



600 East Fourth Street
Charlotte, NC 28202
704-336-2205
www.mumpo.org

TO: Mecklenburg-Union MPO Members
FROM: Robert W. Cook, AICP
MUMPO Secretary
DATE: June 13, 2012

**SUBJECT: Special June 2012 Mecklenburg-Union MPO Meeting
Wednesday, June 20, 2012, 7:00 PM**

A special meeting of the Mecklenburg-Union Metropolitan Planning Organization (MUMPO) is scheduled for Wednesday, June 20, 2012. The meeting will begin at 7:00 PM and will be held in **Room 267** of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center, 600 E. Fourth St., Charlotte. No education session will be conducted before the meeting.

How To Access The Meeting Location

The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center is located at 600 E. Fourth St. (corner of Fourth and Davidson streets) in uptown Charlotte. Parking is available in the Government Center parking deck located on Davidson St. between Third and Fourth streets; on-street parking is also available.

Enter the Government Center on the Davidson St. side through the ground-level door located to the right of the large staircase. (This is a handicapped accessible entrance.) Use the call box located next to the door to contact security staff. Inform them you are attending the MUMPO meeting. Once inside the building, security staff will assist you to Room 267.

Mecklenburg-Union Metropolitan Planning Organization

June 20, 2012

Room 267-Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center

7:00 PM Meeting Agenda

1. **Call to Order** Ted Biggers

2. **Citizen Comment Period**

3. **I-77 & I-485 TIP & LRTP Amendments & Conformity Determination** Bill Coxe

ACTIONS REQUESTED:

A. Air Quality Conformity Determination

Find that the 2035 Long-Range Transportation Plan and 2012-2018 Transportation Improvement Program conform to the purpose of the North Carolina State Implementation Plan.

B. Long Range Transportation Plan Amendment

Amend the 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan to reflect changes to projects on I-77 and I-485.

- 1. Amend the LRTP to modify the I-485 South project shown in the 2025 horizon year to include the Johnston Road flyover and an extension of the project eastward to Rea Road. The project remains a 6 lane widening with auxiliary lanes. Show the NCDOT estimate of \$132,000,000.*
- 2. Amend the LRTP to eliminate the remaining 2025 horizon year projects for the mainline of I-485 between I-77 and US 74, and replace them with an I-485 project to widen I-485 to 8 lanes (6 general purpose and 2 express lanes) from Rea Road to Independence Boulevard with a cost estimate inflated from the current NCDOT estimate to the anticipated year of expenditure.*
- 3. Amend the LRTP to modify the I-485 2035 horizon year project to delete the Johnston Road flyover (having accomplished it in 2025.) Adjust the project cost estimate accordingly.*
- 4. Amend the LRTP I-77 project shown in the 2015 horizon year (TIP project #I-5405) to alter the southern boundary to I-277, acknowledge that from I-277 to Hambright Road the current HOV lanes will be converted to HOT lanes with 3+ occupant vehicles using the lane for free and add HOT 3+ lanes (one each direction) north to Catawba Avenue. An additional HOT 3+ lane will be added in each direction from I-85 to Catawba Avenue. This creates a total of 2 HOT 3+ lanes in each direction between I-85 and Catawba Avenue. This is Scenario 4 under the public involvement notice.*

C. Transportation Improvement Program Amendment

Amend the 2012-2018 Transportation Improvement Program to reflect changes to TIP project I-5405 (I-77) and R-4902 (I-485).

- 1. Amend the TIP for project R-4902 to incorporate the project description contained in #B-2 above, and include the NCDOT cost estimate of \$132,000,000. Acknowledge that equity dollars may be needed to keep this project on schedule which could delay other TIP projects. (See attached list of potential project delays.)*
- 2. Amend the TIP for project I-5405 to incorporate the project description contained in #B-4 above.*

D. I-77 Policy Statement

Adopt a policy statement concerning I-77 North that:

1. Endorses HOT lanes as the preferred technique for providing additional capacity on I-77.
2. Endorses the appropriate use of a public/private partnership in delivering HOT lanes.
3. Expresses the expectation that planning and environmental studies occur within the framework of a corridor that stretches from central Charlotte to Mooresville.

With this umbrella statement, MUMPO commits itself and the TCC to active, ongoing, and meaningful participation in the creation and maintenance of a statement of principles that will guide the development of the I-77 North project or projects. This statement is to be an evolutionary document that shall include but not be limited to the topics contained in the attached draft. (See attached statement of principles.)

E. I-485 Design

Request that NCDOT amend the typical section for project R-4902 between I-77 and Johnston Road to construct four additional feet of full depth paved shoulder on the median side of the travel lanes in each direction. This portion of roadway would be restriped and used in a later project to separate the general purpose lanes from managed lanes. The decision to implement managed lanes, the selection of type of managed lane, and the operational plan for those lanes will be based on a study of I-485 between I-77 and US 74.

TCC RECOMMENDATION: The TCC unanimously recommended that the above actions be taken by the MPO.

BACKGROUND: NCDOT has requested modifications to the LRTP and the TIP to accommodate significant changes in projects for I-485 South and I-77 North. Air quality modeling occurred for several options for the I-77 North project concurrent with a single option for I-485 South. Thus, for any project to move forward, it is essential that one air quality conformity determination be adopted for appropriate projects for both roadways. A task force of the TCC has worked diligently with NCDOT, and consultants, on the options for I-77 North and at this time, sufficient information is available for the task force to recommend Scenario 4 for project I-5405. The task force has formulated the attached draft statement of principles to guide success in the corridor.

ATTACHMENTS: Public comments; TCC I-77 North Statement of Principles Document; list of potential project delays.

4. MUMPO Expansion

Robert Cook

ACTION REQUESTED: Provide guidance to staff on issues affecting the expansion of MUMPO's planning area.

BACKGROUND:

- The increase in the size of the Charlotte urbanized area (UZA) requires an expansion of MUMPO's planning area.
- Several important issues related to finalizing MUMPO's boundary require the MPO's input.
- The TCC provided recommendations at their June meeting.
- The issues and the TCC recommendations can be found on the attached matrix.

ATTACHMENT: Matrix and map.

5. Adjourn



Public Comments
Proposed Improvements to I-77 & I-485
TIP Projects I-5405 & R-4902

2012-2018 Transportation Improvement Program Amendment
2035 Long Range Transportation Plan Amendment
Air Quality Conformity Determination

A public comment period was held from April 3, 2012 through May 2, 2012 to receive citizen input on proposed improvements to I-77 (TIP project I-5405) and I-485 (TIP project R-4902). The following comments were received during the comment period.

