

# **Prioritization Subcommittee Meeting Minutes November 19, 2015 Land of Sky Regional Council Offices**

## **ATTENDING**

Marc Hunt, City of Asheville  
Elizabeth Teague, Town of Waynesville  
Josh O'Conner, Buncombe County  
Autumn Radcliff, Henderson County

Claudia Nix, Blue Ridge Bike Club  
Mariate Echeverry, City of Asheville  
Ricky Tipton, NCDOT Division 13  
Kristina Solberg, NCDOT Division 13  
Ed Greene, NCDOT Division 14

## **Non-Voting**

Tristan Winkler, FBRMPO  
Vicki Eastland, LOSRPO  
Brendan Merithew, NCDOT TPB  
Lyuba Zuyeva, FBRMPO

## **I. Welcome and Housekeeping**

### **Agenda and Minutes Approval**

Marc Hunt asked for a motion and second to approve the agenda and minutes. Motion to approve: Josh O'Conner, Second: Claudia Nix. All in favor- agenda and minutes from October 29, 2015 were approved.

## **II. Public Comment**

No public comment at this time.

## **III. Business**

### **III-A. Revised LAPP Project Updates and Amendment Requests**

Tristan discussed the two projects that requested funding changes to increase funding for PE based on updated cost estimates, including Black Mountain greenway and the City of Asheville greenway connections. Elizabeth Teague- motion to approve the changes, Claudia Nix-second. Motion carried. Those changes will go to MPO Board in January.

### **III-B SPOT Prioritization Methodology**

Tristan Winkler discussed the preliminary draft prioritization criteria and how they scored in group discussion last time. Safety was number one chosen factor, followed by congestion in second place and multi-modal in third place. Next Tristan Winkler went over the current draft methodology and how it was applied for the current draft scoring exercise. For safety data from NCDOT, every roadway segment is assigned a score of 100, 66.6, 33.3 or 0. MPO staff looked at projects and took the peak safety score for every category. Crash rate, crash density and crash severity scores were used for a combined score. Tristan Winkler noted that safety data is comparing similar roadway data around the state. Marc Hunt asked for clarification about what different safety data parameters mean. Tristan Winkler and Rick

Tipton followed up with an explanation. Tristan noted that safety data segments do not have the same termini as a project's termini.

Claudia Nix posed a question about near misses. MPO staff noted it would be hard to quantify those data, since near misses are not usually reported. Rick Tipton-safety and congestion go hand-in-hand, so corridors with high congestion concerns would be more likely to have safety concerns as well.

Tristan Winkler next spoke to the congestion parameter. V/C was used, based on 2014 AADT, with scores changing at 40%, 60%, 60-80% and over 80%. Marc Hunt-question about how those parameters would reflect on current vs. future travel patterns. For example, Hazel Mill Road is a cut-through and we would not necessarily want to widen the road to increase the cut-through activity. How do we make sure that the SPOT parameters are not driving improvements for roadways which are not a high priority for widening. Rick Tipton noted that Hazel Mill Road is likely feeling the effects of Patton Ave and New Leicester Highway being over capacity and not being able to handle the volumes.

Elizabeth Teague-what if we were to consider adding more weight to local priority points? Tristan Winkler-during the last meeting, keeping local points at 20 was suggested. Elizabeth Teague-what about adding 5 more percentage points to local priority to weigh local knowledge better. Josh O'Conner-in agreement, as long as any jurisdiction has a limit on how many projects they can score at the highest level for local priority.

Tristan Winkler noted that under the "improving non-motorized transportation" category, bike ped crash hot spots and existing bike ped plans were considered as factors. Kristina Solberg-some fatalities might be not due to an infrastructure issue. Tristan Winkler-MPO staff have tried to filter out crashes which occurred in a parking lot or off the corridor. But more detailed analysis of why fatalities occurred is probably not feasible for this scoring process. Marc Hunt-what about weighing local plans more heavily and weighing the crash data more lightly. Mariate Echeverry-suggested adding destinations such as transit stations and downtowns to the scoring methodology.

Marc Hunt-if there was a way to tie the non-motorized score to before and after demand, that would be great. With Travel Demand Modeling for roadways, this is what we use. How do we apply this to bike ped element. Josh O'Conner-this could be an either/or. Either linking existing infrastructure to get points, or using crashes. Tristan Winkler suggested that MPO staff can look at adding destinations and linking existing infrastructure for the next version.

Next Tristan Winkler discussed the freight element of the score. Currently looking at peak segment per project corridor. For example, I-26 north of Hendersonville has a peak daily freight volume of 6810. US 19/23 through Canton has 351 trucks per day going through a downtown main street. That can feel like a lot in a downtown context. Rick Tipton-what about weighting freight volumes against roadway capacity, interstates will always have higher freight volumes. US 19/23 in relationship to US 26 would have a higher capacity. Tristan Winkler—capacity on that roadway is lower but still fairly high with a pair of one-way streets. Elizabeth Teague-this is a situation where local knowledge would be important. Canton Paper Mill is generating most of this freight traffic and they have to get to the plant. Kristina Solberg-what about looking at a percentage of volume that is freight trucks. Tristan Winkler noted that with commuter routes such as I-26, freight percentage is not going to be as high. Rick Tipton—probably if we switch to percentage, it would generally be pointing in the same direction. Over 15% of freight traffic out of total volume would be a red flag. Josh O'Conner-this looks like shielded routes would get 8 points almost automatically.

