

Prioritization Subcommittee Meeting Minutes May 8, 2018 Buncombe County Public Library

ATTENDING

Voting Members

- Josh O'Conner, Buncombe County
- Matt Champion, City of Hendersonville
- Vaidila Satvika, City of Asheville
- John Dockendorf, Village of Flat Rock
- Jerry Vehaun, Town of Woodfin
- Elizabeth Teague, Town of Waynesville

Non-Voting

- Tristan Winkler, FBRMPO
- Lyuba Zuyeva, FBRMPO
- Nick Kroncke, FBRMPO
- Daniel Sellers, NCDOT TPD
- Roger Castillo, NCDOT TPD
- Steve Williams, NCDOT Division 14
- Autumn Radcliff, Henderson County
- Matt Cable, Buncombe County
- Vicki Eastland, LOSRPO

I. Welcome and Housekeeping

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

Josh O'Conner, Subcommittee Chair, presided. Voting members and returning non-voting members gave their introduction. The Agenda was approved.

I-B // April 10, 2018 Minutes

The minutes from April 10th meeting were reviewed. Jerry Vehaun made a motion to pass the minutes as presented. John Dockendorf seconded. All approved.

II. Public Comment

No public comment at this time.

III. Business

III-A // P 5.0 Draft Regional Impact Point Assignment

Tristan Winkler introduced and reminded members how the Prioritization process at the statewide level works. The discussion today will revolve around the Regional Impact tier. It was noted that \$244 million dollars is available for the Region which consists of Divisions 13 and 14.

Tristan gave an overview of survey results as the survey closed at the end of April. The MPO was pleased with the results and received over 2,400 responses. He first showed Buncombe county results by giving an overview of the "Quick" Ranking results with a few charts. For Buncombe, the "Deep Dive" Ranking gave results project by project by scoring from a 5 to a -5. The top results for each the Deep Dive and the Quick Ranking provided different scores. Tristan next showed results for Haywood county. I-40 widening and Russ Avenue Access Management were some of the top results. Henderson County "Quick" Ranking results had Balfour Parkway Section A and Section C as high scoring results (Note that this shows which projects are of importance not preferred projects). The "Deep Dive" for Henderson had I-26 Section A widening and NC 280 Improvements as highly rated projects. Madison County results were shown, with all projects scoring positively except for the Superstreet project. Tristan noted that Haywood County survey rankings did not rate Buncombe County projects unless it crossed jurisdictional lines.

Tristan next gave an overview of the county by county meetings for local priorities based on MPO methodology. Tristan showed that nine (9) projects would receive funding given the MPO methodology, with a total of 1800 points available. He noted that all of Divisions 13 and 14 had \$244 million available plus 20% with a total of over ~ \$190 million. Given fiscal realism, the projects were assigned points until money was depleted. Tristan went through each project giving a description as proposed by the MPO methodology. The projects proposed for funding are as follows:

- 1) US 74 Alternate (Fairview Road) from NC 81 to Cedar Street – Access Management
- 2) NC 280 in Mills River from Old Haywood to Haywood Rd – Access Management
- 3) Swannanoa River Road from Tunnel Road to South Tunnel Road – Modernization
- 4) Section of I-26 Connector through West Asheville (I-2513A) – Widening

Before continuing, Tristan discussed the process of cascading projects. The reasoning behind it varies project by project but he stated that it may be warranted for I-26 given that both of the other sides of the project are already funded. Tristan

noted that projects that are close to being funded risk losing the largest pot of 40% of the funding.

Vaidila stated that the City of Asheville position was discussed amongst staff and representatives and they have decided not to cascade state projects at the regional level. Vaidila stated they will not be voting to cascade I-26 or for other statewide projects. In lieu of this, Vaidila stated they are proposing to move forward with the Tunnel Road project (Regional Impact tier). Lyuba mentioned that a potential bottleneck may develop at the middle section of unfunded highway along I-26 (I-2513A). Lyuba wondered if other local jurisdictions would be in support of the project when the city may not be. Elizabeth Teague asked how likely it is to get funded in the future.

Lyuba mentioned if it is funded now it is likely to be incorporated with the other sections so that way the ROW, construction process. Autumn Radcliff stated that they received consensus and support from the public in terms of cascading the I-26 project.