Contents

- I. Pages 1-7 include comments received via e-mail.
- II. Two attachments follow that were included in e-mail comments #10 and #11.
- III. Comments from Mr. Ken Holtje
- IV. Copies of comment sheets received at the April 17 and April 18 public meetings.

Comment 1

It would be great to widen I-77 but if this means putting up a toll, I am against it. I've lived in Conn. and NY where tolls do nothing but tie up traffic (even EZ passes). If the thought is to alleviate traffic problems, this is not the way to go in my opinion. Thanks so much for the opportunity to give my opinion on this.

Lorraine Patterson
10140 Meadow Crossing Lane
Cornelius, NC 28031
lpatterson@tiaa-cref.org

Comment 2

Here are a couple of ideas for you.

#1. If widening 77 from I85 to Exit 16 by 1 foot per lane is still on the table I say take it off. See if you can get a waiver from the Feds because this will be a major disruption to traffic which really won't accomplish anything except waste taxpayers money. I believe we have more pressing needs. How many accidents occur in that stretch of road anyway?

#2. To widen 77 over the Lake how about putting a concrete wall down the middle and utilizing the current median for the extra lane. Sure there would be a problem if there was an accident but there already is. Anytime there's an accident on 77 traffic stops. There are examples of this around Charlotte and in NJ on I80 they did something similar 10 or so years ago. Would be a whole lot cheaper than expanding the causeways.

Chris Conroy
704-604-2619

Comment 3

The I-77 corridor from Charlotte to Virginia should have the Governor's and all State officials full attention and priority. This is a complicated serious situation that needs improvement. It will only get a lot worse as more residents move to the Charlotte community and points south. One part of the proposed bill is seriously flawed and easily understood by people who commute 77 everyday. There should not be an HOV lane and the thought of changing it to 3 or 4 person occupancy would only make the situation worse. Seriously? I drive this road twice a day and many times during rush hour there are few cars in the HOV lane while traffic backs up for miles in the others. I hope there is a better plan to update and widen this road and the last thing anyone can seriously consider is adding more HOV restrictions. You may also consider restricting truck traffic to the right lane only for this stretch of highway to help with the back ups even though I am sure there is big revenue involved. My commute to work begins well before 6:30 am to drive 77 south. I do this so I can head north before the rush hour mess, and most days it makes no difference at all when a 65 mph major highway stops in its tracks while 3+ lanes merge into 2.

Best Regards,
Gary

Comment 4

I attended the 'public comment' session last night and once again, after most local government meetings, went home laughing and crying that we have this group of people leading our country into a never ending debt because of ignorant plans such as this.

Let's start by questioning if we are in the right direction of improving I-77 when the leader that you choose is a person who rarely uses the road during rush hour and who made to the ignorant decision for Davidson and Mooresville to form MI-Connections. He knew nothing about cable, but I am sure he benefited nicely from it, and he knows nothing about transportation, but I am sure he will benefit again. He does not drive on I-77 during rush hour, and does not have an education in engineering or experience managing big projects, but you think he can lead us to the best solution.

Then you claim that you are considering 4 options, with no difference in any of them and they all have the same commonality - they are all over costly proposals that will have NO impact on the commute or the environment, the only thing they will do is to keep DOT and local politicians busy working on the same problem for the next 20 years. If anyone is serious about fixing the traffic problems related to I-77 or 485, and encouraging more businesses to come here, at a fair cost, than we must start by looking at the true root cause of the problem.

If you want to improve traffic, limit (possibly even decrease) pollution, increase the demand for businesses to relocate or expand here, decrease the number of lives that are lost because of accidents, and do it for the best possible dollar value that is within your budgeted amount and has the ability to be adjusted for future development, then you must start by looking at what truly causes the traffic on I-77.

Mile markers 19 - 31 of I-77 has more accidents than exits 1 - 18 and has less than half of the volume. Does anyone know why? It has virtually nothing to do with volume and is only related to design! Too many people have personal lives or jobs or live in locations prevent them from using

HOV and/or HOT lanes. This is no longer the 1940's - 70's were everyone lived and worked in similar locations and didn't have their children's after school activities control their lives. And gas is already \$4 per gallon, so people cannot afford to pay another \$1 - \$4 each way.

HOT lanes will have no impact on traffic, and/or the number of cars on the road. Let's look at the numbers. If we have 2,000 cars per hour using this part of I-77 in one direction, and we use a high number of 10 % of the cars using the HOT lane (less than 2% use the HOV lane) that is 200 cars per hour. If population continues grows at a low 2% per year, in 4 years by the time they are done with the HOT lanes that will = 2,200 cars per hour, minus the 10% we hope would use the HOT lane and we will have the same number of cars on the same 2 lanes.

The best solution would be to:

1. Improved exit/entrance ramps - Most of them from exit 18 - 36 are too short, especially with the few number of exits and poorly designed roads that they connect with. The primary cause of the backup on I-77 is that vehicles, especially trucks, cannot get on or off I-77 in a safe manner. It is not primarily caused by the volume, it is caused by the short distance of the ramps which makes drivers nervous and slow down to allow other vehicles on safely. It is also the short ramps that cause a majority of the accidents on I-77, by having a vehicle that is merging on I-77 cut off another vehicle already on I-77 and causing every vehicle behind it to suddenly slam on the brakes, until finally one person is not paying enough attention and hits the vehicle in front of them causing a train wreck. In addition, most of the exit ramps do not have proper turning lanes to ease the flow onto the cross road. Many are short, single lanes that do not have the multiple left and right turn lanes that would allow multiple cars to exit the ramp at the same time. (adding an extra 500 - 700 feet to most of the exits would equal less than 1 mile = under \$6 mill)
2. Now, the reason that the exit ramps are not properly designed is because it would cause too much traffic in the communities because of the poorly designed crossroads (Gilead, Sam Furr, Catawba). Specifically, the timing of the lights on each of the crossroads must be properly synchronized to prevent the buildup of traffic on I-77 that is initiated from these crossroads. In addition, most of these crossroads need properly designed turning lanes in order to prevent the backup of everyone stopping for each person that is getting off of the crossroad. (city computer synchronization systems would cost under \$1 mill for all of north Mecklenburg and decrease the number of technicians that drive around adjusting the lights). A great solution would be to eliminate the left turn lanes from the crossroad onto I-77 and have them continuously flowing instead of having 20 cars entering 77 at the same time. (that may cost an additional \$1 mill per exit, but be well worth it)
3. Once this is done, the entrance ramps would be long enough to add merging lights that would separate the cars that are merging onto I-77 so that they could more easily merge without causing vehicles to stop. I know that there are some incorrect beliefs on the part of NC DOT about whether merging lights work, but anyone who has been on the LIE in NY knows that they work greatly, and you could create a contract with a company that could test it first with temporary lights at their own expense, and if the results are beneficial, they would get the contract. (these lights would be maintained with the synchronization system, so the only cost is the initial set up which would be well under \$1 mill for all 8 lights)
4. The next step would be to add 6' concrete walls to stop people from admiring the view of the water - that would also save lives by decreasing the daily accidents that occur because of incompetent drivers slowing down to look at the water. While you are at it, you should also add

