



French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization
Minutes from the Governing Board meeting on March 28, 2019

Attendance

William Lapsley	Lyuba Zuyeva	Tristan Winkler	Zia Rifkin
Steve Caraker	George Banta	Bob Davy	Jerry Vehaun
Brian Caskey	Troy Wilson	Jeff McKenna	Kevin Ensley
Daniel Sellers	Brian Burch	Autumn Radcliff	Janna Peterson
Matt Wechtel	Mike Dawson	Mark Gibbs	Nick Kroncke
Amanda Edwards	Hannah Cook	David White	Anne Coletta
Larry Harris	Stephen Sparks	George Webb	

WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS, APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Lapsley called the meeting to order, requested that everyone introduce himself or herself, read the Ethics Statement and inquired if there were any conflicts of interest to note for today's meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman Lapsley called for any public comments.

Jim Price, a resident of Henderson County commented that funds to support transportation improvement should be spent on projects that will improve transportation in the county and not on projects that are over-designed and have a larger footprint than necessary. He urged NCDOT to consider the public's trust and to evaluate the NC 191 project further before proceeding with ROW acquisition.

Robert Coffey, a resident of Henderson county commented that members of his HOA have launched a petition effort against the NC 191 project. He acknowledged that improvements need to be made to the roadway, however, the project proposed is overkill. He urged that the scope of the project be reduced.

Ilsa Yanez, a resident of Henderson County commented that the NC191 project is unnecessary and a waste of taxpayer dollars. The project as currently designed is over reach.

Dan Watson, a resident of Henderson County, commented that the project to widen NC 191 is unnecessary since the Balfour Parkway project is no longer a planned transportation project; the project, as currently designed, would create too much traffic.

Marianna Watson, a resident of Henderson County, commented against the NC191 project. She noted that four-lane roads create a higher traffic hazard than three lane roads and that busy roads near schools could create health issues for students. Rather, solutions to the school traffic problems should be addressed.

Liz Agnall, a resident of Henderson County, commented against the NC 191 project. She called the project a boondoggle, noting that it would negatively affect property values along the roadway.

Dan Kincaid, a resident of Henderson County, made a comment requesting clarification of NCDOTs current plan for the Butler Road Bridge project. He stated concerns about the closure of the bridge and how flooding conditions could impact traffic from homes and businesses.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was presented for approval with no modification requested.

Jerry Vehaun moved to approve the agenda as presented. Larry Harris seconded and the motion carried without further discussion.

CONSENT AGENDA

George Banta moved to approve the consent agenda consisting of the February 28, 2019 minutes. Bob Davy seconded and the motion carried without further discussion.

REGULAR UPDATES

- Hannah Cook provided Division 13 updates and Steve Williams provided Division 14 updates.
- Daniel Sellers provided Transportation Planning Branch updates.
- Mike Dawson provided FHWA updates.
- FBRMPO Committee & Workgroup Updates:
 - Prioritization – The March meeting was cancelled. The next meeting is scheduled for April 9 and the agenda is expected to include JARC and 5310 transit projects selection and Land Use Study update.
 - Regional Trail Workgroup – The group met on March 9 and reviewed the overall background and concept of the Regional Trail.
 - Transit Operators Workgroup – Urban transit (5307) subrecipients met on March 14. Transit operators shared some updates and concerns. Next meeting scheduled for June 13.
 - Citizens' Advisory Committee – Next meeting date TBD.
- Legislative Updates –

NEW BUSINESS

Prioritization Subcommittee Appointment to Replace Matt Champion

The Prioritization Subcommittee is made up of four TCC representatives and three FBRMPO Board members. With Matt Champion stepping down, the TCC voted to appoint Autumn Radcliff (TCC Vice Chair) to replace him on the FBRMPO Prioritization Subcommittee.

Lyuba Zuyeva shared that the subcommittee is open to the public. The meetings usually have very interesting discussions and is the steering committee for the updating of the FBRMPO TIP.

Matt Wechtel moved to support the TCC recommendation to appoint Autumn Radcliff to the FBRMPO Prioritization Subcommittee. Brian Caskey seconded and the motion passed without further discussion.

FY 2020 UPWP, Self-Certification and 5-Year Calendar Adoption

Every year the FBRMPO is required to adopt a Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), which is the budget for the MPO planning work for the year. The draft FY 2019 UPWP was adopted in January 2019 and the updated draft is posted on the MPO website at <http://www.fbrmpo.org/upwp-budget/>. Highlights of the Draft UPWP include new items: SPOT 6 process and Regional Transit Feasibility Study (expected to take place in FY 2020-2021). Continuation of ongoing items in the UPWP include work on the MTP 2045 Plan update, finishing out Land Use Forecast study to support the Travel Demand Model as part of the MTP 2045; Bike/ped planning assistance to local

jurisdictions using Walkability analysis and pop-up demonstration projects; TIP maintenance and project development, NEPA merger participation; UPWP development and performance monitoring; and Public involvement and Civil Rights processes, among other items.

Lyuba Zuyeva shared that the City of Asheville is the recipient for the transit planning funds and adoption of the UPWP early in the year is necessary in order for the City to be able to disburse those funds in July when the new fiscal year begins. She noted that the transit narrative is included as part of the UPWP. In addition, the Self-Certification statement is submitted to Federal Highways. The Five-Year Calendar describes activities for the next five years that the MPO is planning to work on.

Brian Caskey moved to approve the resolution certifying the French Broad River MPO's Transportation Planning Process. Larry Harris seconded and the motion carried without further discussion.

