough stated that part of the reason to select the alignment was so that you stop  
336 making changes of a significant scope and move forward. He stated that GoTriangle had received  
337 hundreds of suggestions to build the alignment in a slightly different way. Patrick McDonough stated  
338 that some of them were technically feasible and some of them, by looking at them, were not. The DAD  
339 (Durham Area Designers) and other suggestions would require much technical work and involve many

issues to so they would not be able to figure some of those things out by February. Many issues and decisions take time - it is best to get a full investigation and do it correctly. The Record of Decision allows GoTriangle to go forward with confidence to engage the community about what the true impacts of the projects are without the idea that the line could then leap somewhere else later. There will be changes to the alignment but it will be moving in feet, not a hundred yards. They can do some of the things that citizens or organization are requesting but it depends on the complexity of the request as well as the location and constraints where the alignments are. Many of those will take independent engineering investigations. Highway 54 is a great example. Patrick McDonough stated that GoTriangle meets monthly with Durham, Chapel Hill, NCDOT and GoTriangle staff to discuss a whole punch list of things that we are looking at that requires engineering coordinating consultation. Also, GoTriangle will learn a lot from the new SPOT projects on NC 54.

Bernadette Pelissier stated to Patrick McDonough that she guesses that GoTriangle will not know until they get into engineering whether they can address some of the comments made by the city or anyone else. Patrick McDonough stated that what GoTriangle will try to do through the FEIS is to say these are the issues that have been identified and the ones that GoTriangle can go look at. It does not mean that GoTriangle can do it, but it is a commitment that we will go and give it a look.

Ellen Reckhow stated that this idea is missing in the wording. She was pleased to hear that there was a willingness to look at further mitigation that might be feasible. They might not have the exact answer now but there is a willingness to look at collaborative efforts around Highway 54 and things of that nature.

Diane Callen, GoTriangle (AE Com) lead environmental engineering consultant, stated that she wanted everyone to know that what they are reviewing are preliminary drafts. There are a lot of comments to review – three binders worth. They have taken the time to hone in on the main topics and give good responses. The next comb through of the comments is to focus on project and

mitigation suggestions. They will be working with the communities or with the municipalities in the region further in the next phase of design. The FTA (Federal Transit Authority) will be reviewing all of the comments and giving their feedback as to if the responses were addressed appropriately.

Ed Harrison stated that he has been around a while and the resolution that was passed, goes back to the Spring of 2008 to the Special Transit Advisory Committee. Ed Harrison stated that for him, the planning process for this project goes back 21 years. The first fixed guideway transit study committee. This is not a new thing for people who have been around this issue. Ed Harrison stated that one of the key facts that came out of that planning process was that the owner of the NC State 40 Corridor (NCDOT – owns it on behalf of the American Public), did not welcome an exclusive transit line in that corridor at all and has not since then. The one thing that DOT sounds like they would welcome is a high occupancy vehicle lane. That is still theoretical, but there have been plans over the years. The I-40 corridor has never been available since it was asked about in the 1990's as a corridor; which it was. The GoTriangle staff back then (the TTA staff) reminded me of the station area placement for transit. Ed Harrison stated that he grew up in the mega City of New York, where the whole thing was a station area. Ed Harrison stated that in this area people have to think about how they build them because there is not one established yet, except the main campuses of Universities that would qualify. Ed Harrison stated that putting a road down an interstate like the I-40 corridor is a really challenging place to do stations. Ed Harrison stated that Mark Ahrendsen and himself and whomever else that went on the trip to Denver in April 2012, saw that challenge. The University of Denver found out how incredibly expensive it was to put a station right there on the interstate to connect to the biggest University around there. Ed Harrison stated that it was a mind blowing expense, even when it was tied into the interstate renovation project. He stated that is why he believes that the proposal of running the transit project down I-40 has not been received positively. Only a very short section in terms of the I-40 corridor will be used to connect Chapel Hill and Durham. Ed Harrison stated that it (I-40 corridor) is

388 somewhere that has not been available, it is very hard to figure out how to do stations, it passed city  
389 council (which consisted of none of the current council members), and pretty much destroyed one of  
390 the best places in the corridor by bringing in the Southpoint Mall. Ed Harrison stated that people keep  
391 asking why higher capacity transit is not going to Southpoint Mall. The reason is because it has 6,500  
392 parking spaces. That is a big reason not to have the motivation to not have a station there. It could  
393 certainly be serviced by transit, but there is a reason why the currently proposed corridor makes sense.  
394 It could use some moving around. The station area planning is a huge challenge that is yet to come. Ed  
395 Harrison stated that he wanted to put that on the record. He stated that this is not a new process; the  
396 I-40 corridor has been unavailable for a long time, unless somehow DOT changes its mind. That is why  
397 there is the proposed option before us.