trees or walls in the central reservation to prevent people from being nosey looking at accidents on the other side of the road. (estimate \$1 - \$2 million)

5. Then add additional exits around mile marker 24 and/or 26 (Stumptown Road and Westmoreland). This will also assist the poorly designed/developed Sam Furr and Gilead Roads and decrease the backup to/from the other exits. There is less traffic on I-77 in the city of Charlotte than there is in Huntersville because there are more exits, there is no HOV/HOT lane in the city. When is there traffic in the city area? When there is a major back up on one of the exits, especially 85 or 277 or Tyvola. (since the roads are already there, it would only be adding the exits/entrance and acquiring some property, so we can estimate that at \$7-12 mill)

6. Then the last stage should be to increase the number of lanes, starting with northbound. The addition of 1 lane from 23 to 25 will virtually eliminate most of the northbound traffic for the next 5 -10 years (specifically because of the poorly designed merging of 7 lanes to 2 lanes within a couple of miles: 3 standard lanes +1 HOV lane on 77 + 2 lanes from 485 + the exit 23 entrance merging lane). In addition, the last part of 485 will also probably be done some time over the next couple of years, this will also increase the number of vehicles Involved in the 7 lane to 2 lane merge, which will obviously make the traffic even worse. As far as southbound the addition of 1 lane from 23 to around 21 (where It goes from 2 lanes to 4 lanes) would solve most of the AM congestion that backs up all the way to exit 31 because of the short merging lane and cars/buses that jump over to the left/HOA lanes and cause the backup. (for the 4 miles, it should be around \$16 - 21 million)

7. Another simple improvement to most of the roads in NC would be the use of half way decent reflectors, both on the roads and on the side railings. NC has the worst reflectors than virtually any other state, and all the local politicians instead fight to have much more costly lights installed (which as Charlotte knows, this doesn't work because of the poor quality that they have purchased). If you drive through states like Virginia, Florida, or South Carolina, you will see that they have slightly larger, but much better reflectors that prevent the need of lights and prevent many accidents, especially the type of accidents that Charlotte is known for over the past few years - people driving on the wrong side of the exit/entrance. This will also decrease traffic in during the dark times of the day because it allows people to more easily see the roads ahead. (aprox \$1 - 2 million)

I am all for having a separate company run virtually anything instead of having our overspending, mismanaging government run it. But, thinking that any company can make money out of this is about as smart as saying that Mi-Connections, the NASCAR Hall of Fame, or the National White Water Center would be profitable, or that school districts would be able to operate in a reasonable budget. As we know, the NASCAR Hall of Fame made up an estimation that at least 250,000 people would visit it each year. When the public saw it, they laughed at the fact that more than 125 people per hour would enter it. Go figure, we were right and the local politicians were wrong, and they have been averaging about 110,000 per year or 55 per hour. We are in a similar situation here. Same thing with Mi-Connections, the new leader of this project, Thunberg, caused Mooresville and Davidson to be more than \$90 million in debt and rapidly growing, with no chance of ever breaking even, and the customers are paying the same exact price as the customers of their competitors with less benefits. No business, unless fully funded by the government would expect to invest over \$150 million dollars and 3 years of work, to have huge administrative expenses for an estimated income of about \$2,200 per day or \$790,000 per year (350 cars per hour for 3 hours for 5 days of the week at \$3 per car). If they didn't have any future expenses (labor, maintenance, etc..), it would take them about 180 years to break even.

All of that work could be done for \$25-45 million and will not have to require future operating expenses that the HOT lane will have. And best of all it will actually have better traffic results than spending the proposed \$75-100 million that is being proposed along with the continuous operating expenses for unused lanes. As for the next steps, create a new tax for all new development - all new commercial construction must pay a 1 time fee per square foot and all new residential must pay a lower rate, but maybe per bedroom. Then, properly manage the projects so the you do not overspend as DOT always does (Brawley School Road is a prime example, it took twice as long and cost twice as much as it should have if it was designed and managed properly, Catawba Avenue is another great example of poorly designed project).

If you want to truly improve the transportation in the area, so that local businesses can boom, so that more people will want to come here, and then in return you will have more income taxes paid, do it right for once, stop making excuses and blaming other people. Get rid of Thunberg, listen to the people who use the roads every day, stop wasting money on lame excuses, stop all current projects, design a short and long term plan that actually uses common sense, and then manage the project properly.

Chris Grancagnolo
130 Meadow Run Lane Mooresville
cgrancag@roadrunner.com

Comment 5

MUMPO

I-77 should be widened from 485/Huntersville to Mooresville, this is known to all citizens who use I-77. These ideas that I see about toll booths, light rails and HOV lanes seem useless to the people who actually live here. We are attached to our vehicles and the freedom of driving our own vehicles to and from the city. As a local, I and many others have no need for a HOV lane, toll lane or rail system. My hope is that more folks will speak up as the widening of I-77 would be a benefit to us all if it were for all of the residents.

Regards,
Erica Nicole Wilson - IRES, SFR
C 704-467-6673 O 704-815-3231

Comment 6

I am very grateful that the project to widen I 485 in South Charlotte is planned to start next summer. Will the project add from I 77 to Johnston or Rea Rd? I've seen reports of both. In either event will it not just move the bottleneck down to those exits?

