

Prioritization Subcommittee Meeting Minutes August 8, 2017 Land of Sky Regional Council Offices

ATTENDING

- Elizabeth Teague, Town of Waynesville
- Josh O’Conner, Buncombe County
- Jerry VeHaun, Town of Woodfin
- Matt Champion, City of Hendersonville
- Vaidila Satvika, City of Asheville

Non-Voting

- LeRoy Roberson, Town of Waynesville
- Vaidila Satvika, City of Asheville
- Matt Cable, Buncombe County
- Autumn Radcliff, Henderson County
- Brendan Merithew, NCDOT Division 13
- Steve Williams, NCDOT Division 14
- Tristan Winkler, FBRMPO
- Lyuba Zuyeva, FBRMPO

I. Welcome and Housekeeping

I-A // Welcome and Introductions, Approval of Agenda

Elizabeth Teague, Subcommittee Vice-Chair, presided. Voting members and returning non-voting members gave their introduction. VeHaun-motion to approve the agenda, Matt Champion-seconded. The Agenda was approved.

I-B // June Minutes

Elizabeth Teague asked for an approval of the minutes from June meeting. Jerry VeHaun made a motion to approve the minutes, Matt Chamption-seconded. Minutes approved.

II. Public Comment

No public comment at this time.

III. Business

III-A // STBGDA Project Selection

Tristan Winkler provided an overview of STBGDA summer 2017 call for projects. The City of Asheville previously requested that a transit capital project be considered for a replacement project in place of the Beaucatcher greenway project. The call for projects for STBG-DA funding was reopened. In addition to Asheville application for transit vehicles, the Town of Waynesville has submitted two applications—PE study on a greenway from the Recreation Park to Boyd Avenue and a feasibility study from the Recreation Park to Haywood Hi-Tech Center. There are sufficient funds to fund all three applications. Lyuba Zuyeva noted that if funded, MPO staff request that the Waynesville Greenway Feasibility study be postponed till FY 2019 due to the limit of \$200,000/year flexed from STBGDA to PL funds. Josh O’Conner added that with a PE study, it takes a while to get started due to the agreements with NCDOT, and both studies would likely both go forward in 2019. Discussion followed about remaining STBG-DA funds-approximately half a million; those will be folded into the next call for STBG-DA projects in January of 2018 (total funding available at approximately \$7.5 million.)

Discussion followed about holding a separate call for feasibility studies apart from the call for projects for PE and Construction. Feasibility studies have a set-aside of \$200,000 per year. Feasibility studies do not carry a commitment to go to construction. Once PE is funded with federal funds, federal government could ask for a reimbursement if the project is not implemented within 10 years. Autumn Radcliff voiced a request to leave the option of funding more than \$200,000 per year in feasibility and planning studies open; and to provide updates on regular basis about which STBG-funded projects are getting close to their 10-year mark and should be flagged. Tristan Winkler pulled up the table available at www.fbrmpo.org/projects-plans-and-programs/. Josh O'Conner commented that the MPO could consider putting a limitation on the scope of projects, for example additional amenities so that the base level projects can compete more fairly. Further discussion followed about the cost of projects going up. Subcommittee members discussed whether environmental permitting documents are generally completed as part of a PE study. Based on Buncombe county's experience, usually environmental documents are finished as part of PE if funding for CST is lined up; if not ask then the project sponsor can ask the consultants to finish a draft version and hold the final documents until CST funding is identified.

Elizabeth Teague asked for a motion to approve the projects for STBG-DA funding. John Dockendorf made a motion to approve the three projects presented for funding, Josh O'Conner-seconded. Motion carried. Selection results will go to the Board in August and TIP Amendments are expected in September-October.

III-B // SPOT 5.0 Alternative Criteria

Tristan Winkler indicated that Secretary Trogon has been encouraging regions to consider alternative criteria for SPOT selection for Regional and Division Tier projects. This applies to NCDOT quantitative criteria. FBRMPO staff have met with Divisions staff, Hickory MPO and all four RPOs staff for Divisions 13 and 14 to consider alternative criteria. The Regional Impact Tier scoring was recommended to be left alone. Division Needs score was recommended to be adjusted as follows:

- Division 13: increase "safety" from 10 to 15% at the cost of decreasing "accessibility/connectivity" to 0%. "Accessibility/connectivity" score prioritizes improvements that provide four-lane median-divided roadways or otherwise improve the roadways for high-speed travel, in counties that have a higher unemployment rate.
- Division 14: remove "freight" and "accessibility/connectivity" score and increase "pavement condition" to 10% due to pavement maintenance needs.