398 Chair Mark Kleinschmidt stated that he remembered 30 years ago driving up to Chapel Hill to  
399 visit the University as a high school student, and I-40 did not quite make it to Chapel Hill, then. As you  
400 moved through Raleigh, past Cary, past the airport and towards where you had to get off in order to  
401 get to Chapel Hill, back in that day there was no South Point, there was no Quintiles building, there was  
402 not much of anything along the interchanges as they were being built. Back 30-40 years when I-40 was  
403 being planned, the transportation program envisioned a lot of growth along the corridor that we  
404 ultimately saw occur. He stated that the highway might not have been the best way to inspire growth  
405 because what you get is 6,500 parking spaces along that road. That is what was happening back then.  
406 There was nothing between Raleigh, RTP and Chapel Hill but when you put in a transportation  
407 infrastructure system, growth development around it. The kind of growth that developed around it  
408 was the kind of growth that made use of that kind of infrastructure, which was the automobile  
409 infrastructure. He stated that some of the concerns heard today, kind of a ring flat to him, such as;  
410 "This corridor do not have anything along it in order to keep it viable." Chair Mark Kleinschmidt stated  
411 that we are talking about a decade long planning and implementation process for the rail line. And like



other transportation infrastructure programs of the past, such as I-40, it will inspire growth along it. Fortunately for us, it will not be inspiring the kind that of growth with people using their single vehicle with one person in their car and searching for a parking space. Instead, it is going to be built for people to walk to and from the new kind of development that the project has been shown to inspire. Chair Mark Kleinschmidt stated that the idea that it does not exist today, is true and that is the point because the kind of development that we have seen inspired by our past infrastructure programs produced exactly what we expected them to do. The intention is that this project will inspire the type of economic development that is expected for the future. He stated that to say that it should go down an existing automobile corridor fails to consider all the other community and region-wide goals for developing a great place in the Triangle.

Ellen Reckhow stated that she wanted to make two comments after reviewing the comments that have come from our citizens. In terms of whether people will take light rail in that particular corridor, she cited some census data that she saw in the paper a few months ago. The Durham- Chapel Hill area was highlighted for having the third highest reduction in automobile commute trips between 2006 -2013. San Francisco Metro was first, Boston, Cambridge Newton came in second and Durham- Chapel Hill was third. She stated that was a credit to the staff and some of our progressive policies. Through the things that have been done like Chapel Hill with its free transit and through our Transportation Demand Management strategies, we have been able to substantially lower automobile trips in the peak hours. Ellen Reckhow stated that she wanted to highlight that because it is important to keep that in mind. Ellen Reckhow stated that we are leaders. San Francisco and Boston are so amazingly walkable and currently have a much higher level of transit availability, thus to be just behind them is really good.

Ellen Reckhow stated that the second point that she wanted to raise is that in many of the comments that were received, people asked; "Why are we not going east? Why aren't we going first to

436 Research Triangle Park and onto Raleigh?” Ellen Reckhow stated that she went back and pulled out the  
437 bus and rail investment plan that was adopted in 2011 (before we had our successful referendum in  
438 Durham). She stated that there were three components to the plan. The first step was expansion of  
439 bus and much of that expansion has been implemented. When it is fully implemented, the plan calls  
440 for a 44% increase in bus service. The second step was a commuter rail from West Durham into  
441 Downtown Durham, onto RTP and then on to Cary, NC State and Raleigh. That plan was not  
442 implemented because we did not have a partner in Wake County and commuter rail would not work if  
443 it cannot go east. The third step is the light rail piece. She wanted to say that we had a structure, and  
444 that the good news is that we will not know for several months what the final plan for Wake County  
445 will be but it’s her understanding that bus is Wake County’s first step also and they do have a later step  
446 in their current plan to implement commuter rail. Ellen Reckhow stated that when we have a partner,  
447 she will certainly be an advocate for doing that piece. She stated that for all the folks that said “Why  
448 aren’t we going to RTP and to Raleigh?” It is an essential element of the plan and when we can do it,  
449 we will do it.