George Banta moved to approve the resolution adopting the Planning Work Program for FY 2019-2020. Brian Caskey seconded and the motion carried upon a vote.

TAP-DA Funding Rescission in FY 2020 and TIP Modifications for TAP Projects

FBRMPO is one of the MPOS with an urbanized area population greater than 200,000 (designated as Transportation Management Areas or TMAs). TMAs have access to federal funds that are specifically assigned to their areas. One of those funding categories is Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)- Direct Attributable (DA) funds. The current federal transportation funding bill (FAST Act) contains a \$73569 billion rescission of certain categories of unused transportation funding, including TAP-DA. If some of the MPO's TAP-DA funds are rescinded, the ability to utilize those funds would be permanently lost. The determination of what amount of funds will be rescinded will be computed based on unused funding balances as of September 30, 2019. Based on a preliminary analysis by FHWA and NCDOT, it appears that virtually all of the TAP-DA funds that have not been authorized by the end of September would be lost. Therefore, it is imperative to authorize all of the TAP-DA funded projects in our region. Merely selecting a project and programming it in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is not sufficient to authorize the funds. For PE studies, signing an agreement with NCDOT prior to beginning the study is sufficient for the funds to be authorized. For construction projects, work must have progressed to a certain phase including an environmental document, right-of-way and utility certification, cost estimate, and a set of plans/specifications reviewed by NCDOT. The FBRMPO has approximately \$1.7 million in TAP-DA funding, which is assigned to projects and might be in jeopardy due to rescission.

Tristan Winkler shared that MPO staff are proposing switching the funding on projects from TAP-DA to STBG-DA. The goal is to retain the \$1.7 million in funding for projects. The City of Asheville supports these changes

David White moved to approve modifications to the TIP to shift funding between several STBG-DA and TAP-DA projects to protect TAP-DA funds from rescission. Steve Caraker seconded and the motion carried without further discussion.

A-0010A I-26 Widening North of Broadway: Project Update

Lyuba Zuyeva shared that there is not much to update, at this point. She shared that preliminary impacts have not been concluded yet. Hopefully, the impacts would be available by the May meeting. She urged local governments to hold off on passing any resolutions about this project until the preliminary impact studies are available.

Informational item only – no action needed at this time.

Travel Time Reliability Data for Several Key Corridors in the FBRMPO CMP

Tristan Winkler provided an overview of the travel time reliability data, which is now available to MPOs across the state under a contract between NCDOT and RITIS. Travel Time Reliability metrics are becoming more recognized in transportation planning as a preferred way to look at congestion, rather than the volume to capacity parameter. A formal definition for travel time reliability is the consistency or dependability in travel times, as measured from day-to-day and/or across different times of the day.

Tristan Winkler shared that there is no definitive data- different data provides different parts of the entire picture. The purpose of using data is to try to get at how bad is traffic. He shared that commute data shows that commutes are getting shorter in the City of Asheville. However, commute data and traffic data are not the same things. While commuters make up some of the traffic, there are many other reasons that folks get in traffic. Roadway volume to capacity can be good data, indicative of busy roadways. Different roadways have differing traffic volumes throughout the day. Roads that have more widely distributed fewer peaks, can still have congestion, but not be at capacity. He shared that RITIS uses data from cellphones, which can now be used by MPOs in the state through NCDOT. People's travel experiences are impacted by the congestion peaks they encounter. Planning time index compares average travel time with 90 percentile travel time: When it's bad- how bad is it? He noted there are some weird things about the region including that there are not really morning peaks like other areas. However, many Friday afternoon peaks throughout the region. Some roadways have Sunday peaks on i-26 and i-40 (indicative of a tourism economy, perhaps). Tristan Winkler shared that he would like to look at the impact of the rockslide on i-40 that happened recently. He noted that none of this data accounts for projected growth of communities.

Discussion occurred about what "at capacity" means, which is the number of cars a roadway is able to handle per day. It does not take into account the busy (peak) times; however, it can still be a really good indicator. Tristan Winkler shared that it is necessary to understand the flaws in the data; travel time data paints a different part of the picture. Lyuba Zuyeva noted that roadways at capacity in combination with secondary factors (construction, heavy rain, etc.) are what can really slow traffic down. Daniel Sellers noted there are various types of roadway capacity and most people experience roadway capacity at the moment-by-moment level. Those types of

averages are known traditionally; however, as the economy has moved away from traditional 9 to 5 jobs, roadway capacity is still valuable, but the data from cellphones is very deep data that can show more.

Discussion occurred regarding how to know which metric to use when examining roadway capacity. Tw shared that the prioritization process in the state makes the transportation planning process localized with jurisdictions/municipalities, the MPO and NCDOT. Chair Lapsley noted that many years ago, there was no data analyzed about roadways- that process has changed; however, there is still the component where the FBRMPO awards points to projects based on that public input and knowledge. Matt Wechtel shared that his commute to Waynesville has risen from 45 minutes to over an hour over many years. It was noted that another factor is an inadequate level of funding for transportation projects.

Informational item. No action required at this time.

Announcements

No MPO meeting cycle in April. Next meeting cycle is May 2019.
NCAMPO Conference April 24-26 in Charlotte.

Chair Lapsley presented Lyuba Zuyeva with local artwork and shared his appreciation for her service to the local elected officials during her tenure as MPO Director. Lyuba Zuyeva graciously accepted her gift, noting she hoped to return in her new capacity in the future.

ADJOURNMENT

Matt Wechtel moved to adjourn the meeting, which received a second and the meeting adjourned.