

## MINUTES

### TECHNICAL COORDINATING COMMITTEE

Wednesday, September 21, 2022

### HYBRID MEETING DUE TO COVID-19 PANDEMIC

NC Research Campus  
Kannapolis City Hall  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room  
401 Laureate Way  
Kannapolis, NC 28081

#### Members:

Phillip Graham	City of Concord*
Susie Morris	Cabarrus County
Ed Muire	Rowan County & Town of Cleveland
Stuart Basham	NCDOT Div. 10*
Wendy Brindle	City of Salisbury*
Erin Burris	Town of Mt. Pleasant
Jason Hord	Town of Granite Quarry
Joel Taylor	Town of Spencer
Mallory Hodgson	Town of Harrisburg*
Richard Smith	City of Kannapolis
Brian Brown	Town of Landis
Fred Haith	NCDOT Division 9

\*Met in person

#### Others:

Phil Conrad	CRMPO Director*
Wendy Miller	CRMPO Staff
Phillip Craver	NCDOT Div 9
Victoria Baliff	City of Salisbury
Scott Miller	NCDOT Div 10*
Jason Schronce	NCDOT STIP
Roger Castillo	NCDOT TPD
LeDerick Blackburn	City of Concord
Teresa Robinson	NCDOT STIP
Loretta Barren	FHWA*
Brad Lagano	City of Concord
Valerie Steele	Mid-Carolina Airport*
Andy Bailey	NCDOT TPD
Steve Blount	Town of Spencer
Kristy Cowden	Rowan Transit*
Phil Collins	Cabarrus County

The September 21, 2022 meeting of the Cabarrus Rowan MPO TCC was called to order by MPO Director Phil Conrad. Director Conrad started the meeting by welcoming the members and called the roll of eligible TCC members and determined that a quorum was met. Director Conrad continued on by asking if there were any adjustments to the meeting agenda. Mr. Franklin Gover asked that an Item 7A – the allocation of funds to perform a planning study of US 152 Corridor be added to the agenda. Mr. Richard Smith made a motion to accept the addition to the agenda as presented and the motion was seconded by Ms. Susie Morris. Director Conrad continued by asking if there were any speakers from the floor. With no speakers being heard, Director Conrad moved to the next item of business.

### Approval of Minutes

Director Conrad called the TCC members' attention to the meeting minutes of the August 17, 2022 TCC meetings included in their meeting packets. Director Conrad asked if there were any corrections or additions to the minutes. With no corrections or additions being heard, Ms. Susie Morris made a motion to approve the meeting minutes as presented. Mr. Richard Smith seconded the motion and the TCC members voted unanimously to approve.

### **NCDOT Request to Segment U-5706B**

CRMPO Director Phil Conrad presented information on the request to segment the NC 73 widening project U-5706B. Director Conrad noted that with the release of the Draft STIP, it has become apparent that R-5706B or the NC 73 widening may face an uphill climb to gain funding in the near term. NCDOT staff is recommended segmenting this 11 mile project into 2 separate projects that would be scored and programmed independently. The break point would be at the I-85 interchange. NCDOT has been conducting an express design on this corridor to ascertain a better cost estimate. As noted this segmentation would require another project slot and additional points from the MPO and Division office to obtain funding in future STIPs. An email from Division 10 staff was included in the packet as attachment 3.

Mr. Stuart Basham, Division 10, discussed the project and noted that the A segment has funding for right-of-way in 2023 and construction in 2026. The B segment has been stalled and was caught in the 2019 funding shut down. Right-of-way is unfunded and the construction costs have increased significantly to \$70 million. The proposed segmentation is BA from Poplar Tent Road to I-85 and BB from I-85 to US 29/NC 601. The cross-section is four-lane with a median. The segmentation is expected to increase the project scoring. An additional slot for scoring will be required in addition to the current U-5706B slot. Mr. Conrad asked if committed projects are required to use an additional slot? Mr. Argabright noted that because the U-5706B project was not committed in either the draft STIP or re-released STIP, it isn't considered committed. Mr. Conrad said the project was committed at one point in the past but the right-of-way slipped. Mr. Argabright said that even if a project was once committed, it can fall out due to cost increases but the SPOT group will need to know this is a carry forward project. Mr. Basham said Division 10 will coordinate with the SPOT group to create the split and pointed out that the project should score well. Mr. Conrad noted that assigning points will come later and require additional points for 2 separate projects.

