

April 20, 2022

Joey Hopkins
Deputy Chief Engineer – Planning
1 South Wilmington Street
Raleigh, NC 27601-1552

Dear Joey,

We are providing this letter to communicate several comments and concerns that have been raised at NCAMPO regarding the programming and upcoming dissemination of the preliminary draft STIP. NCAMPO continues to support an ongoing, collaborative, and cooperative process to develop, update, and maintain the STIP and the various TIPs for each region of the state.

To that end, NCAMPO representatives participated in the Prioritization Workgroup in the summer and fall of 2021 as the workgroup developed recommendations for a process to help NCDOT develop the preliminary draft STIP. This effort resulted in several recommendations on the general process and framework to develop the preliminary draft STIP. As you know, these recommendations were provided by NCDOT staff on behalf of the Prioritization Workgroup to the NC Board of Transportation (NCBOT) in early 2022. Since that time the Prioritization Workgroup and MPOs have not been engaged in any follow on or detailed work related to the development of the preliminary draft STIP. Earlier this week MPOs were informed that NCDOT's expectation was for each MPO to present the preliminary draft STIP. NCDOT staff also informed the NCAMPO Board that another webinar designed for local officials would be held later, but little information has been shared on the purpose or desired outcomes for that meeting.

MPOs have not been engaged by NCDOT in the detailed process to implement the Prioritization Workgroup's programming framework recommendations. The Workgroup ceased meeting after the initial process framework recommendations were presented to the NCBOT. Requests and inquiries by several MPOs to collaborate with NCDOT on the programming step have not been fulfilled. As a result, MPOs do not have the knowledge of how NCDOT developed the preliminary draft STIP and do not possess information on the various revisions and changes that have been made by NCDOT to the STIP. In short, NCAMPO does not believe coordination and collaboration have occurred beyond the initial step of developing the recommended framework for the NCBOT. NCDOT staff have also provided a schedule for the next several months that may not provide adequate time for the project "swap" process. This issue will be further challenged by the lack of detailed information about NCDOT's preliminary programming decisions.

NCAMPO recommends the various Division Engineers and/or regional STIP Unit staff be tasked with providing the presentations on the preliminary draft STIP. Additionally, NCAMPO recommends more coordination and outreach for each MPO. NCAMPO requests NCDOT provide a summary or crosswalk of changes for projects from the current STIP to the preliminary draft STIP as has been provided in past STIP cycles.

We appreciate the opportunity to work with NCDOT to continue to evolve and advance the development of the next STIP and look forward to seeing the benefits of this effort.

Sincerely,

Chris Lukasina, AICP, GISP
President, NCAMPO