450         Damon Seils thanked Ellen Reckhow for the reminder of the importance of the bus and rail  
451 investment plan in Durham County and how that is important in Orange County as well. Damon Seils  
452 stated that he hears similar comments from folks in Orange County about the Durham Orange corridor.  
453 The Orange Count plan includes bus service improvements, atrain station in Hillsborough, and  
454 improvements along Martin Luther King Jr. corridor in Chapel Hill. This is not just about the light rail  
455 plan; it is about a comprehensive approach to addressing transportation infrastructure in the region.  
456 Damon Seils stated that he wanted to take this opportunity to do something that does not happen  
457 enough and certainly has not happened enough in the last several years in planning and that is to thank  
458 GoTriangle and their staff. Damon Seils wanted to thank them for all the hours of work that they have  
459 given. Damon Seils stated that Patrick McDonough alone has invested many hours in the project.

Damon Seils stated that he knows that there are multiple staff members and consultants involved in the work to do the technical research, public outreach, the collaborative work with the jurisdictions around Durham and Orange counties and to get us to this point. Damon Seils stated that he just wanted to say thank you.

Bernadette Pelissier stated that she wanted to echo Damon Seils comments. Bernadette Pelissier stated that it is amazing how many outreach meetings GoTriangle has had. The amount of outreach has just been incredible. Bernadette Pelissier stated that she also wanted to make another comment. She sat on STAC before she was elected and this project is very near and dear to her. Bernadette Pelissier stated one issue that they talked about in STAC, was that without a regional authority, things could fall apart and now we see that happen in the larger region. Bernadette Pelissier stated though that Durham and Orange County have really done a great job cooperating on the plan for our portion of the region. Bernadette Pelissier stated that she has to commend everyone (staff and elected leaders) because they actually implemented that part of the regional plan. Bernadette Pelissier stated she gets really upset when people say that Wake County opted out. Wake County did not opt out, they just have not opted in yet. Bernadette Pelissier stated that this is what happens when you don't have a regional authority and each individual entity has to decide how and when to opt in. Bernadette Pelissier stated that if we had that, we would not be where we are now. Bernadette Pelissier stated that we really would have all parts where you would have connected all the way from Orange to Durham and then Durham to Wake County. Hopefully, we will get there, but this is what happens when you have each entity that has to make their own decision. Bernadette Pelissier stated that she had been a little worried and she expressed on the GoTriangle Board, where Wake County was revising its plan. She kept saying that it could not be only a Wake County plan. It has to be a regional plan. Bernadette Pelissier stated that she knew that the new general manager (Jeff Mann) had strongly felt that it had to involve Durham County because it is a regional plan. Hopefully, we will get there.

Steve Schewel stated that he really appreciates the historical perspective that Ed Harrison, Bernadette Pelissier, Ellen Reckhow and Chair Mark Kleinschmidt have offered. Steve Schewel stated that he is relatively new to this, but he definitely feels like his four years on the council, this will be one of the most important votes that he will cast. He is really glad Chair Mark Kleinschmidt and Diane Catotti will get a chance to be a part of it. Steve Schewel stated that this is game changing in our region in a way like nothing else that he votes on is. Steve Schewel stated that he is very appreciative of GoTriangle and Damon Seils comments about that. Steve Schewel stated that this is something that we are going to look at (if he is alive when it is finally built), it will be something that everyone will look back on this day as a day that we made a monumental positive decision for our Region and the State. Steve Schewel stated that he is looking forward to casting his vote.

Jenn Weaver stated that her comment is pretty simple and continues on the same thing and this is her third meeting. She promises, whether she continues as an alternate or the main representative from Hillsborough, there will not be long lengths of time without thanks. Jenn Weaver stated as a new person reading through the comments and responses it really helped instill knowledge of the tremendous amount of work that has gone into this entire process over many, many years. Jenn Weaver stated that just to imagine how much work has gone into responding to the comments that are not even complete yet, is pretty overwhelming. And then the actual content of the comments was very useful to her as a new person who was following it mostly from the newspaper. Jenn Weaver stated that to see how the comments are responded to makes her really appreciative. Jenn Weaver stated that she feels that this is really important to the region and she thanks the current Board for all the work that has gone into the project and the staff members as well.

Barry Jacobs stated that he wanted to thank all of the residents who commented. There were a lot of insightful comments and a lot of passionate comments. Barry Jacobs stated that he believes that is what makes the communities interesting has they are because people take the time to actually

