

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

**TECHNICAL COMMITTEE**

**July 27, 2022**

**MEETING MINUTES**

The Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization Technical Committee met on July 27, 2022 at 9:00 a.m. through a teleconferencing platform. The following members were in attendance:

Ellen Beckmann (Chair)	Durham County
Nishith Trivedi (Vice Chair)	Orange County
Scott Whiteman (Member)	Durham County
Tom Devlin (Member)	City of Durham
Tasha Johnson (Member)	City of Durham
Erin Convery (Member)	City of Durham
Eric Vitale (Member)	City of Durham
Tina Moon (Member)	Town of Carrboro
Kent Johnson (Member)	Town of Carrboro
Josh Mayo (Member)	Town of Chapel Hill
Kevin Robinson (Member)	Town of Chapel Hill
Margaret Hauth (Member)	Town of Hillsborough
Brandon Dawson (Member)	Chatham County
Bernard Clark (Member)	Orange County
Matt Day (Member)	TJCOG
Jay Heikes (Member)	GoTriangle
Julie Bogle (Member)	NCDOT TPD
Brandon Jones (Member)	NCDOT Division 5
Kurt Stolka (Member)	The University of North Carolina
Travis Crayton (Member)	Research Triangle Foundation
Joe Geigle (Member)	Federal Highway Administration
Bill Judge (Alternate)	City of Durham
Evian Patterson (Alternate)	City of Durham
David Keilson (Alternate)	NCDOT Division 5
Stephen Robinson (Alternate)	NCDOT Division 7
Bryan Kluchar (Alternate)	NCDOT Division 8
Matt Cecil (Alternate)	Chapel Hill Transit/Planning
Meg Scully (Alternate)	GoTriangle
Nick Pittman	Town of Chapel Hill
Tracy Parrott	NCDOT Division 5
Jeron Monroe	NCDOT Division 8
Nick Morrison	NCDOT Integrated Mobility Division
Frankie Tran	Burlington-Graham MPO
Doug Plachcinski	DCHC MPO
Aaron Cain	DCHC MPO
Andy Henry	DCHC MPO

44	Dale McKeel	DCHC MPO
45	Filmon Fishastion	DCHC MPO
46	Yanping Zhang	DCHC MPO
47	Mariel Klein	DCHC MPO
48	David Miller	DCHC MPO

49 Quorum count: 24 of 31 voting members

50 Chair Ellen Beckmann called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

51 **PRELIMINARIES:**

52 **1. Roll Call**

53 The roll call was completed using the Zoom participant list. Chair Ellen Beckmann  
 54 shared that Kent Johnson, Transportation Planner for the Town of Carrboro, and Bernard Clark,  
 55 Transportation Administrator for Orange County, joined the Technical Committee (TC) as new  
 56 Members. Chair Ellen Beckmann stated that Doug Plachcinski joined the Durham-Chapel Hill-  
 57 Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization (DCHC MPO) as its new Executive Director.

58 **2. Adjustments to the Agenda**

59 Aaron Cain requested that agenda item 5 be referred back to LPA Staff.

60 **3. Public Comments**

61 There were no public comments.

62 **CONSENT AGENDA:**

63 **4. Approval of the May 25, 2022 TC Meeting Minutes**

64 David Miller, DCHC MPO

65 Tom Devlin made a motion to approve the consent agenda. Brandon Jones seconded  
 66 the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

67 **ACTION ITEMS:**

68 **5. Draft FY2024-2033 STIP Update and Proposed Swap**

69 Aaron Cain, DCHC MPO

70 Aaron Cain stated that the original motion of this item was to recommend that the Board  
 71 release the proposed Draft FY2024-2033 STIP swap for a 21-day public comment period.  
 72 However, due to new information provided by NCDOT, additional funding put into transportation

through the recently adopted budget by the state legislature will require the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) unit at NCDOT to reprogram the Draft FY2024-2033 STIP, make schedule adjustments, and add new projects, all of which may make the swap moot. Aaron Cain said more information about this process is forthcoming. Aaron Cain said that the NCDOT SPOT workgroup met the previous week, and their recommendation is to push back the Draft FY2024-2033 STIP swap deadline to March 2023. Aaron Cain stated that once the new draft STIP has been received, there will be an opportunity to review and make comments, and then submit swaps at that time. In light of this information, Aaron Cain requested that the TC not move forward with the original request at this time.

