

Prioritization Subcommittee

Meeting Agenda

April 6, 2022

9:00 AM

Meeting to be held via Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/91373453789>

Voting Members on the Committee: Jessica Morris (City of Asheville, Vice-Chair), Larry Harris (Black Mountain), William High (Buncombe County), Autumn Radcliff (Henderson County), Anthony Sutton (Town of Waynesville), Elizabeth Teague (Town of Waynesville, Chair), Jerry Vehaun (Town of Woodfin)

1. Welcome and Introductions	Elizabeth Teague
2. Public Comment	Elizabeth Teague
3. Approval of January, 2022 Meeting Minutes	Elizabeth Teague
4. Business	
A. JARC Project Selection Update	MPO Staff
B. Planning Call for Projects	MPO Staff
C. LAPP Project Selection (Applications Received)	MPO Staff
D. Discretionary Grants Discussion	MPO Staff
5. News, Events, Updates	Elizabeth Teague
Strive!	
6. Public Comment	Elizabeth Teague
7. Adjournment	Elizabeth Teague

Item 3

Prioritization Subcommittee

Meeting Minutes*

March 2, 2022

ATTENDANCE

Voting Members

- Elizabeth Teague, Town of Waynesville
- Autumn Radcliff, Henderson County
- Larry B. Harris, Town of Black Mountain
- Jerry Vehaun, Town of Woodfin
- William High, Buncombe County

Non-Voting Members

- Tristan Winkler, FBRMPO
- John Ridout, FBRMPO

- Hannah Bagli, FBRMPO
- Lucy Crown, City of Asheville
- Janna Bianculli, Henderson County
- Jessica Trotman, Town of Black Mountain
- George Webb
- Teresa Robinson
- Steve Williams, NCDOT Division 14
- Michael Dawson FHWA
- David Wasserman, NCDOT
- Stephen Sparks, NCDOT Division 13
- Troy Wilson, NCDOT Division 14
- Hannah Cook, NCDOT Division 13
- Daniel Sellers, NCDOT TPD
- Jane Pies LOSRC (minutes)

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Elizabeth Teague started the meeting with introductions. A quorum was announced, and roll was called.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment was received.

APPROVAL OF JANUARY 2022 MINUTES AND AGENDA

Jerry Vehaun moved to approve the agenda and the January 2022 minutes. Larry Harris seconded the motion, which passed unanimously upon a roll call vote.

Elizabeth Teague spoke on the importance of this committee and the need to “work through the weeds” on each item of business to help ensure that TCC and TAC meetings can work more efficiently.

BUSINESS

JARC Project Selection Update

Members moved to fund two projects (City of Asheville’s Route 170 and Recovery to Career), at the last Prioritization Subcommittee meeting, at 100% of their request. This left a balance of \$82,404 of the funding unprogrammed. Both projects could use the additional funding. MPO Staff recommends waiting until April 2022 to select where the remaining funding will be programmed, as Dogwood Health Trust will not know if additional local match funding for the vanpool team will be available until April.

Larry Harris made a motion to table the discussion of the JARC Project Selection until the April 2022 meeting. William High seconded the motion. All approved.

CTP Goals & Objectives

The Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) is a high-level plan for the region that helps identify transportation needs. It is the recommendation of MPO staff to utilize the Goals & Objectives developed in 2019/20 as part of the 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), for this CTP update. MPO and NCDOT are looking for any requested modifications to these goals and objectives that should be incorporated into the CTP, at this time. Listed below are the current goals and objectives.

1. Improve Multimodal Transportation:
 - a. Improve Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety
 - b. Increase Utilization of Other Modes
 - c. Increase Utilization of Public Transportation
 - d. Improve Multimodal Network Connectivity
2. Improve Safety:
 - a. Improve the Safety of Travelers and Residents
 - b. Improve System Resilience to Incidents
3. Address Congestion and Bottlenecks:
 - a. Improve Travel-Time Reliability
 - b. Improve Transit On-Time Performance
4. Improve Public Transit Options:
 - a. Improve Transit On-Time Performance
 - b. Increase Percentage of Population with Access to Public Transit
 - c. Increase Percentage of the Transportation Disadvantaged Population with Access to Public Transit

5. Ensure Changes Protect our Unique Places and Environments
 - a. Mitigate and Reduce Impacts to the Environment
 - b. Minimize Impacts to Culturally and Environmentally Important Resources
 - c. Reduce Overall Impacts to Communities
 - d. Enhance the Link Between Transportation and Land Use Planning

6. Maintain and Improve Safe Freight Movement Within and Through the Region
 - a. Reduce Crashes Involving Freight Vehicles
 - b. Improve Freight Travel Time Reliability
 - c. Increase Overnight and Rest Area Truck Parking

7. Maintain the Region's Infrastructure in Good Working Condition
 - a. Increase the Number of Roadway Miles in Good Condition
 - b. Improve the Transit Capital State of Good Repair
 - c. Improve Bridge Safety

8. Develop a More Equitable Transportation System
 - a. Increase Participation of Historically Underrepresented groups in the Planning Process
 - b. Decrease Adverse Impacts to Historically Underrepresented Groups

Discussion occurred about clarifying and possibly modifying some of the goals and objectives for the CTP. William High shared that he likes how measurable most of them are, but that he has some hesitation with Goals 5 and Goal 8 as he feels they could be strengthened with more measurable data. Elizabeth Teague stated that for Goal 5, she would like to see mitigation happen in place. She would also like to see language such as, "Mitigation Dollars Brought to our Region as a Result of Transportation Improvements" under section 5a. Referring to Goal 8, Tristan Winkler shared that and Equitable Transportation System includes avoiding adverse impacts to low income, minority, and other underrepresented groups. Lucy Crown noted that she would like to include ADA transitions and ROW. Hannah Cook with NCDOT related that she thinks the goals and objectives are still current, but in the future, it would be nice to update electric vehicle goals. Troy Wilson added, in reference to Goal 5 that NCDOT tries to mitigate locally.