Dan Kuhn
dvkuhn@carolina.rr.com

Comment 7

To Whom It May Concern,

I've noticed that the public hasn't had a large input or opportunity for public meetings by NCDOT in regards to whether or not the public is or is not in favor of the decision to convert the HOV lanes to HOT lanes. I travel the section from Exit 28 to Exit 5 on a daily basis and yes we do have a problem with congestion from around Mile 30 to Mile 19. But to be stated the only option is to Toll this

section of roadway does not make the best effort for our resources. I have attached a couple of article links from Washington State in regards to the HOT Lanes that were created on Highway Route 167 between Auburn and Renton. I've also included an posted article by WDOT that gives some interesting statics and data backing up their viewpoint.

I would like the committee to view and comment before just stating the only selection is to chose one of the four scenarios supplied by DOT. I would think the push is for air quality and most vehicles remaining in the general purpose lanes doesn't quite work. I believe that some individuals will in fact take advantage of the lanes by if you scroll down in the WDOT article look at the pictures of the highway showing traffic flow and how many cars do you see utilizing the HOT lanes.

<http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/NR/rdonlyres/6B696CEE-0FA2-4C6E-8625-DD2D868DC0CC/0/hot6mnthb.pdf>

<http://www.thenewstribune.com/2011/03/23/1596040/legislators-cant-agree-on-extension.html>

http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/NR/rdonlyres/C198671E-7B2F-4186-9912-A41A0B274103/0/SR167_AnnualPerformanceSummary_113011_FINAL_WEB.pdf

Michael Case
18912 Harbor Cove Lane
Cornelius, NC 28031
(704) 995-6416

Comment 8

Hello,

I am a resident of the Town of Cornelius. While I agree I-77 needs to have more travel lanes, I am very concerned about increases to the noise level on surrounding communities. I live on the west side of I-77 in Cornelius, in the Captain's Point subdivision. The closest main intersection is Knox Road and Torrence Chapel. The highway noise with the current number of lanes is very loud in my neighborhood and in surrounding neighborhoods. Noise pollution of this type impacts our quality of life and the value of our homes. I'd like to know what the NCDOT is going to do to mitigate any increase in noise pollution from the highway in our community.

Unfortunately, it looks like the Red Line will not be a solution to easing congestion on I-77 anytime soon. It would have been a much more environmentally friendly option than the widening of I-77.

Sincerely,
Chris Micolucci
21201 Baltic Drive
Cornelius, NC 28031
704-896-3499

Comment 9

I would like to caution MUMPO to strongly consider Not widening I-77. The Lake Norman area is a beautiful yet fragile ecosystem. As a commuter to Charlotte on a daily basis I chose to live here because I cherish and prefer the natural landscape. As I enter the corridor between exit 18 and exit 30 I break away from the harsh air, treeless roads, and smog that Charlotte has been headlined for in the past year. Charlotte has a tremendously high rate of asthma amongst children and the air quality is a code orange most days of the year. As the world moves towards an increased awareness of quality of life and clean living I fear that the Lake Norman area will become increasingly undesirable. So, in an effort to bring more people to the area and move current residents over our roads faster we will erode our currently fragile area to a place of banal appeal. If there's no

difference between us and Charlotte, then what would draw people here? A polluted lake that is the result of no natural filter will destroy the beauty and economy of our area. Take a moment to pause and envision a treeless roadway with signs dotting the roadsides warning people of the toxic water that they can no longer use due to the decisions you make on the 16th.

If you diffuse the future for the momentary fix, then you will erode the future of our legacy. Please consider carefully.

Sincerely,
Michelle Furches
Cornelius Resident

Comment 10

Please see Attachment A for slides referenced in Mr. Horner's comments.

Hi Stuart,

Thanks for taking the time to speak with me today. As mentioned on the phone, I'm not an expert at city planning by any means. I'm just an engineer and an observant driver.

Anyway, after having reviewed the plans that are publicly available on the MUMPO website, I'm concerned about the bottlenecks in the system. I'm worried that if we go ahead with this as currently proposed, we will have built an 8 lane highway with the capacity of a 6 lane highway. But, I also think that the necessary modifications are minor.

I've put together a couple of slides for you to illustrate where I see the problem areas. To summarize, 1) the Pineville-Matthews interchange is bottlenecked to only 3 lanes in both directions, 2) the Johnston interchange is bottlenecked to only 2 lanes in the Eastbound directions, and 3) the Johnston interchange could clog up in the Westbound direction if the dashed white lane stripes aren't carefully planned.

So, thanks again for your time. When do you think I could expect to hear back about whether these recommendations will be implemented?

Regards,
Truman Horner

Comment 11

Please see Attachment B for attachment referenced in Ms. Pruess' comments.

Greetings Robert,

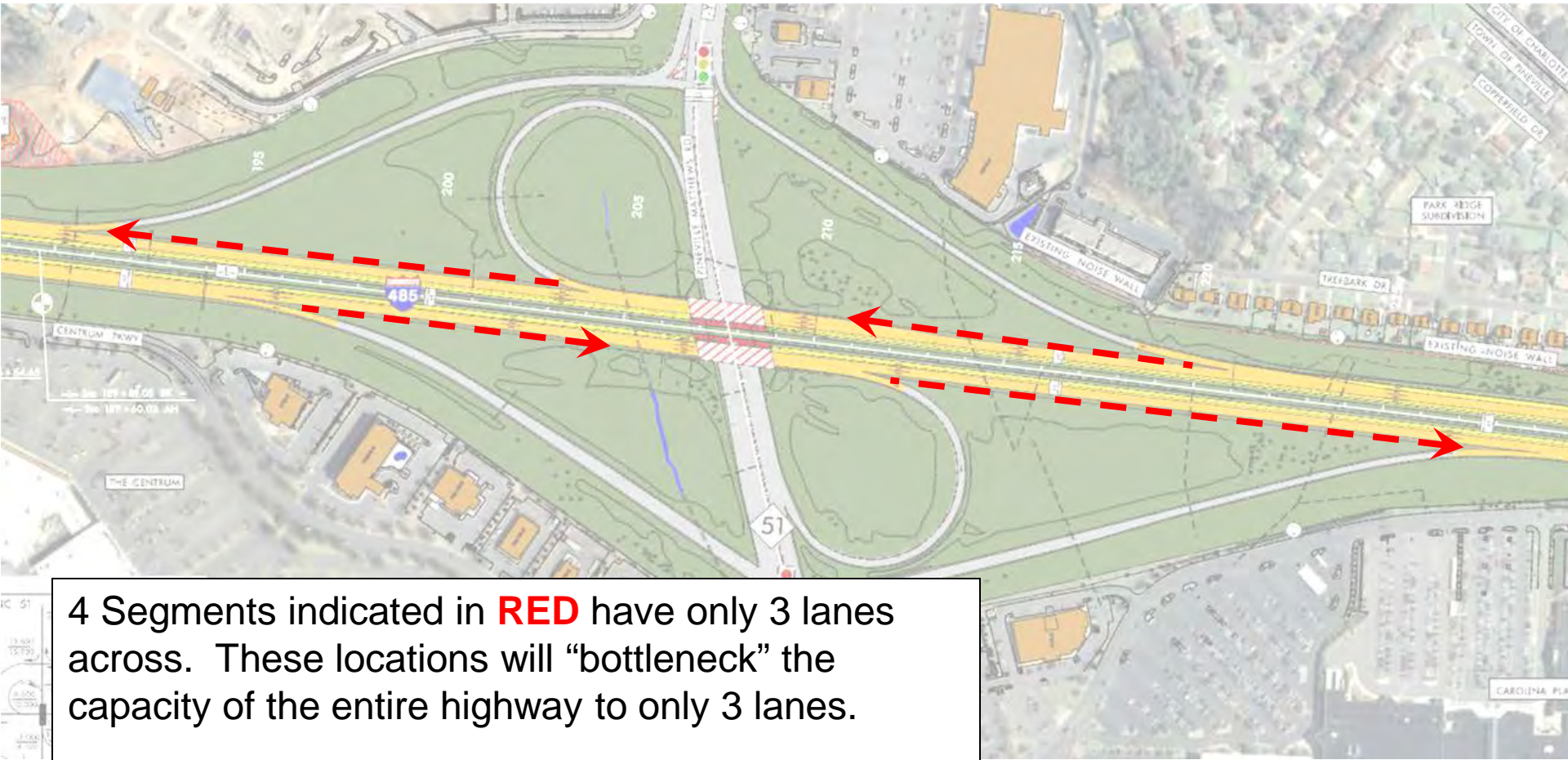
The Mecklenburg County Land Use and Environmental Services plan review team requests your consideration of the attached with regard to the 2035 LRTP Amendments.

Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions or concerns.

Heidi Pruess, CEP
Environmental Policy Administrator
Land Use and Environmental Services
Mecklenburg County
Charlotte, NC 28202
(704) 336-5597

Attachment A

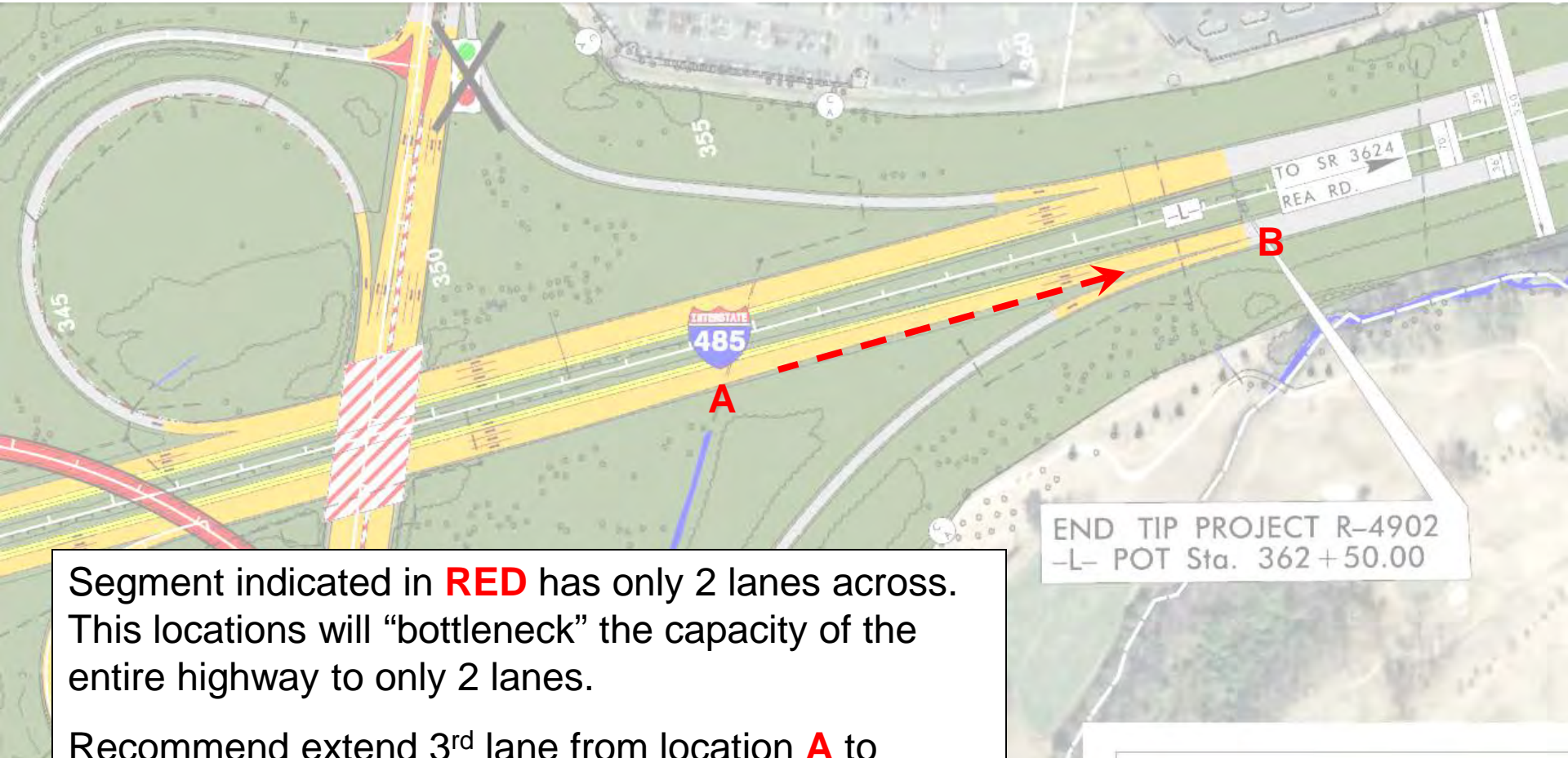
Pineville-Matthews Interchange



4 Segments indicated in **RED** have only 3 lanes across. These locations will “bottleneck” the capacity of the entire highway to only 3 lanes.