Mariate Echeverry-can a jurisdiction chose where to assign those points. Eight points is a lot. Possibly a different scoring for non-shielded routes (non US/non state highways). Lyuba Zuyeva-could potentially switch places between "unique places and environment" and "safe freight movement."

Next Tristan Winkler discussed the "unique places and environment" criteria-MPO staff looked at two different parameters. One was existing water and sewer infrastructure. With the best data available, staff checked to see if a

project is inside or outside of existing service area. The other parameter used was whether a non-widening CMP strategy was used to address congestion. Fruitland Road in Henderson County would be primarily outside of urban service area. Most of the other projects do fall within existing service area. Rick Tipton-what about plans to extend utility on the horizon. Tristan Winkler-could consider it if data available. Josh O'Conner-this would be counter to what might be desirable, i.e. encouraging more sprawl and growth. Tristan Winkler spoke to the water and sewer infrastructure limitations. Staff had to use an engineering group-generated file for Haywood and Madison County. Josh O'Conner-as long as jurisdictions can bring their own data to the table instead, where available, using the third party data is acceptable. Rick Tipton commented on the second parameter under this grouping, and indicated that this feels like pre-determining a solution. Tristan Winkler responded as this is one of the best ways we have to look at solutions that are not encouraging widening out of context, not ideal.

For the next meeting staff can make modifications to the Prioritization Methodology as proposed. Also as discussed last time, 300 points from Division level would be made available for other modes. Josh O'Conner-overall, this is moving in the right direction, more digestible. Tristan Winkler-will need to have final adopted version by April 1, would like to have a final version by late January from this group.

Elizabeth Teague—suggestion to take 3 points off safety and 2 off freight to add 5 points to local priority points. Rick Tipton-what about doing this differently depending on regional or division tier? Tristan Winkler-will look at those options. In the regional tier, local input is not as important. Elizabeth Teague-agreement to keep the scores as is for Regional. For Division, allow 27 points for improve safety, freight would be 6, local priority would be 25. Tristan Winkler-will reflect those changes for the next meeting.

### **III-C Prioritization Subcommittee Draft Bylaws**

Tristan-MPO staff have been working with TCC and MPO Board leadership on those bylaws. Two goals are to clarify and consolidate the purpose and role of this subcommittee, and to refine the roster. To the first point, the role of this subcommittee would increase—this committee would become the default CTP and MTP steering committee, would assist with modeling data vetting and any other requests the MPO Board might have. The roster would change to include 3 members from the MPO Board and the 4 members from the TCC. Rick Tipton—as written this excludes Division participation. Marc Hunt-the influence of this committee is very large, we talk at a much more detailed level. Would recommend to add language indicate that other agency members and members of the public would be encouraged to participate at the digression of the Chair. Rick Tipton-or, add “ad-hoc/non-voting members for Division 13 and Division 14 representatives.” This would make us feel more like a committee member.

Josh O'Conner-suggested that to address this concern broadly, draft bylaws could be modified to add that other members of the MPO TCC and Board can attend as ad-hoc/non-voting members.

Discussion about adding more than 3 and 4 members. Tristan Winkler and Josh O'Conner noted issues with some members not attending and maintaining a quorum.

Mariate Echeverry-if this subcommittee is going to go over the MTP and CTP, what about adding a CAC member. Josh O'Conner-CAC probably needs to address the public input process and not specific projects. The new CAC bylaws refines this.

Kristina Solberg-a concern with observing the last CAC, it was very heavy in West Asheville representation and not geographically representative. Tristan Winkler—originally the membership was more geographically spread out, but we lost some participation from outlying areas.

Tristan Winkler-as part of the Bylaws changes, the roster review will become more automatic. If somebody is not showing up on regular basis, their membership will be reviewed. Marc Hunt-suggestion to add language that TCC and

MPO Board appoint members to the Prioritization Subcommittee. Make this subject to an annual review and adoption by the TCC and MPO Board. Tristan Winkler-annual review by the subcommittee already included.

Further discussion about a separate bullet for DOT representation as ad-hoc-non-voting members. Also to be included is a statement that other TCC members and Board members can come as ad-hoc and not count towards quorum. Marc Hunt-encouragement to have a regular review by TCC and Board to appoint members to the subcommittee. Marc Hunt-because this group has so much policy influence, the MPO Board needs to have more regular input.

Josh O'Conner-what about TCC and MPO Board to review membership by-annually; MPO Board can also review membership more frequently as needed. Josh O'Conner-will bring up discussed changes at TCC. The group members concurred with the changes proposed.

### **III-D 2016 Calendar**

Tristan Winkler—MPO staff would like to keep the subcommittee meeting time for 10 AM on the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursdays before the MPO Board. Are there any changes needed? The group was in agreement with schedule as proposed.

Staff will send out a Doodle poll for December meeting date.

Would like to keep Prioritization current membership until the end of February to finish SPOT methodology.

Autumn Radcliff-request to announce an open call to MPO Board and TCC for nominations.

Tristan Winkler recognized Marc Hunt for his service on this committee, this being Marc Hunt's last Prioritization Subcommittee meeting.

Meeting adjourned.