Lyuba mentioned checking the bylaws on how the vote count would work for the impacted jurisdiction.

Elizabeth stated her appreciation of the stance that Asheville took on deciding not to cascade the project. She stated that the regional impact and the length of this study are a cause for concern in further delaying the project. She wanted consensus among this committee and proposed going to Asheville staff and asking for a broader stakeholder discussion. She asked if the recommendations for this committee could be delayed, giving time for Asheville to further discuss the project before going to the TAC. Elizabeth further reminded the group how hard the process has been to get to this point in the study.

Vaidila stated it is not the City of Asheville's understanding that doing this would delay the project by 10 years. Tristan stated that he would strongly prefer not to delay the vote because MPO points need assigned in May. Lyuba mentioned that it could still be voted on at the TAC level in May. Autumn stated that decisions likely will not be made at the TCC level, and it will probably ultimately be up the TAC. Elizabeth agreed with this statement. Lyuba mentioned that the funds could ultimately be given to another region if this does not go through.

Josh stated that he would like to make a recommendation to move the project forward, because it is a crucial congestion project to address.

Vaidila asked if projects who rank higher than Tunnel Road would receive funding. Lyuba stated that yes, those projects would be more likely to receive funding.

Tristan stated that it may score high but other projects in the region (not listed in the scoresheet) may receive the funding as well.

Daniel Sellers and Steve Williams noted that environmental documents have a five (5) year lifespan so that process has to be restarted if the project gets funded in future rounds.

Tristan noted his discussion with David Wasserman and realizing that this project may take longer than anticipated if it is delayed even further. Elizabeth stated concern about going forward to vote without Asheville involved in the process. She proposed making this motion at the TAC level instead so they are not outvoted without their approval. Josh asked if the mechanics of funding or process are more of a concern than the project impacts itself. Vaidila confirmed that is the funding process that is the concern. Josh stated he believes in moving it forward because it is process focused and not concerning the desire of the City of Asheville. John echoed the support for the project and asked if we took the support of the Prioritization committee to the City of Asheville to have this discussion before the TAC meeting on May 24. Tristan confirmed that the Prioritization committee is making a recommendation, not a vote. Josh stated his comfort to move forward with a difference of opinion among the members and City of Asheville. **Elizabeth made a motion to cascade the project. Jerry seconded. Vaidila opposed the vote, all else approved.**

5) Sweeten Creek Road from I-40 to London Road modernization was mentioned by Tristan. Vicki Eastland asked if the division was putting points on it. Tristan was unsure. John asked when the section south of I-40 was programmed. Tristan and Elizabeth clarified that is scheduled for 2023.

6) I-26 from US 25 to Four Seasons Blvd (I-4400A) – Widening - Proposed to be Cascaded

John stated that this project has received support from Henderson County although there is disagreement on the project ending at Four Seasons. Tristan clarified that the project area does extend further to be studied. The group discussed the statewide score of this project.

Vaidila stated the City of Asheville will be voting against this project. Elizabeth stated that cascading this project will push other important projects in the region out of funding. Lyuba asked if Steve Williams with Division 14 would have an idea where the division stands on the project. Steve stated it is not their decision...(inaudible). Clarification was asked about other projects in the region and how this would impact Henderson County funding, in particular how this project

would be funded in the future. John stated it is a priority for the county although he understands it may not be a priority for the region. **John made a motion to cascade the project. Matt Champion seconded. Elizabeth, Jerry, Vaidila and Josh opposed the project.**

I-40 from Monte Vista to Liberty Road is proposed to be cascaded. Tristan stated the importance of freight movement on I-40 towards Tennessee. Tristan asked if the committee wanted to cascade this project. Lyuba mentioned if the shorter section is not funded now, it sets up the longer section to be cascaded in the future. Vaidila motioned not to cascade the project. Elizabeth stated cascading should be the exception to the rule, and it should be a last case scenario. **Elizabeth made a motion to not cascade the project. Vaidila seconded the motion. All were in favor.**

7) US-19 (Soco Road)

Tristan mentioned it was in SPOT for a couple of rounds. Its section was reduced in length.