Mr. Phillip Graham made a motion to recommend that the TAC consider endorsing segmentation of the NC 73 widening (U-5706B) from Poplar Tent Road to US 29/NC 601 and Ms. Susie Morris seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

### **FY 2020-2029 MTIP Modification #14**

Director Phil Conrad reminded the TCC members that the MPO staff typically brings amendments or modifications from recent NCDOT Board of Transportation agendas to the TCC/TAC for consideration. The project modification is the delay in construction to FY 24 for the North Washington Street sidewalk (BL-0043). Ms. Erin Burris with the Town of Mount Pleasant noted that the town needed more time for the project and the construction will only be delayed by one year. With no questions or comments, Ms. Erin Burris made a motion to recommend that the CRMPO TAC consider endorsing Modification #14 to the FY 2020-2029 MTIP. Mr. Phillip Graham seconded that motion and the TCC members voted unanimously to approve.

### **Proposed STPBG Call for New Projects**

Director Phil Conrad explained that the MPO issued a call for project proposals for the STPBG funding source to the MPO. The call concluded on September 2<sup>nd</sup>. Staff received a total of 5 project requests from 3 project sponsors. The total cost of these projects is \$35.5 million. Director Conrad reviewed the STPBG funding allocations available through 2033 and noted that the balance of funds requested is within the allocation. Mr. Ed Muire asked about the table and wanted clarification about the federal funding versus the total. Mr. Graham pointed out the \$44 million includes the local match. The project sponsors presented information about the 5 projects.

Mr. Philip Graham of Concord discussed the Derita Road widening and the overruns experienced due to the extensive utilities issues which doubled the cost of the project. Mr. Muire asked Mr. Graham if the City of Concord had been aware of the match in meeting the cost overruns, if they would have committed to the project. Mr. Graham said he couldn't speak for the elected officials but likely yes as the project is needed for the area. Mr. Muire was concerned about the likelihood of this happening in the future and the precedent that this sets. He asked if someone saw this coming and was there an opportunity to consider the situation earlier in the process. Mr. Graham said it was unfortunate and from his conversations with Division 10, this project was the worst NCDOT has seen. Mr. Basham said that the utilities were a big problem on the project as well as cost increases on materials. The Department didn't realize the magnitude of the overruns until close to the end of the project which correlated with the COVID 19 shut downs. He said it was definitely an anomaly and there are now processes in place internally to do more frequent cost estimates, however, fluctuations in the market are still out of NCDOT's control. Mr. Basham noted that Division 10 is trying to meet the City in the middle.

Ms. Mallory Hodgson of Harrisburg presented their three projects. The NC 49 corridor safety project includes medians, turn lanes, driveway closures, improved pedestrian access and other aesthetic improvements. The Hickory Ridge Road Sidewalk project has a number of challenges including creek crossings and the bulk of the cost of the project is a separate pedestrian bridge. There is also a connection to the greenway project. Mr. Conrad noted that this project would likely be considered for future TAP funding. The Caldwell Road Extension Phase 1 is a future 2 lane median divided road with a ten-foot pedestrian side path. The proposed project is a 3,000 foot segment north from the intersection with NC 49. The expectation is that developers will complete the connecting road to US 29. Ms. Morris asked if the total distance of the road is 2.5 miles and how this project fits into the Morehead West/Harrisburg Area Plan. Ms. Hodges said the project is part of the plan to connect NC 49 to US 29. Ms. Loretta Barren asked if this project is on the Federal Aid system. Mr. Conrad noted Caldwell Road is not, however there may be a way to swap for State Trust funds. Mr. Argabright asked if the facility would be on the State system. Ms. Hodgson said Caldwell would remain a City street. Mr. Argabright noted that the road would need to be functionally classed as more than a local street. Ms. Barren said she is not sure the project will qualify for federal funds. Mr. Fred Haith asked if there is a path to eligibility for the project. Ms. Barren said the project needs to have the connectivity and be a full project. Mr. Conrad said there needs to be additional discussion on the project and wanted to be sure he had the correct total of \$6 million. He will adjust the table accordingly and the town will remove the Hickory Ridge Road sidewalk project and bring it back for TAP funds during that upcoming call for projects.

Ms. Wendy Brindle of Salisbury presented the Salisbury Main Street safety improvement project. She noted that the project has had extensive community input and the City Council adopted the concept plan for a total of 17 blocks of safety, parking, striping, pedestrian safety and landscaping improvements. This project is a 6-block portion in downtown. The project request is for \$7.4

million. Mr. Gover asked if the City has budgeted for the project design. Ms. Brindle said the RFQ for the design is being released in October.