508 think things through, they have their own perspective and then they articulate it. Barry Jacobs stated  
509 that he has both colleagues on the Board of Commissioners and residents in parts of Orange County  
510 who did not think that this is a good idea. They believe that it does not serve them. Barry Jacobs  
511 stated that he believes that it's about a bigger vision than parochial interest; whether it is your  
512 neighborhood, your district or your municipality. Barry Jacobs stated that it was interesting that Chair  
513 Mark Kleinschmidt mentioned I-40. Barry Jacobs stated that right after I-40 opened , he droveto  
514 Raleigh to visit somebody and as he was driving down the road; he thought to himself; "Why in the  
515 heck did they build this road that no one is using." Barry Jacobs stated that he seemed to be the only  
516 car on the road. Barry Jacobs stated that he always kept that in mind when he was on planning boards  
517 and other boards, that plan is long term. You have to first have a vision of where you are going and  
518 then create the infrastructure to get you there. Barry Jacobs stated that is what this process is about.  
519 Barry Jacobs stated that he made jokes about the project at a Burlington MPO meeting. The joke was  
520 that it may take a while, but that the project would be built before Duke ever goes to a Football Bowl  
521 game and the next year Duke went to a Football Bowl game. So this may happen sooner than later.  
522 Barry Jacobs stated that this is another testament to a regional vision, to the way in which it is  
523 important for governments to see beyond their borders and to have a larger purpose. Barry Jacobs  
524 believes that there were a lot of good critiques and he shares some of the concerns of the residents.  
525 Overall, he believes that we are heading in the right direction and he is pleased to be a part of the vote.

526 Diane Catotti stated that she echoed the thanks to the GoTriangle, all staff and elected officials.  
527 It has been a long hard process and she believes that all great municipal areas have public transit  
528 systems and she feels strongly that this is the right way to go. Diane Catotti stated that in the spirit of  
529 that, she would like to make a motion to approve the resolution as amended. Bernadette Pelissier  
530 seconded that motion.

Chair Mark Kleinschmidt stated that the motion to endorse the Durham Orange Light Rail Transit Project has been made by Council member Diane Catotti and seconded by commissioner Bernadette Pelissier, is there any other discussion?

Jim Crawford stated that he echoed the thanks that others have given to the various staff that have collaborated on the project over the years. Jim Crawford stated that he just wanted to say from Chatham's point of view, they expect a lot of growth and because of the lake, the only way to get to the major core of the population of their region is around the northern part of the lake. Chatham will be adding in all kinds of traffic on the corridor now. That relates to his other concerns, that the kind of traffic that will come through will go through the New Hope Valley and then will have an impact on the drinking quality of the water. Jim Crawford stated that he applauds this measure on regional grounds, because it will help what is a critical artery both for the drinking water and commuters like his wife who goes from Chatham to as far as Morrisville. This will be one alternative way to manage the traffic and is a lot of forward thinking on the part of the Board. Jim Crawford stated that he gives the project his wholehearted endorsement and will vote for the resolution.

Chair Mark Kleinschmidt asked if there was any other discussion. No other discussion manifested. Chair Mark Kleinschmidt asked all of those in favor to raise your hand. Chair Mark Kleinschmidt asked for all those that oppose. The motion passes unanimously and the resolution is adopted.

**9. Triangle Air Quality Conformity**  
**John Hodges-Copple, TJCOG**

John Hodges-Copple stated that he wanted to briefly bring the MPO up to speed on five air quality issues. John Hodges-Copple stated that the first action that was taken back in September 2015; the completion of air quality conformity for the amended 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and 2016-2025 Transportation Improvement Programs (TIP), which is good for two years. As of the end of September DCHC MPO and CAMPO will no longer need to demonstrate Air Quality

556 Conformity for their long range plan and their Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs). John  
557 Hodges-Copple stated that we are now in attainment. We were non- attainment for a while, then in  
558 maintenance for a while (meeting the standards, but still having to maintain them) and now the 20-  
559 year period of maintenance is done and we will no longer have to prepare Air Quality Conformity  
560 documents. John Hodges-Copple stated that on October 1, 2015 the new Federal Ozone Standard was  
561 lowered. It had been 75 per parts per billion and has been lowered to 70 per parts per billion, but we  
562 are still well below that value. The State Air Quality division does assign a value and in Durham County  
563 it is at 61, Chatham County is at 58 and Wake County is at 63. John Hodges-Copple stated that the  
564 Triangle is well below the standard of 70 parts per billion. Orange County does not have a monitor so  
565 there is no value. John Hodges-Copple stated air quality treatment in future plans; Bill Marley was  
566 before you from FHWA at the last DCHC MPO Board meeting, and stated; "Even though you do not  
567 have to do with conformity, even though you are under the standard, FHWA would still like to see as  
568 you develop your Metropolitan transportation plans that you address air quality and acknowledge its  
569 importance." John Hodges-Copple stated when you do see a new Metropolitan Transportation Plan  
570 next year it will still have an air quality chapter in it and it will explain a lot of issues. John Hodges-  
571 Copple stated that the final thing that he wanted to mention was the air quality monitoring stations.  
572 There was legislation passed in the most recent session that requires the Division of Air Quality to look  
573 at the monitoring stations and perhaps discontinue some. John Hodges-Copple stated that the Division  
574 of Air Quality periodically changes their monitoring stations anyway. For example; they recently  
575 discontinued what had been a particulate monitoring station in Pittsboro but added one along I-40 near  
576 RDU that measures nitrous oxide (one of the criteria pollutants) and will be adding carbon monoxide  
577 monitors to that as well. John Hodges-Copple stated that he asked the Division of Air Quality what was  
578 their process of discontinuing the monitoring stations and they stated that in the spring they will put  
579 out a recommendation with a 30-day comment period so that people will not be surprised. John