Information only. No action required.

Planning Call for Projects

The MPO is capable of – and has for the last few years – funded planning studies by providing 80% of funding for a project in its Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and requesting a (required) 20% match from local governments. These studies can cover lots of different eligibilities but are required to be shown to be advancing regional or local transportation interests.

At the November Prioritization meeting, the subcommittee elected to hold a call for projects with allocating a specific amount of funding. MPO staff received the following projects:

1. Patton Avenue Corridor Planning Project (City of Asheville)
2. Blue Ridge Road Modernization Study (Town of Black Mountain)
3. Fonta Flora State trail Connection Study (Town of Black Mountain)
4. Black Mountain Traffic, Parking and Circulation Study (Town of Black Mountain)

MPO staff recommend selecting options 1, 3 and 4, as the Blue Ridge Road Corridor Study has already had a feasibility study completed by NCDOT.

Discussion occurred about the possibility of funding all three selected projects. Tristan Winkler stated that it is a possibility. Elizabeth Teague commented that the two highest scoring of the projects are the Black Mountain projects. Lucy Crown spoke on the Patton Avenue Corridor project, noting that the idea is to figure out how to make the transition from the highway project into downtown Asheville that would also include better connection to the Hill Crest housing neighborhood, and to figure out ways to slow the speed down going into town. It would essentially create a gateway into Asheville right off the I26 project. William High affirmed that this project aligns with the goals and objectives previously stated, and Elizabeth Teague noted that all three projects do.

Autumn Radcliff shared that the amount to fully fund these three projects exceeds the allotment usually set aside for such projects. Tristan Winkler confirmed this, stating the usual amount is \$250,000 (to fully fund all three projects would be \$336,000). Elizabeth Teague asked if there could be a reduction to the amount requested by the City of Asheville for the Corridor project, so that all three projects may receive some or most of their requests. Lucy Crown stated that it is a possibility. Tristan mentioned maybe staggering the projects between FY23 and FY24. Autumn Radcliff suggested tabling the recommendation until next month when there is more information available.

Autumn Radcliff moved to table the recommendation until next month. Larry Harris seconded the motion. All approved.

Prioritization Update

Tristan Winkler shared that the P6.0 budget overage after the Infrastructure and Investment Jobs Act (IIJA) (\$8B) is a bit better than before IIJA (\$11B), but that there is still significant overage. Typically, TIP/STIP cycles are updated every two years and new projects are selected and programmed through the prioritization process. Transportation funding is split between three categories: Statewide Mobility (40%), Regional Impact (30%), and Division Needs (30%). Outside planning organizations impact all three funding buckets. Normally, this ten-year funding document has eight years of funding for committed projects and two years of non-committed funding. Because of cost increases, if no changes are made, we will not be able to fund new transportation projects for several years. Our plan is to “cut things back” so that we may get back into that ten-year budgetary window and program new projects.

Going forward, projects will be prioritized by determining if they are delivery or to-be-reconsidered projects. Delivery projects are projects scheduled to begin construction in 2026 or sooner (or has begun property acquisition). These projects will likely remain in the TIP/STIP. To-be-reconsidered projects are scheduled to begin construction in 2027 or later. These may not remain in the TIP/STIP. The next step is to rank the to-be-reconsidered projects based on the round of prioritization the projects were committed (older commitments to be prioritized) and the project’s score in that prioritization round. The projects will be programmed until budgets are expended. Finally, the flexibility option will be utilized to prioritize projects. MPOs, RPOs and NCDOT may consider switching out projects for projects that did not make the cut in the first two steps.

Information only. No action required.

2050 Socio-Economic Projections RFQ

The MPO is required to do Socio-Economic Projections for the MPO’s planning area as part of its update to the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) as well as the region’s Travel Demand Model. The Travel Demand Model is an important tool for long range planning and for traffic forecasts. These studies have been done by consultants in the past and provide updated population and employment projections to provide TAZ-level data to update the region’s Travel Demand Model.

The last study done in 2019/2020 for the 2045 MTP included three (note: two were initially scoped) different growth scenarios: 1) Business as Usual, 2) “Efficient” Growth, 3) Walkable Urban Places. Having these different scenarios enabled more discussion about the impacts of growth and enabled more analysis about how the transportation network could be impacted by different growth patterns.

MPO staff plans to begin the 2050 Socio-Economic Projections in FY 2023 and two general scope elements are being considered for addition:

- 1) Resiliency- including an analysis on the potential impacts and overlaps of resiliency concerns (flooding, forest fire, landslide, etc.) in the study
- 2) Public Input- adding public meetings to the scope of the project

An FHWA update revealed that the Urbanized Area Delineation from the Census will be delayed for approximately one year. While our area was potentially to shrink, it looks like it may be expanding. Discussion occurred about what may cause this area to shrink or expand.

Information only. No action required.

NEWS, EVENTS AND UPDATES

LAPP Call for Projects is open through 3/31/22. The success rate of municipally managed projects that are LAPP funded is 25%, while DOT managed projects is 80%. In future discussions, focus needs to be placed on the delivery of LAPP projects as many fall behind schedule.

Hannah Bagli shared that STRIVE is making headway, offering several exciting events planned for the near future. Some events include STRIVE Not to Drive (week of May 16), Ride of Silence, Oakley Neighborhood Association's Open Streets event and a Bike Rodeo in Haywood County. Planning is also in the works for an event in Henderson County.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment was received.

ADJOURNMENT

Elizabeth Teague adjourned the meeting at 10:40am.