Chair Ellen Beckmann asked when the new Draft FY2024-2033 STIP will become available, and Brandon Jones stated that it is tentatively scheduled for September 2022. Matt Day added that the SPOT workgroup said it would be between four and six weeks for it to become available. Bill Judge stated that if any member potentially impacted by the Draft FY2024-2033 STIP swap is concerned or has questions, that they can contact him. Aaron Cain replied that a 21-day public comment period is planned for the swap, and that a request to do so could appear on the January 2023 TC agenda.

**6. FY2020-29 Transportation Improvement Program Amendment #12**  
**David Miller, DCHC MPO**

David Miller introduced FY2020-29 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment #12, and stated that since some of the projects have a change greater than \$1 million dollars in funding, that the amendment must be released for a 21-day public comment period per the MPO's Public Involvement Plan (PIP).

Tom Devlin made a motion to recommend that the Board release FY2020-29 TIP Amendment #12 for a 21-day public comment period. Brandon Jones seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**INFORMATION ITEMS:**

**7. Greater Triangle Commuter Rail Feasibility Study Results**  
**Katharine Eggleston, Chief Development Officer, Go Triangle**

Katharine Eggleston introduced the draft results of the two-year Greater Triangle Commuter Rail Feasibility Study, referenced the DCHC MPO's 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) that was adopted during the study, and stated its data has been used to update the rail project's statistics and projections. She also shared the projected job and population growth along the rail corridor, which could increase ridership demand.

Katharine Eggleston said that Phase 1 of the feasibility study reviewed a range of scenarios related to geographic service areas and service plans, and the results showed a focus on a West Durham to Garner or Clayton corridor with an "8-2-8-2" frequency service plan. Phase 2 of the feasibility study shows two implementation options, which include Option One as a corridor from West Durham to Garner or Clayton, and Option Two as a starter service between Raleigh Union Station and Auburn Station in Garner.

Katharine Eggleston shared that Option One encompasses the full rail corridor and is estimated to cost between \$2.8 - \$3.2 billion dollars, which is about a 50% increase from the cost estimate developed during Phase 1. Katharine Eggleston stated that the factors contributing to this cost increase include rapid construction cost escalation and market volatility, additional infrastructure requirements identified by Norfolk Southern through capacity modeling, and the cost of technical analysis conducted to identify solutions to add infrastructure in key areas along the rail corridor. Katharine Eggleston said that the updated cost to operate and maintain Option One is projected to be \$42 million dollars per year, that 12,000 to 18,000 boardings per day are expected by 2040, and that start of service is expected between 2033 and 2035, assuming that both a decision is made on this project during the current calendar year, and that funding is available to implement the project.

Katharine Eggleston shared that Option Two, which focuses on a starter service in the Wake corridor from Raleigh Union Station to Auburn Station in Garner, has a cost estimate

125 between \$600 - \$700 million dollars, that it will cost \$15 million dollars per year to operate and  
126 maintain, that 4,000 to 6,000 boardings per day are expected by 2040, and that start of service  
127 is expected between 2031 and 2033. These figures assume that both a decision is made on this  
128 project during the current calendar year, and that funding is available to implement the project.

129 Katharine Eggleston shared that implementation challenges were found to be unequally  
130 distributed along the corridor, and explained unique circumstances by corridor section. These  
131 challenges, include additional infrastructure identified by Norfolk Southern in Durham, an  
132 existing track along the S-line in the central section between Raleigh in Cary that is used by  
133 both CSX and Norfolk Southern, and Cary's implementation of a multimodal project that could  
134 potentially relocate the Amtrak station within its downtown area. Katharine Eggleston shared  
135 that the feasibility study has provided what is considered to be feasible solutions to these  
136 challenges.

137 Katharine Eggleston shared changes in potential funding since first embarking on this  
138 feasibility study, stating that the adoption of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law has made more  
139 funding available for rail infrastructure, causing a reconsideration of grant seeking strategies for  
140 this project. Katharine Eggleston said that the Capital Investment Grants program pertaining to  
141 transit is a concern, as the rail project scoring criteria for potential funding is lower than desired,  
142 though the project's workgroup is developing a grant proposal that would help fund  
143 infrastructure components that are needed through various programs that also have wide-  
144 reaching benefits beyond commuter rail to freight or inner-city traffic within the corridor.

145 Katharine Eggleston stated that the next steps include obtaining stakeholder input,  
146 releasing a finalized feasibility study document for public consumption coinciding with a 30-day  
147 to 45-day public comment period, refining a financial plan and grant strategy, and making a  
148 decision how, or if, to move forward with the project.