Director Conrad asked for questions or comments. Mr. Muire asked if the vote on the projects should be individual or a package. Mr. Conrad said it could be as a package. Mr. Gover asked if the vote should wait until October to determine the Caldwell Road eligibility. Mr. Conrad said that staff will work on the Caldwell Road eligibility between now and the TAC meeting. Ms. Mallory Hodgson made a motion to recommend that the TAC consider endorsing the four STPBG projects for funding with the possibility that the Caldwell Road project may not qualify for STPBG funds. Mr. Phillip Graham seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.

### **Proposed STBG-DA Fund Swaps**

Director Conrad introduced Mr. Van Argabright with the NCDOT STIP unit. Mr. Argabright discussed the STBG-DA program which began in the mid-1990s to allow large MPOs designated as Transportation Management Areas (TMAs) to direct how these federal dollars should be spent. The funds are part of the state's federal apportionment and flow to the MPOs through NCDOT. The MPOs developed processes to call for projects and administer the funds through the Local Programs Division units. The complex rules to use federal funds can slow down the delivery of projects with local jurisdictions. The delays result in NCDOT being unable to obligate the state's funds and creates unobligated balances and limits the amount of funds NCDOT can request before the August Redistribution. This year NCDOT was able to obligate funds and will receive \$277 million in August Redistribution from the federal government. To increase the amount NCDOT can request during the August Redistribution and to aid local jurisdictions in administering projects, NCDOT is proposing to swap unobligated and future programmed STBG-DA funds in the CR MPO. There are two options to fund swap – most highway projects which are eligible for state trust funds and bicycle and pedestrian project eligible for STBG Any Area funds. The benefits are that it is simpler for local jurisdictions to deliver projects with state funds, a larger pool of highway projects can be considered for CR MPO discretionary funds, and matches and schedules remain the same. Previous swaps allowed NCDOT to receive \$127 million more in August Redistribution than would have otherwise been available.

NCDOT is preparing for 2023 August Redistribution and is planning to obligate as much as possible in each federal funding category through fund swaps and obligating all TAP and CMAQ funding. NCDOT is requesting a swap of \$12 million in CR MPO STBG-DA funds for FY 2023 and 2024 for the I-5858 Interstate 85 Pavement Rehabilitation in Salisbury (\$6,466,885) and U-4910 Derita Road Widening in Cabarrus County (\$5,533,115). Mr. Conrad asked about using the the STBG Any Area funds through the STI. Mr. Argabright noted that state funds are easier to use and open more project options such as the Caldwell Road project could have been funded if it was a state route. He said they are starting the swap early to be prepared for next August redistribution.

Director Conrad asked for questions or comments. Mr. Phillip Graham made a motion to recommend that the TAC consider endorsing the proposed STBG \$12 million funding swap with the two CR MPO projects in FY 2023 and 2024. Mr. Fred Haith seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.

### **Proposed NC 152 Corridor Study with PL Funds**

Director Phil Conrad invited Mr. Franklin Gover from the Town of China Grove to present the NC 152 Corridor Study request. Mr. Gover presented the Town of China Grove's request to do a study of the NC 152 corridor at Exit 68 with planning funds. The industrial growth in the area around Exit 68 has been booming and the traffic counts have been increasing significantly. The Town of China Grove is requesting \$60,000 in PL funds to accomplish the study. Mr. Conrad asked if the Town has the local match budgeted. Mr. Gover replied that the Town does.

Director Conrad asked for questions or comments. Mr. Conrad pointed out there is already a study for South Main Street underway and the study funds would flow through the City of Concord Finance Department. Mr. Conrad said there may be other study needs and other communities with similar requests pending and that these additional studies would require an amendment to the UPWP. Mr. Richard Smith made a motion to recommend that the TAC consider allocating \$60,000 in PL funds to China Grove to undertake a planning study of the NC 152 Corridor at Exit 68. Mr. Fred Haith seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.

### **Reports/CRMPO Business**

**1. Local Reports – MPO/NC DOT Division 9 and 10/PTD** - Mr. Fredrick Haith, NCDOT Mr. Stuart Basham, NCDOT Division 10 representative called the TCC members' attention to a spreadsheet of Division 10 project updates and highlighted some of the ongoing projects in Division 10. Mr. Basham noted that U-3440 is 89% complete with opening scheduled for April 2023, Centergrove Church Road is 93% complete with an October opening, S. Lentz Harness Shop Road is 61% complete and opens in December, Miami Church Road over Dutch Buffalo Creek has been awarded with completion in May 2023, and NC 24/27 in Locust has been let with completion in July 2023. Mr. Basham stated that NCDOT Division 10 will hold a week of drop-in meetings on the draft STIP from September 26th through 30th at the Division 10 offices at 716 W. Main Street, Albemarle.

Mr. Fred Haith, Division 9 representative called members' attention to the Division 9 spreadsheet included in their packets. Mr. Haith noted that the Division 9 will hold a week of drop-in meetings on the draft STIP from October 3rd through 7th at the Division 9 offices at 375 Silas Creek Parkway, Winston-Salem. He reported he had no additional information to report but would gladly answer any questions.

**2. Rowan Transit System Section 5310 Grant Application Letter of Support** – Director Conrad introduced Ms. Valerie Steele to report on behalf of the Rowan County Airport and Transit Authority. Ms. Steele presented the Section 5310 grant application for Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities. The request is for \$375,000 with 50% from the grant and 50% match from contract revenue. The funds support Rowan Vocational Opportunities Inc, Trinity Living Center and Davita Kidney Care. Mr. Conrad noted that the letter of support is in the agenda packet and will be included for consent in moving forward to the TAC in September.

**3. TAP Fund Project Call** - Mr. Conrad informed the members that the TAP Fund Call for Projects will be issued soon and the deadline will be November 30<sup>th</sup>. There is \$4.1 million in funds available for TAP projects and Harrisburg's sidewalk project is already in the queue.

**4. Special Studies Update- Rowan County and Town of China Grove** - Mr. Franklin Gover reported that the Town of China Grove Main Street Corridor Study is underway and the public input portion is complete with a community survey on the project. The town is working on recommendations with the consulting team and will hold a community charrette on October 31<sup>st</sup>.

**4. Rider Transit Program of Projects** – Director Conrad presented the Draft Rider Program of Projects located in the agenda packet. Staff met with Andy Christy, Rider Transit Manager, to review the transit Program of Projects which will go out for public comment from October 3<sup>rd</sup> through October 31<sup>st</sup>. The Program of Projects will come back to the MPO for approval in January 2023.

**5. MPO Newsletter** – Ms. Wendy Miller reported on the upcoming Fall 2022 CR MPO Newsletter which will include information on the adopted 2050 MTP, the re-release of the STIP, updates on project data for the Airport Parkway, Spencer Greenway, and other projects as well as the project selection process for the STBG-DA funds and Call for TAP and Carbon Reduction Program (CRP) funding. MPO staff would like to hear of other projects or programs of interest by the TCC member jurisdictions.

**6. Proposed GHG Performance Measure by FHWA – Federal Register Comments due October 13th** - Ms. Wendy Miller provided information on the Greenhouse Gas Performance Measure and Emission Targets. On July 7, 2022, FHWA announced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking for states and municipalities to track and reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The Rulemaking proposes to amend regulations governing National Performance Management Measures to require State DOTs and MPOs to establish declining carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) targets and a method for the measurement and reporting of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions associated with transportation under the Highways title of the United States Code.

The performance measures will apply to States and MPOs with National Highway System (NHS) mileage within their geographic boundaries and they have flexibility to set targets appropriate to their communities as long as the targets reduce emissions over time. The proposed rule requires biennially reporting on progress and requires FHWA to assess significant progress toward achieving the targets. FHWA will not mandate reduction target levels and MPOs may use alternate methods such as the regional Travel Demand Models (MOVES) to calculate GHG emission reductions. The goal is to reach net-zero by the year 2050. Comments on the Rulemaking are due by October 13, 2022 thru the Federal Register.

MPO staff will consider submitting Federal Register comments on the proposed Rulemaking on the Greenhouse Gas Emissions Measure as the national AMPO will be submitting comments. A timeline for establishing the baseline targets and reporting may be adjusted based on Rulemaking comments before the final Rulemaking is promulgated by FHWA. Mrs. Loretta Barren with FHWA pointed out that the MPO will be required to coordinate with both NCDOT and with CRAFT in developing a joint regional target. She encouraged the MPO to consider commenting on the joint target aspect of the Rulemaking.

### **Informational Items**

Director Conrad called attention to the following informational items included in their packets:

- RIDER Transit, Salisbury Transit, and MTC Ridership

➤ TPD Newsletter

➤ CRAFT Meeting Minutes

**Next scheduled meeting : October 19, 2022**

With no further business to discuss, Mr. Phillip Graham made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mrs. Wendy Brindle seconded the motion and the meeting was adjourned.