

FRENCH BROAD RIVER

METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

Staff Report & Recommendations

Item 3A:

January 9, 2020 Minutes

French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization

Minutes from the TCC meeting on January 9, 2020

ATTENDANCE:

Josh O'Conner	Tristan Winkler	Zia Rifkin	Nick Kroncke
Emily Scott-Cruz	Brian Burgess	Hannah Cook	Troy Wilson
Stephen Sparks	Steve Williams	Daniel Heyman	Nathan Bennett
Eric Rufa	Joel Setzer	Autumn Radcliff	Janna Peterson
Jessica Trotman	Daniel Sellers	Mike Dawson	Dan Baechtold
Matt Cable	Eunice Lovi	Jodie Ferguson	Jessica Morriss
Spencer McDonald	Reese Darnell	Chris Lee	Lonnie Watkins
Kenny Armstrong	Joel Setzer	Christ Medlin	

WELCOME AND HOUSEKEEPING

Josh O'Conner opened the meeting, welcomed everyone and introductions followed.

CONSENT AGENDA

Josh O'Conner indicated that the Consent Agenda included the November 21, 2019 minutes; the 5310 Call for Projects; the STBGDA & TAPDA Call for Projects; and the Highland Lake Road TIP Removal Request. He requested approval for the Agenda at this time, as well.

Dan Baechtold moved to approve the Consent Agenda and the Agenda as presented. Eric Rufa seconded and the motion carried as all were in favor.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No one made any public comments.

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BUSINESS

FY 2020 UPWP Amendment & TIP Amendment

At the November 2019 MPO Board meeting, MPO Board Chair, Commissioner Lapsley introduced a proposal to increase funding at the MPO to increase staffing levels by one senior planner and to adjust compensation. In order to do this, the MPO would be able to pay for 80% of this effort through federal Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) funds, the other 20% would be required to come from local dues. The total level of local dues for the increase would be \$9,597. The total level of STBG funding for the increase would Be \$47,984. The local portion of the increase would be borne by the Counties of Buncombe, Haywood, Henderson, and Madison and the Cities/Towns of Asheville, Hendersonville, and Waynesville. The change would be implemented February 1, 2020, if approved, and would be budgeted in the FY 2021 Planning Work Program. To make this amendment, a TIP Amendment would also have to be made to flex more STBGDA funds to be used for planning.

Discussion occurred about using federal planning (PL) funding for staffing and MPO staff shared that those funds have been maxed out for staff support. Additionally, in order to accommodate another staff position, STBG funds would need to be flexed in order to do so.

Jessica Morriss moved to recommend sending the request for increased local dues to the MPO Board for consideration of approval. Autumn Radcliff seconded and the motion carried without further discussion.

Draft FY 2021 UPWP

The French Broad River MPO is required to develop a Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and present a draft in January with the final approval in March. The UPWP is a federally mandated document for MPO's to produce that is, essentially, the MPO's budget. This includes line items of work for MPO staff as well as studies being carried out using federal planning funds. Major changes between the FY 20 and FY 21 UPWP include the expectation that the MTP 2045 would be completed early in the fiscal year so less funding would be allocated for developing the MTP; more funding allocated towards TIP Development/Prioritization to go along with P6.0; more funding allocated to Special Study Coordination with the Regional Transit Study and Corridor Studies expected to be on-going; more funding allocated to Statewide Coordination with MPO Staff on the Statewide Resiliency Workgroup, SPOT Workgroup, Non-Motorized Planning Workgroup, and Data Users Workgroup.

Nathan Bennett moved to recommend that the MPO Board consider approval of the Draft FY 2021 UPWP. Jodie Ferguson seconded and the motion carried without further discussion.

Land Use Study- Preferred Growth Scenario

In November 2019, the Land Use Study consultant provided a presentation on the population and employment data projections for the 2045 Travel Demand Model. In summary, the study looks at where

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growth in the region is expected to occur and assigns population and employment projections to geographic Transportation Analysis Zones (TAZs). Census data, local development and employment data were compiled for the 2015 base year and used to project out to 2045.

The consultant developed and presented three growth scenarios: (1) Baseline, (2) Alternative Growth and, (3) WalkUPs. The consultant's presentation and links to the outputs of each scenario are on the MTP page on the FBRMPO website at: <http://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/mtp/> and linked below. The MPO Board made the recommendation that in order to allow time to review the outputs, this item should be reconsidered in January 2020.

2045 Land Use Study Presentation: <http://frenchbroadrivermpo.org/wpcontent/uploads/2019/11/TCC-and-Board-Meetings-November-21.pdf>

The following are different links with the WalkUP Scenario outputs, based on FBRMPOs Congestion Management Plan:

Household change: <https://arcg.is/0Civju>

Household population change: <https://arcg.is/0LKOWK>

Total employment change: <https://arcg.is/WO0vy>

Employment change by type: <https://arcg.is/9454K>

The following are different links with the Alternative Growth Scenario outputs, based on GroWNC's "Efficient Growth" Scenario:

Household change: <https://arcg.is/01Ou1q>

Household population change: <https://arcg.is/bqrnz>

Total employment change: <https://arcg.is/0j9z10>

Employment change by type: <https://arcg.is/1aiyH9>

The following are different links with the Business as Usual Scenario outputs;

Household change: <https://arcg.is/nSiyb>

Household population change: <https://arcg.is/mnyi>

Total employment change: <https://arcg.is/qG1fK>

Employment change by type: <https://arcg.is/0OGXXX>

Discussion occurred about the Efficient Growth and WalkUP scenarios. Tristan Winkler shared that the Efficient Growth scenario is based on the data developed through the GroWNC project. the WalkUP scenario focuses on those densely populated urban areas that are more likely to experience a higher rate of growth. Even as more of the growth is allocated to walkable areas, these are still incremental changes, showing slight differences from business-as-usual. Tristan Winkler noted that the Prioritization Subcommittee met this week and recommended the walkable growth and business-as-usual models as the growth models to choose between. Daniel Sellers shared that more and more growth could move towards

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Buncombe County with less of the region's population allocated to Transylvania and Madison Counties. If more growth is allocated to the urbanized areas, traffic increases could be expected. The WalkUP scenario increases density, and models additional traffic in those areas. Tristan Winkler communicated that this data could be distilled down to "what kind of growth in the region should be planned for by the MPO?" Growth could be planned for in a slightly different manner, which would allocate more growth to the densely populated urban areas. He continued that the WalkUP scenario is more palatable since it is not radical. While policies are not in place currently for the WalkUP growth scenario, the expectation is that those would be developed over the next 25-30 years. TCC members were generally supportive of the WalkUP growth scenario; however, there could be unintended consequences to the concentrated growth of that scenario, leading to more congestion, which the region would need to choose to live with.

Jessica Morrise moved to recommend to the MPO Board, for consideration of approval, the WalkUP growth scenario, that would be used for the 2045 Travel Demand Model. Janna Peterson seconded the motion.

Discussion occurred about the possibility of supporting the business-as-usual growth scenario while encouraging local governments to consider developing those policies that would support the WalkUP growth scenario. Alternatively, if the WalkUP growth scenario was preferred, what would be the consequences of not having the necessary policies in place for that type of growth, to which MPO staff communicated that regardless of the model chosen, there wouldn't be a massive impact. Discussion also occurred regarding rural areas with development pressures may seek a respite from those pressures. Daniel Sellers shared that the difference between the two scenarios is the over or under identification of projects to steer a preferred growth scenario. Additionally, if necessary, the MPO Board could also change the preferred growth scenario at a future time.

Upon a vote, the motion was approved.

U-5887 (Highland Lake Road)- TIP Removal Request

On Monday, December 30, 2019, the Village of Flat Rock passed a resolution requesting that project U-5887 be removed from the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The project is for the modernization of North Highland Lake Road from US 176 (Spartanburg Highway) to NC 225 (Greenville Highway) in Henderson County and directly impacts the jurisdictions of the City of Hendersonville, the Village of Flat Rock, and Henderson County.

For some background, here is a brief history of the project, up to the present:

2011- North Highland Lake Road was initially submitted to SPOT 2.0 by Division 14 but was not successfully funded in the process.

2013- The project was automatically resubmitted to SPOT 3.0.

2014- The MPO put local input points on the project, Division 14 did not.

2015- The Draft TIP initially did not include U-5887 as a funded project.

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September, 2015- Governor McCrory signed HB 97, which added funding to the transportation program. Additional funded projects were determined by the outcomes of SPOT 3.0, which allowed U-5887, among other projects, to become funded.

January, 2016- the MPO approved adding U-5887 to the TIP, officially funding the project.

June, 2018- Village of Flat Rock Council voted to approve NCDOT's revised roadway plan.

2019- Right of Way Acquisition for U-5887 begins.

December, 2019- Village of Flat Rock Council voted to request U-5887 be removed from the TIP.

FY 2021- Construction expected to begin If the MPO Board were to vote in favor of removing the project, the NC Board of Transportation would likely take up the request in March. If the MPO Board does not vote in favor of removing the project, work would continue as currently scheduled.

Tristan Winkler shared that the Village feels like there are a number of design issues that are not compatible with the historic nature of Flat Rock. It was also noted by TCC members representing Henderson County and its municipalities that there is support for the North Highland Lake Road project to continue.

Autumn Radcliff moved to refer this matter to the MPO Board for their review and decision.

Steve Williams noted that as this project is already in PE, the State Board of Transportation would need to approve the removal of the project from the STIP. Discussion occurred regarding the reconciliation process that would need to occur to quash the project. Tristan Winkler noted that the MPO's TIP must align with the STIP. Plans could not be amended prior to a reconciliation process. He noted, too, that the State Board of Transportation would have the decision of whether to take up the matter, which if decided in the affirmative, would begin a reconciliation process.

Jodie Ferguson provided a second to the motion, which carried without further discussion.

REGULAR UPDATES AND INFORMATION ITEMS

Regular updates included NCDOT Division 13 and 14 updates, TPB updates and FHWA/FTA updates. MPO Subcommittees, Legislative, and Staff updates were also presented.

ANNOUNCEMENTS, NEWS, SPECIAL UPDATES

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comments were received.

ADJOURNMENT

Josh O'Conner adjourned the meeting, as there was no further business.