Further discussion took place about the different SPOT criteria. Tristan Winkler indicated that shoulder width was one of the additional items brought up, as well as lane width. However, if those width conditions are creating a safety issue then safety score would pop up. Additional discussion followed. Steve Williams added that people who drive on narrow roads are better drivers and get used to driving on narrow roads; however those conditions are still sub-standard. Vaidila Satvika voiced a concern that safety is not getting a higher score. The City of Asheville is starting to look at safety more and more. Steve Williams-safety has been brought up for Division 13 but not for Division 14. In Division 14, pavement condition was the number one comment that DOT staff are getting from the traveling public. Brendan Merithew noted that for Division 13, because there are two MPOs and three RPOs it was difficult to find an agreement and safety was the easiest one to increase. Tristan Winkler added that the MPO scoring methodology will also be up for discussion and update.



Elizabeth Teague asked for a motion to recommend the alternative criteria to TCC. Jerry VeHaun-motion, Josh O'Conner-seconded, motion carried.

III-C /// CMP Updates

Tristan Winkler gave an overview of the CMP process and indicated that the MPO staff have started to put some starting points on paper, based on previous discussions with this group. Discussion followed about the need for a CMP process. Lyuba Zuyeva indicated that recommendations from the CMP will be folded in the MTP update, SPOT prioritization project submissions, and will generally become part of the transportation planning guiding documents for the region. Elizabeth Teague-the CMP process includes a mapping component. Would like to see more ITS elements highlighted as part of CMP.

Tristan Winkler provided an overview of Chapters 1, 2 and 3. Chapter 3 includes various types of CMP corridors. MPO staff would like to break out "Freight Corridors" as an additional typology, with specific V/C numbers and freight counts. When pulling out freight corridors, the major interstate system through the region emerges, including I-26 from Polk County to Weaverville, I-40 from Clyde to Swannanoa and I-240 around Asheville. For "Mobility Corridors", which are more likely to serve longer trips, corridors over 10,000 vehicles per day and v/c over 60% in Buncombe and Henderson and over 80% V/C in Haywood in Madison Counties from 2040 projections. This resulted in corridors such as Dellwood Road, Russ Ave and 19/23 from Canton to Buncombe County for Haywood County. "Mobility Corridors" are less likely to have regional destinations along them. For Buncombe County Mobility Corridors include New Leicester Highway, NC 191, Hendersonville Road and many others. In Henderson County US 64 west of downtown Hendersonville, sections of US 25 Bus and sections of NC 280 in Mills River close to Buncombe County pop up. Elizabeth Teague posed a question about Howard Gap Road. Tristan Winkler-based on the data reviewed, it did not come up. It does serve as an alternative to I-26 and US 25 for north-south travel. John Dockendorf and Autumn Radcliff chimed in that many commuters currently avoid Howard Gap Road due to the construction going on. The improvements with a wide shoulder might help the congestion issue. Matt Cable noted that based on his experience with commuting on Howard Gap road, the congestion is not as bad. Some peak period congestion. If congestion on US 64 was addressed then Howard Gap Road congestion would probably improve.

No feedback required today. Additional sections will be coming for review later.

Discussion followed about holding an ITS strategies workshop and about the Land Use component of the CMP. The Old CMP looked at "developed" and "undeveloped" corridors. MPO staff would like to refine this to developed-walkable (better grid, more alternate routes) and developed-suburban development. Tristan Winkler further spoke to the Management Corridors. Those are corridors that serve areas with a number of regional destinations and walkable land uses nearby. For Asheville, this is Haywood Road, Patton Ave, a section of Sweeten Creek Road in Royal Pines, a section of Sweeten Creek Road through Biltmore Village, South Tunnel Road and Tunnel Road around the Mall, Amboy road and Meadow road, Elk Mountain Road in Woodfin,; in Waynesville South Main Street; in Canton 110 and Main Street; in Hendersonville US 64 through downtown and Spartanburg Hwy, NC 225; in Madison NC 213 through downtown Mars Hill. A discussion followed about measuring walkability via sidewalk presence vs. street network connectivity. Josh O'Conner-would be useful to have the sidewalks mapped out for illustration. MPO staff will continue to work on refinements to the "walkable" and land use analysis.



III-C /// PART Presentation

Scott Rhine, Executive Director of Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation (PART), called in and gave an overview of the agency history, structure, funding sources and current services provided (including but not limited to Express bus routes, vanpools and carpools). PART was created in 1997 and includes members from 10 counties, four MPOs, the Triad's four largest cities, two regional airports, and the NCDOT Board of Transportation.

Adjournment

After a request for public comment, the meeting was adjourned.

