

**French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization
Prioritization Subcommittee
August 28, 2014 - Minutes**

ATTENDING

Marc Hunt, City of Asheville
Jack McCaskill, Town of Montreat
Doug Dearth, Town of Weaverville
Josh O'Conner, Buncombe County
Forest Gillian, Madison County
Mariate Echevery, City of Asheville
Claudia Nix, Blue Ridge Bike Club

Ed Green, NCDOT Division 14
Eddie Henderson, Town of Fletcher

Non-Voting

Paul Black, FBRMPO
Tristan Winkler, FBRMPO
Vicki Eastland, LOSRPO

WELCOME AND HOUSEKEEPING

Approval of April Meeting minutes: motion by Eddie Henderson, seconded by Jack McCaskill, all in favor, motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No Public Comment

BUSINESS

SPOT Scores

Paul Black updated the committee on a number of changes to SPOT scores and the process in which those changes took place. The MPO met with Divisions 13 and 14 to coordinate project scores to ensure that projects were being scored in the same tier- this allows projects to receive 200 points total (100 from the Division and 100 from the MPO.) A few projects were cascaded from the regional to the division tier in lieu of these meetings. Other meetings were held with Buncombe County and Henderson County to go over these and other changes made towards the end of the process.

A few additions and alterations were made towards the end of the process. The airport submitted two projects that were entered on the regional tier which include the purchase of snow removal equipment and the construction of a road to the runway. In Buncombe County, Riceville Road projects were swapped; initially a capacity project was entered but at the advice of Division 13, it was replaced with a sidewalk project, due to likelihood of being funded. In Haywood County, the Russ Avenue Sidewalk project was moved in lieu of the Dellwood Road project. In Henderson County, the Canooga Road project was moved. No changes were made in Madison County. Any changes in points are indicated in the "comments" section of the score spreadsheet. The TCC and counties affected by these changes have been informed. Marc Hunt inquired as to whether or not a motion is needed. Paul Black- no motion required, simply an update for the group that has played a major role in this process.

Claudia Nix requested assurance that bike/ped facilities would be installed on the Sweeten Creek Road project. Paul Black replied that any mention of bike/ped facilities were left out of the spreadsheet in order to save space; the description for the project was taken from the CTP or TIP. Bike/Ped facilities will be considered once the project goes to design.

Claudia Nix also inquired about the changes made to Swannanoa River Road. Paul Black- two projects were initially put forth for Swannanoa River Road: one, a modernization project from the city/MPO, the other, a capacity project from Division 13. The Division's capacity project was submitted due to projected volumes with the promise that with the adopted Complete Streets policies at the state and local levels, multi-modal considerations would be taken into account. Claudia Nix- there was a study done by the state a number of years ago that concluded that there was not sufficient room for bicycle lanes. Paul Black- that may still be the case, but a multi-use path may be what is currently being considered. This project was also shifted from the regional to division tier.

Marc Hunt wondered if the spreadsheets have all the updates. Paul Black- the spreadsheets made available for this meeting are updated but those emailed with the Board agenda a week ago are now out of date.

STP-DA and TAP Project Submissions

Tristan Winkler gave an overview of the project applications: six projects were submitted for STP-DA funding, three from the City of Asheville, one from Black Mountain, one from Waynesville, one from Buncombe County. The amount of STP-DA funding available was not exhausted so all projects can be funded. Approximately \$300,000 remains in unused STP-DA funds. Mariate Echevery asked what happens with the remaining funds. Paul Black replied that the money just sits there, unless it gets taken away.

Tristan Winkler went through the adopted scoring methodology for the projects. The Wilma Dykeman Riverway scored very poorly due to the adopted scoring methodology's lack of emphasis on right-of-way acquisition projects. A general disparity exists between what was incentivized by the scoring methodology and what was requested: no points were given to right-of-way acquisition, but the majority of requested funds were for right-of-way acquisition. Paul Black- we have a mismatch between what people wanted the money for and how we evaluated the projects.

Paul Black noted that another call for projects may happen sooner than the usual two-year cycle. There is a chance that Henderson County may turn their STP-DA money back due to issues with federal requirements for their planned transit center. They have already asked for an extension of one year. The extension has been helpful for the Bent Creek Greenway Study, which has a time-crunch. Consultants need to be locked-in for the Greenway Study to meet the needs of the Interstate Study. Lauren Blackburn at NCDOT has said that her division can step-in and cover consultant costs until the STP-DA funds are approved and TIP amendments go through. If the Henderson County STP-DA money comes back, another call for projects may need to be made. Marc Hunt: does TAC need to approve the project submissions? Paul Black: Yes, but it's not on the August TAC agenda, it will be on the October agenda. Staff wanted to make sure the Prioritization Committee was okay with the projects and staff wants to work with NCDOT to make sure the correct amount of money is being allocated.

Paul Black gave an overview on TA submissions. Only one project was submitted, also from the City of Asheville for the Wilma Dykeman Riverway. Available TA funds were also not exhausted by this submission. TA funds have stricter rules than STP-DA. Due to MAP-21 rule-making delaying the use of TA funds, there are three years of funding available. Approval of STP-DA and TA Project Submissions: motion carried by Claudia Nix, seconded by Mariate Echevery, all in favor, motion carried.

Motion seconded. STP-DA and TAP projects approved and recommended to the board.

TIP AMENDMENT FORM

Paul Black noted that staff will develop a TIP Amendment form. We have an adoption process, but it needs to be formalized. Currently the process is very ad-hoc. Having a formalized amendment process helps to put all projects are on an even basis.

Mark Hunt suggests staff should work on the form over the next month- show to committee in the next month or two. Ed Greene suggested that it would be beneficial to make one form- make it easy. Check boxes for what you want. Paul Black replied that we currently replicate the STIP form, but need something more nebulous due to limitations on what is known about projects at the time of amendment.

Committee approval was given to allow staff to work on the TIP Amendment Form.

TOPICS FOR NEXT MEETING

Mark Hunt inquired about what is needed in the future for the committee? Paul Black replied that final scoring and revisiting prioritization are still needed, but otherwise workload is relatively light. The Committee may be needed to come back if there is another call for LAPP projects. No September meeting needed- should meet in October.

Mark Hunt commented that staff should have discretion over what time the meeting is so people don't have to wait for Board meeting. Committee approval was given.

NEWS, UPDATES

Tristan Winkler is new to the MPO staff.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No comment.

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