149 Chair Ellen Beckmann asked about the timeline for the decision-making process, and  
150 Katharine Eggleston replied that a public release of information could occur in late-August

151 followed by the 45-day public comment period that would extend the timeline to the end of  
152 September, and a public engagement summary for stakeholders is anticipated by late-October.  
153 Katharine Eggleston stated that presentations are also scheduled for other organizations, and  
154 anticipates that they will help solidify the decision-making timeline by the end of the year.

155 Chair Ellen Beckmann said the recommended Durham Transit Plan was recently  
156 released for public comment, which includes funding for commuter rail projects based on  
157 GoTriangle's previously anticipated cost and project delivery by 2030, but that this new  
158 information makes both the timing of the Plan off, and the expected cost for Durham unclear  
159 due to the cost increase. Chair Ellen Beckmann added that the timing of the anticipated  
160 adoption of the Durham Transit Plan and the decision by GoTriangle will be challenging, as the  
161 finalized Durham Transit Plan is expected to be presented between late-October to November  
162 for adoption. Katharine Eggleston said that there may be opportunities to advance rail  
163 infrastructure as standalone projects.

164 Andy Henry asked what percentage of capital would need to come from the federal side  
165 to move forward with the rail project, and Katharine Eggleston replied that with an assumption  
166 that 50% is coming from the Federal Transit Administration's New Starts program, that two-  
167 thirds of the capital cost is coming from the Wake County plan, and that Durham's contribution  
168 is set at what is in the recommended Durham Transit Plan, that there is a financial gap between  
169 \$500 - \$600 million dollars.

170 Chair Ellen Beckmann asked if Option Two were to move forward, would a New Starts  
171 grant award be sought. Katharine Eggleston replied that while Option Two's scoring criteria for  
172 funding is borderline, its scoring criteria is being updated. Katharine Eggleston added that if  
173 there was interest in moving forward with Option Two, other potential funding sources would be  
174 sought, such as federal loan programs. Chair Ellen Beckmann said that she views Option Two  
175 as the more viable way to move forward because of Option One's funding demands, and the  
176 timing of and priorities in the recommended Durham Transit Plan.

**8. DCHC MPO Certification Review Results**  
**Joe Geigle, Federal Highway Administration**

Joe Geigle introduced the recently completed joint transportation planning certification review of DCHC MPO, and explained that the review is required by law, used to verify compliance with current transportation law and planning regulations, and used as an opportunity to share best practices.

Joe Geigle stated that no corrective actions were identified. Joe Geigle said that that three recommendations were identified, which include updating the DCHC MPO Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) while also acknowledging that he was aware that it is slated to be updated after the next census update, adding detail to the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) tasks assigned to municipalities, and adding detail to the descriptions that staff calculated for the revenue in the MTP. Joe Geigle commended DCHC MPO for its level of commitment to utilize public engagement to inform its decision making. Joe Geigle shared that this review finds that DCHC MPO meets federal planning requirements. Joe Geigle also encouraged that the roles and responsibilities of project partners be clearly defined when submitting grant applications, as not doing so could affect future reviews.

Chair Ellen Beckmann and Doug Plachcinski commended staff for a successful review.

**9. Status Report on Locally Administered Projects (LAP)**  
**Dale McKeel, DCHC MPO**

Dale McKeel stated that when the DCHC MPO adopted its federal funding policy in November 2021, a status report on Locally Administered Projects (LAP) provided twice per year became required, and that the projects reported only include funds controlled by DCHC MPO such as Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), Surface Transportation Block Grant – Direct Attributable (STBG-DA) and Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ), but also LAP projects funded through the SPOT process. Dale McKeel explained that representatives from each of the MPO's jurisdictions will provide their status report, and that feedback on this process is welcome.

Tina Moon shared the Town of Carrboro's projects, which include C-5181 – Jones Creek Greenway, U-4726DF – Bicycle Detector Loops, C-5650 – South Greensboro Street Sidewalk, EL-4828A – Morgan Creek Greenway, and BL-0044 – NC 54 Signalized Crossing in Carrboro.

Josh Mayo shared the Town of Chapel Hill's projects, which include C-5179 – Estes Drive Bike & Ped Improvements, EB-5721 – Fordham Sidepath, EB-5886B – Estes Drive Ext. Bike & Ped Improvements, EB-5998 – Fordham Sidepath Extension, U-4726IK – Homestead Road Bike & Ped Improvements, and BL-0044 – NC 54 Pedestrian Improvements.

Eric Vitale shared the City of Durham's projects, which include C-56505I – Durham Neighborhood Bike Routes I, BL-0031 – Durham Neighborhood Bike Routes II, C-5605E – Durham Bicycle Lane Striping, BL-0028 – Durham Bike Facilities II, BL-0030 – Vertical Protection, C-4928 – Morreene Road, U-4724 – Cornwallis Road, U-4726HN – Hillandale Road, U-4726HO – Carpenter-Fletcher Road, EB-5720 – R. Kelly Bryant Bridge Trail, EB-5904 – Durham Rail Trail, EB-5837 – Third Fork Creek Trail Extension, C-5183B – Alston Avenue, EB-5708 – NC 54, EB-5704 – Raynor Street, EB-5703 – LaSalle Street, EB-5715 – US 501 Bypass (N. Duke Street), EB-5835 – NC 55 Sidewalk, EB-5834 – NC 157 (Guess Road), and C-5605H – Downtown Durham Wayfinding Program.

Jay Heikes shared GoTriangle's projects, which include TL-0018 – 15-501/Eastowne Transit Access Improvements, and TL-0025 – NC 54 / Falconbridge Transit Access Improvements.

Chair Ellen Beckmann thanked Dale McKeel and local staff for the presentation, and suggested that these presentations include an introduction about LAP projects and their approval process to demonstrate their significance and time commitment, and Dale McKeel agreed and stated he would expand on the introduction in the agenda packet moving forward.

**10. IJJA Standing Update**  
**Marisel Klein, LPA Staff**



Mariel Klein shared current and pending grant applications from the DCHC MPO and its member jurisdictions, information on notice of funding opportunities, and mentioned the creation of the DCHC MPO IJA Project Catalog, where DCHC MPO jurisdictions can submit project ideas that may be eligible for future grant opportunities.

Chair Ellen Beckmann requested that as GoTriangle develops its grant strategy for its commuter rail project, that those projects be added to this list. Chair Ellen Beckmann asked if NCDOT was submitting grants, and if so, if they have been incorporated in this information. Mariel Klein replied that she had not sought out their grant applications, but that this was a good idea moving forward. Aaron Cain added that DCHC MPO has been in contact with John Grant and his NCDOT division about potentially partnering on a Safe Streets for All grant application.

Stephen Robinson said that NCDOT Division 7 has not submitted any grants recently because they are waiting for opportunities that align with its needs, though they would be open to being a project partner on future DCHC MPO grant applications.

#### **REPORTS FROM STAFF:**

##### **11. Report from Staff**

**Doug Plachcinski, Executive Director, DCHC MPO**

Doug Plachcinski updated the group on UPWP projects, FY 2024-2033 TIP Development and funding changes, and the US 70 Corridor Study.

##### **12. Report from the Technical Committee Chair**

**Ellen Beckmann, TC Chair**

Chair Ellen Beckmann stated that the recommended Durham County Transit Plan is currently open for public comment through mid-August, and that an open house is scheduled for July 28, 2022 at Durham Station.

##### **13. NCDOT Reports**

**Brandon Jones (David Keilson), Division 5 – NCDOT**

Brandon Jones provided details on the sales tax revenue and increase in projected revenue that is positively impacting the reprioritization of the Draft FY2024-2033 STIP. Chair

256 Ellen Beckmann asked for an explanation on the difference between projects that get funded  
 257 through the Highway Fund and Highway Trust Fund, and Brandon Jones replied that the 2%  
 258 sales tax revenue this year goes to the Highway Fund and is used for maintenance  
 259 programming, and the Highway Trust Fund is used for capital programs or the STIP.

260 Brandon Jones also mentioned that the East End Connector opened on June 30, but  
 261 that there is still work being conducted.

262 **Wright Archer (Pat Wilson, Stephen Robinson), Division 7 – NCDOT**

263 Stephen Robinson shared that paving for the Franklin-Main Street resurfacing project is  
 264 near completion, which will be followed by pavement markings within a month. Stephen  
 265 Robinson said that the I-40 widening project may require intermittent night lane closures.

266  
 267 **Patrick Norman (Bryan Kluchar), Division 8 - NCDOT**

268 Bryan Kluchar had no additional report.

269 **Julie Bogle, Transportation Planning Division – NCDOT**

270 Julie Bogle had no additional report.

271 **John Grant, Traffic Operations – NCDOT**

272 John Grant had no additional report.

273 **Nick Morrison, Integrated Mobility Division – NCDOT**

274 Chair Ellen Beckmann stated that Nick Morrison left the TC meeting early, but shared his  
 275 information about an NCDOT Integrated Mobility Division (IMD) multimodal updates webinar  
 276 scheduled for July 27, 2022 in his absence.

277 **Adjourn**

278 Chair Ellen Beckmann confirmed the next TC meeting will be in person. There being no further  
 279 business, the meeting was adjourned by Chair Ellen Beckmann at 10:48 a.m.