Recommend Exit Only be converted to standard exits for both Inner and Outer I-485 Loop.

Johnston Interchange Eastbound



Segment indicated in **RED** has only 2 lanes across. This locations will “bottleneck” the capacity of the entire highway to only 2 lanes.

Recommend extend 3rd lane from location **A** to location **B**. Inbound ramp would then have standard entrance and merge unto existing 3rd lane.

Johnston Interchange Westbound



Introduction of new lane on left-hand shoulder at location **C**, in combination with loss of right-hand lane at location **D**, will cause many drivers to shift one lane to the left.

Recommend adjustment of white paint stripes to shift all traffic automatically to the left. “New lane” would appear to come in from the right and then immediately exit at location **D**. All through traffic would perceive that they had stayed in the same lane.



MECKLENBURG COUNTY
Land Use and Environmental Services Agency

April 20, 2012

Robert Cook
MUMPO
600 E. Fourth Street
Charlotte, NC 28202-2853

rwcook@ci.charlotte.nc.us

Re: 2035 LRTP Amendments
Proposed TIP & LRTP Amendments & Air Quality Conformity Determination

Dear Mr. Cook,

Representatives of the Air Quality (MCAQ), Groundwater & Wastewater Services (MCGWS), Solid Waste (MCSW), Storm Water Services (MCSWS), and Water Quality (MCWQ) Programs of the Mecklenburg County Land Use and Environmental Services Agency (LUESA) have reviewed the above referenced 2035 LRTP Amendments. The comments below are submitted for your consideration.

Programs with No Comment at this Time

Solid Waste
Groundwater & Wastewater Services
Air Quality

Recommendations / Request for Consideration

Storm Water Services

Mecklenburg County Water Quality Program (MCWQP) offers the following recommendation regarding the proposed expansion of I-77 and I-485:

- I-77 crosses McDowell Creek and its unnamed tributaries ten times between Hambright Road, Charlotte, NC and Catawba Avenue, Cornelius, NC. McDowell Creek drains to Mountain Island Lake, the primary drinking water supply for Mecklenburg County residents. **Extra care should be taken to protect this Watershed.**

- I-485 crosses unnamed tributaries of Six Mile Creek four times between Ballentyne Commons Parkway, Charlotte, NC, and McKee Road, Charlotte, NC. McKee Creek is the home of the Carolina Heel Splitter, a federally listed endangered species of freshwater mussel. **Extra care should be taken to protect this Watershed.**

Please feel free to contact myself or Ms. Heather Sorensen at Heather.Sorensen@mecklenburgcountync.gov or 704-432-1969 directly regarding the comment above.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Heidi Pruess". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

Heidi Pruess, Environmental Policy Administrator
Heidi.Pruess@mecklenburgcountync.gov

**14535 Highway 73
Huntersville, NC 28078**

Wednesday, April 25, 2012

Robert W. Cook, Secretary
Mecklenburg-Union Metropolitan Planning Organization
600 East Fourth Street
Charlotte, NC 28202

Re: I-77 Proposed Improvements HOV-HOT
Public Workshop April 18, 2012
Huntersville Town Hall

The following is in response to your request for for comments on the Proposal to Amend the 2012-2018 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) for Proposed Improvements to I-77.

Scenario 1 & 2 versus Scenario 3 & 4

It is difficult to compare these Scenarios since cost estimates were available for only Scenarios 1 & 2 (\$ 64 million)

HOV versus HOT lanes

It is difficult to compare these alternatives since there were no revenue figures available for the HOT lanes. What is the cost to convert HOV lanes to HOT lanes? What is the projected revenue from the HOT lanes (i.e. how many vehicles per day are projected to use the HOT lanes, and what would be the charge per use).

1HOT2+ versus 1HOT3+

Personal observation is that current HOV2+ lanes are underutilized. Converting existing HOV2+ to HOT2+ would seem to be the cheapest and most prudent way to test the viability of HOT lanes. If HOV2+ are currently underutilized, converting them to HOT3+ rather than HOT2+ doesn't seem to make much sense.

Exit 28

Plans displayed at the Public Workshop didn't show the 2013 planned DDI at Exit 28. Also, there doesn't seem to be any consideration of how to deal with the potential backup south of Exit 28 due to the constriction of 3 lanes to 2 lanes north of Exit 28. This is currently a significant problem for northbound I-77 traffic afternoon commuter traffic south of Exit 23.

1HOT versus 2HOT

Without existing and projected traffic count data available for public review, it is not possible to compare these options, especially without any cost data. During afternoon rush hour, some I-77 northbound traffic will exit at Exit 23, some at Exit 25, some at Exit 28, and the remainder continue northbound across the Lake Norman causeway. How much volume currently departs at each Exit ? What are the projected Scenarios for extending HOT lanes north of Exit 28 ? If P3 funding is envisioned for 2HOT (Scenarios 3 & 4) , then there are many other questions that need to be addressed.

Comments of the April 18, 2012 Huntersville Public Workshop

The Workshop would have been more helpful and informative if there had been a formal presentation of the various Scenarios and an opportunity to collectively discuss and compare them. On site Document Review was not available until just before the start of the Workshop, and the documentation (with the exception of the Air Quality data) lacked specificity.

Additional Information and Comment

Our respective Commissioners and the TCC of MUMPO will undoubtedly require more complete information than what was presented at the Huntersville “Workshop”.

Dr. Ken Holtje
ken.holtje@gmail.com

cc: Bill Coxe, Town of Huntersville, MUMPO TCC Chairperson
Sarah McAulay, Huntersville Commissioner and MUMPO Board Member
Ron Julian, Huntersville Commissioner
Karen Bentley, Mecklenburg BOCC - District 1



PUBLIC COMMENT FORM
I-77 & I-485 Proposed Improvements

April 18, 2012
Huntersville

Please use this form to provide comments on the proposed improvements to I-77 & I-485.

NAME: KURT NAAS

ADDRESS: 19431 SCHOOVER DR CORNELIUS

E-MAIL ADDRESS: knaas92@hotmail.com

COMMENT: SEE ATTACHED

Why NO general purpose lanes?

- Add additional pages as necessary -

All public comments should be sent to

MUMPO Secretary
Regular mail: 600 E. Fourth St
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center-8th floor
Charlotte, NC 28202
E-mail: rwcook@charlottenc.gov
FAX: 704-336-5123



Facts and Questions about the Toll Lane

A few facts regarding I-77 through Lake Norman:

Fact: when I-77 was built in 1978, the combined population of the LKN towns, including Mooresville, was less than 15,000. Today it is over 120,000.

Fact: since its construction there has not been a single improvement to any north-south corridor through the LKN area. I-77 has never been widened. 115 is still two lanes, and US 21 remains a cul de sac.

Fact: I-77 through LKN is the only stretch of interstate in Mecklenburg County that is four lanes. All others are at least six.

Fact: The current service level on I-77 is an "F".

Fact: In terms of vehicles per lane, I-77 remains the most congested stretch of four lane interstate in North Carolina.

Fact: To mitigate this, we have a choice between a toll lane and a toll lane.

Fact: NC gas tax increase 4 cents last year to 39 cents per gallon, the sixth highest in the country

Fact: There is presently \$54B worth of highway projects competing for \$11B worth of public funding.

Fact: Completing I485 and widening 85 cost \$130M less than originally planned.

A few questions:

How can the widening of a major transportation artery that has never been improved in 30+ years, that has a failing service level, that serves a fast-growing region, *not* qualify for the top 20% of public projects?

Why are the citizens of Lake Norman once again being asked to pay taxes... twice?

Why are we not pursuing sources of public funding such as CMAQ or the governor's Mobility Fund, the savings from the I-85 project or the half cent transportation tax?

A few more facts:

Since the beginning of the year, the leadership of the LKN towns have held 56 separate meetings devoted to the Red Line.

Since the beginning of the year, the leadership of the LKN towns- until today- have held zero meetings devoted to widening I-77.

And a conclusion:

~~General purpose~~
~~General purpose~~

General purpose lanes
Serve the public best!



PUBLIC COMMENT FORM
I-77 & I-485 Proposed Improvements

April 18, 2012
Huntersville

Please use this form to provide comments on the proposed improvements to I-77 & I-485.

NAME: CLAY FURCHES

ADDRESS: 19800 CALLAWAY HILLS LANE, DAVIDSON NC 28036

E-MAIL ADDRESS: Furchesh@bellsouth.net

COMMENT: _____

AN INFORMATIVE DISPLAY. MAPS ARE GREAT.

① MY PREFERENCE IS SCENARIO 3 OR 4.

I SEE THE ADVANTAGES OF 4 (HOV 3+), BY TAKING AN ADDITIONAL CAR OFF THE ROAD. HOWEVER, I BELIEVE THE GENERAL PUBLIC WILL RAIL AGAINST THAT INITIALLY. WE SEEM TO HAVE HAD A MINDSET ~~OF~~ OF MORE ROADS, MORE LANES ~~BEFORE~~ AT 65 MPH ALL THE TIME WITHOUT PAYING FOR IT. THOSE DAYS ARE OVER; SOME SACRIFICE HAS TO BE MADE BY THE MOTORING PUBLIC, EITHER IN TIME OR MONEY.

② ALSO, I STRONGLY SUPPORT THE RED LINE. SOONER OR LATER WE WILL NEED IT.

③ ANYTHING WE CAN ACCOMPLISH THAT MOVES FORWARD THE WIDENING OF I-77 TO 8 LANES FROM CLT TO I-40 IS A DEFINITE PLUS FOR THIS REGION.

- Add additional pages as necessary -

THANKS FOR THE FORM

All public comments should be sent to

MUMPO Secretary

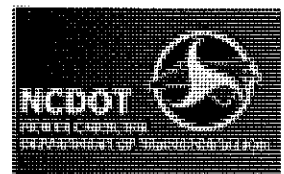
Regular mail: 600 E. Fourth St

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center-8th floor

Charlotte, NC 28202

E-mail: rwcook@charlottenc.gov

FAX: 704-336-5123





PUBLIC COMMENT FORM
I-77 & I-485 Proposed Improvements

April 18, 2012
Huntersville

Please use this form to provide comments on the proposed improvements to I-77 & I-485.

NAME: KEVIN WALSH

ADDRESS: 8914 McDIARMID LANE.

E-MAIL ADDRESS: kwalsh@hntb.com

COMMENT: I WOULD LIKE TO EXPRESS THE NEED FOR A GREENWAY CROSSING TO BE CONSIDERED FOR THIS PROJECT. AS YOU ARE AWARE, THERE ARE MULTIPLE PROPOSED GREENWAY CROSSINGS OF I-77. THESE ARE INCLUDED IN THE MECK. CNTY GUY. MASTER PLAN, TOWN OF HUNTERSVILLE GUY. PLAN AND THE CAROLINA THREAD TRAIL PLAN. I WOULD LIKE TO SEE IF THERE'S A WAY TO ~~REPLACE~~ REPLACE/IMPROVE THE EXISTING CULVERT UNDER I-77 JUST NORTH OF I-77 TO ACCOMODATE A GREENWAY. IF WE ~~DON'T~~ DON'T CONSIDER THIS NOW, IT WILL BE A LOST OPPORTUNITY. ~~NEVER~~ WE TURN OUR BACK ON THESE TYPES OF CONNECTIONS B/C IT IS EASY TO DO SO, AND I THINK WE OWE IT TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC TO THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX AND FIND A WAY TO MAKE THIS WORK. - FEEL FREE TO CALL ME @

704.208.5358

- Add additional pages as necessary -

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MUMPO Secretary

Regular mail: 600 E. Fourth St

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center-8th floor

Charlotte, NC 28202

E-mail: rwcook@charlottenc.gov

FAX: 704-336-5123



Mecklenburg-Union Technical Coordinating Committee
I-77 North Corridor Statement of Principles Guidance Document
May 10, 2012

The Mecklenburg-Union Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC) hereby commits itself to active, ongoing, and meaningful participation in the development and implementation of projects in the I-77 corridor between central Charlotte and Mooresville. To guide this collaboration the TCC is preparing a statement of principles. This statement of principles is intended to be an evolving document that can be modified as additional issues arise and information is developed.

The development should include:

- 1) A strategic vision for the corridor between Charlotte and Mooresville, with the potential extension to Statesville of this vision
- 2) A mechanism for examining the environmental issues that would affect project development throughout the corridor
- 3) The development of the types of information and a schedule that could lead to a public/private partnership (P3) project moving forward in 2012
- 4) A framework for the amount and source of any public subsidy to a P3 project
- 5) A meaningful mechanism for stakeholder participation in the development of terms and conditions of a P3 project
- 6) Defining how to ensure the physical and financial viability of other projects that penetrate the envelope of the corridor (both those currently envisioned and how do deal with subsequent proposals)
- 7) Actions to ensure long term support for transit and shared ride modes of travel
- 8) Actions to ensure the operational viability and characteristics of any interim project



600 East Fourth Street
 Charlotte, NC 28202
 704-336-2205
 www.mumpo.org

TO: Mecklenburg-Union MPO Members
 FROM: Robert Cook, AICP
 MUMPO Secretary
 DATE: June 13, 2012
 SUBJECT: **Funding Scenario for I-485 Widening (R-4902)**

The NCDOT has advised MUMPO that that the proposed widening of I-485 between I-77 and Rea Road (R-4902) may require Equity funds to keep the project on schedule; however, the need for project delays will be mitigated if funds from the Mobility Fund are awarded to a MUMPO project.

NCDOT has proposed the following delays to Equity-funded projects as a “worst-case” scenario:

Interstate Paving- 1 Year Delay					
TIP Project	Facility	Project Limits	From	To	Cost
I-5368	I-77	MM 13 to MM 24	2019	2020	\$8,200,000
I-5381	I-77	SC state line to MM 9.9	2018	2019	\$6,300,000
I-5384	I-485	MM 43 to MM 51	2019	2020	\$7,900,000
					\$22,400,000

Interstate Paving- 2 Year Delay					
TIP Project	Facility	Project Limits	From	To	Cost
I-5346	I-85	MM 29.8 to MM36	2017	2019	\$6,600,000
I-5369	I-85	MM 36 to MM 42	2018	2020	\$8,900,000
I-5383	I-485	I-77 to MM 3	2018	2020	\$3,200,000
					\$18,700,000

Interstate Paving- 3 Year Delay					
TIP Project	Facility	Project Limits	From	To	Cost
I-5343	I-485	MM 37 to MM 40	2017	2020	\$4,500,000
					\$4,500,000

Capacity-Adding Project Delays					
TIP Project	Facility	Project Limits	From	To	Cost
R-2555B*	W. Catawba Ave	Jetton Road to NC 73	2018	2019	\$7,500,000
U-4714B*	Old Monroe Road	I-485 to Indian Trail Road	2017	2018	\$16,900,000
U-2509A**	Independence Blvd	Idlewild Road to Sardis Road North	2020	2022	\$128,000,000
					\$152,400,000

* Delay is for Construction only; ROW is to remain on schedule.

** Delay is for Construction and ROW

Several MUMPO projects scored very high on the Mobility Fund project rankings, and there is reasonable confidence that at least one MUMPO project will be funded from this source. If the General Assembly awards Mobility Fund resources to a MUMPO project, NCDOT estimates the following will be the result:

Project	Impact of Addition of Mobility Fund Resources in MUMPO
Interstate paving projects	Projects still delayed
R-2555B	No delay
U-4714B	No delay
U-2509A	One year delay

It is unknown at this time if Equity-funded project delays will be needed for the I-77 project (I-5405).

MPO Expansion Issues

MPO Meeting June 20, 2012

	Issue	Background	Options	TCC Guidance
1.	UZA ¹ encroachment into counties with an existing MPO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charlotte UZA encroaches into Cabarrus County and York County • Both are currently served by existing MPOs • Metropolitan planning process must be implemented in UZAs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extend MUMPO's planning area into the two counties • Cede MUMPO's planning responsibilities to the two existing MPOs 	<p>Cede MUMPO's planning responsibilities to the two existing MPOs</p> <p>TCC guidance consistent with action following 2000 Census</p>
2.	UZA encroachment into counties without an existing MPO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charlotte UZA encroaches into Catawba County and Lancaster County • Neither county is currently served by an existing MPO • Metropolitan planning process must be implemented in UZAs • RFATS² has been in discussion with Lancaster County officials about extending its planning area into that county • Hickory MPO plans to extend its planning area into southeastern Catawba County 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extend MUMPO's planning area into the two counties • Cede MUMPO's planning responsibilities to the two MPOs planning to extend their boundaries to include the areas in question 	<p>Cede MUMPO's planning responsibilities to the Hickory MPO and Rock Hill/Ft. Mill Area Transportation Study</p>
3.	UZA encroachment into Gaston County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charlotte UZA encroaches into Gaston County in the area of Mountain Island Lake, near NC 16 • Area is currently in the jurisdiction of the Gaston MPO • Gaston MPO has expressed desire to cede planning responsibilities to MUMPO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommend that Gaston MPO retain jurisdiction over area in question • Extend MUMPO's planning area into Gaston County-UZA area only • Extend MUMPO's planning area into Gaston County-smooth boundary and connect to MUMPO planning area in Lincoln County 	<p>Delay decision until Gaston MPO conducts further discussions with Mt. Holly and Gaston County officials</p>

MPO Expansion Issues

**MPO Meeting
June 20, 2012**

	Issue	Background	Options	TCC Guidance
4.	Iredell County boundary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UZA extends to Statesville 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extend planning area to include all of Iredell County • Extend as far north as South Yadkin River • Use county lines as eastern and western boundaries • Limit planning area boundary to a “smoothed” UZA boundary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Northern boundary: South Yadkin River • Eastern & western boundaries: county line
5.	Lincoln County boundary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UZA extends into eastern Lincoln County • Gaston MPO may extend planning area into central Lincoln County & Lincolnton • Two options provided by Lincoln County staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limit boundary to UZA and immediately contiguous area • Extend boundary further west to meet Gaston MPO boundary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Either Lincoln County option is viable • Delay decision until Lincolnton & Lincoln County officials conclude discussions with Gaston MPO
6.	Union County boundary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UZA extends to Marshville • All Union County municipalities now in MUMPO planning area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extend planning area to include all of Union County • Expand planning area to take in minimally required area (Marshville) • Develop boundary that allows Rocky River RPO to continue planning activities in Union County 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delay decision until input is obtained from Union County elected officials and staff

Acronyms

¹ UZA-urbanized area

² RFATS-Rock Hill/Ft. Mill Area Transportation Study (aka, Rock Hill MPO)



Charlotte Urbanized Area Census 2000 & 2010

Urbanized Areas outside Charlotte shown for 2010 Census only

2000-2010 Changes

- Charlotte 2000
- Charlotte 2010 additions
- Charlotte 2000 Concord 2010
- Charlotte 2000 Rural 2010