Hodges-Copple stated that those were the five items that he wanted to bring to the Board's attention and he asked if there were any questions.

Mark Ahrendsen stated that he wanted to thank John Hodges-Copple and Triangle J Council of Governments (TJCOG) for their work in coordinating all of the air quality conformity initiatives from a regional perspective. Air quality does not respect jurisdictions, so it really is something that you have to look at regionally.

Ellen Reckhow mentioned that during the Federal Certification review, the DCHC MPO received recognition for their air quality work.

Chair Mark Kleinschmidt stated that it is noted that the Board received the air quality report.

#### **REPORTS:**

##### **10. Report from the Board Chair** **Mark Kleinschmidt, Board Chair**

Chair Mark Kleinschmidt reminded everyone that NCDOT was not present today because of the federal government holiday - Veteran's Day.

He thanked the DCHC MPO Board and everyone for the opportunity to serve as the Board Chairman.

Chair Mark Kleinschmidt stated he had asked Mr. Jim G. Crawford, Chatham County, and Mr. Steve Schewel, City of Durham, to serve as the nominating committee. Chair Mark Kleinschmidt stated the action today is for the DCHC MPO Board to make comments and identify the new Chair at the December board meeting as the bylaws require.

Chair Mark Kleinschmidt asked if there were any questions or concerns on the nominations.

Chair Mark Kleinschmidt advised that following the resignation of the Chair of DCHC MPO Board a vacancy existed on the board. Chair Mark Kleinschmidt recommended to the meeting that Steve Schewel be appointed as an interim Chair to fill the vacancy until the next December DCHC MPO Board Meeting or until his successor is elected or appointed.



605 Chair Mark Kleinschmidt advised Steve Schewel to work with MPO LPA Staff for meeting  
606 procedures.

607 **Resolution to Honor the following for Service to the DCHC MPO**

608 A resolution was read and recognized Eric Hallman's service to the DCHC MPO. A motion was  
609 made by Ellen Reckhow and seconded by Bernadette Pelissier to adopt the resolution. The motion was  
610 carried unanimously.

611 A resolution was read that recognized Diane Catotti's service to the DCHC MPO. Chair Mark  
612 Kleinschmidt thanked Diane Catotti for her dedication to the DCHC MPO Board. A motion was made by  
613 Ellen Reckhow and seconded by Steve Schewel. The motion was carried unanimously to adopt  
614 resolution.

615 A resolution was read and recognized Chair Mark Kleinschmidt's service to the DCHC MPO.  
616 Diane Catotti thanked Chair Mark Kleinschmidt for his dedication to the DCHC MPO Board. A motion  
617 was made by Damon Seils and seconded by Ellen Reckhow. The motion was carried unanimously to  
618 adopt resolution.

619 **11. Report from the Technical Committee Chair**

620 Mark Ahrendsen, TC Chair

621  
622 Mark Ahrendsen stated that the Federal Transportation Reauthorization bill was being developed  
623 for the next six years.

624 **12. Report from LPA Staff**

625 Felix Nwoko, LPA Staff

626  
627 Felix Nwoko stated that the staff had no report.

628 Dale McKeel stated that he wanted to mention that Durham will participate in the "Watch for Me  
629 NC" campaign, which is to make drivers aware of the importance of bicyclist safety on Thursday,  
630 November 12, 2015, 11:30 a.m. at Central Park.

631 **13. NCDOT Reports:**

632 There was no report from NCDOT Division 5.

633 There was no report from NCDOT Division 7.

634 There was no report from NCDOT Division 8.

635 There was no report from Julie Bollinger, Transportation Planning Branch, NCDOT.

636 There was no report from Traffic Operations, NCDOT.

637 **INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:**

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

639 Chair Mark Kleinschmidt stated that the recent news articles and updates are attached for  
640 review.

641 **ADJOURNMENT:**

642 There being no further business before the DCHC MPO Board, the meeting was adjourned at  
643 10:50 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for December 9, 2015 at 9:00 a.m., in the City Council  
644 Chambers.