8) US-19 Business (Weaverville Highway)

9) US 276 at Crymes Cove and Raccoon Road Intersection

Tristan described this project as an intersection where the roads don't line up and asked if the committee had other questions. Vicki asked if Tristan could show the group the projects the MPO would put points on.

No points on Long Shoals, Jonathan Creek, Russ and Pisgah projects. Tristan stated that 11 projects would now be receiving points. Steve asked for clarification on cascading projects and if the Board could overrule the committee. Lyuba mentioned that the public comment and NCDOT public input period still has to take place even after the Board votes. Vaidila asked about the impact of moving the I-2513A forward. Josh stated that the I-26 is such a beast of a project he is comfortable to not be consistent by voting to cascade it. Elizabeth stated her concern for citizens impacted by the I-26 project, especially near Burton Street and that this project "cannot be kicked further down the road". John echoed this statement.

Tristan listed the projects the MPO would put points on to confirm with the group: NC 280 Access Management, I-2513A, US 70 Tunnel Road, Fairview Road Access Management, 276 Crymes Cove/Raccoon, Soco Road, Swannanoa River Road, Russ Ave, Sweeten Creek Road, Weaverville Highway, Brevard Road. Autumn asked Tristan to email that list out.

Tristan mentioned which projects the RPO would put points on:

US 276/Raccoon/Crymes Cove, Russ Avenue, Dellwood Road, Jonathan Creek Road.

John made a motion to approve the list of projects that Tristan just stated. Elizabeth seconded. Vaidila supports with the exception of I-26 Section A. All approved.

III-B // 5310/JARC Project Selection

Lyuba discussed the staff turnover for the committee that usually attend the 5310/JARC project selection. She asked if this committee could take the projects to the TCC and TAC. She briefly explained the urban transit funding associated with 5310 and JARC.

The JARC projects were discussed, projects funded in green are funded at 100%. Buncombe County Trailblazer and Black Mountain Transit Route are funded at 91.5% due to lack of full funding.

The 5310 projects require 55% to be funded as "traditional", and 45% funded at other/operations type projects. The City of Asheville ADA Paratransit and Buncombe County Elderly and Disabled are traditional projects funded at 90%. The Council of Aging, Land of Sky Senior Companions, Buncombe County Ride were proposed to fund at 61.9%. Madison County Meal Sites, a smaller portion, is to be funded fully. Elizabeth asked if the entities have to come up with additional funding on their own. Lyuba stated that yes it may require a search for local funds or may require reduction in services/trips/resources. Josh asked if the reduction in funding would hurt grant requirements, Lyuba stated that is not necessarily the case.

Autumn asked for clarification on how the buncombe County program works. Matt Cable clarified how the ride voucher program worked, and that it is limited per trip. He stated that the reduction in service usually changes the dates that they operate, particularly the after-hour trips.

Vaidila stated his concern for traditional projects regarding the new request from Buncombe County Senior and Disabled. Lyuba clarified she does not feel it is a additional or new request as an expansion of service. Matt Cable clarified the variety of services they use for funding elderly and disabled. Lyuba stated the funding would not increase the number of trips Buncombe County could provide, they are trying to keep the number of trips consistent. She also stated that it is tough to reduce funding across the board.

Vaidila made a motion to approve as presented. John seconded. All approved.

III-C // Regional Land Use Modeling Project

Lyuba talked about the future population and employment growth and how a Land Use model helps answer that question. She stated a RFP that was issued due to in-house MPO staff time constraints.

She is looking for the Prioritization committee to be a steering committee for this project, and a smaller group of folks to help select the firm. Vaidila, Josh, Matt Champion and Autumn volunteered to help.

Lyuba stated that this Land Use study is why the MPO is asking for a change in the draw-down of dues which will be presented at the TCC and TAC.

IV. Announcement, News, Special Updates

Tristan stated the MTP amendments will be presented at TCC and TAC. Tristan estimated \$3.3 billion dollars of investments will be available for the next 25 years. \$6.3 million in additional funding may be available through STBG.

Lyuba mentioned US 19/23 Local officials meeting will be this Thursday 5/10/2018.

V. Topics for Next Meeting

Next Meeting: June 5 at 9am.

No topics identified.

VI. Public Comment 2

No public comment at this time.

VII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned.