



600 East Fourth Street
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www.mumpo.org

TO: Mecklenburg-Union MPO Delegates & Alternates
FROM: Robert W. Cook, AICP
MUMPO Secretary
DATE: March 13, 2013

**SUBJECT: March 2013 Mecklenburg-Union MPO Special Meeting
Wednesday, March 20, 7:00 PM**

The March 2013 meeting of the Mecklenburg-Union Metropolitan Planning Organization (MUMPO) is scheduled for Wednesday, March 20, 2013. 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.

Due to staff time and resources being focused on MOU-related matters and the I-77 HOT lanes project, there was insufficient time to prepare an education session this month. We hope to schedule an education session in advance of the regular May meeting.

PLEASE NOTE: Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center Access Changes*

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.

**There are two ways to enter the Government Center. Enter via the large staircase on the Davidson St. side or through the plaza entrance facing E. Fourth St. (This is a handicapped accessible entrance.) Once inside the building, security staff will assist you to Room 267. Security measures have been improved recently, so please allow more time for entering the building.*

Mecklenburg-Union Metropolitan Planning Organization

March 20, 2013

7:00 PM

Room 267-Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center

Meeting Agenda

1. **Call to Order** Sarah McAulay
2. **Ethics Awareness & Conflict of Interest Reminder** Sarah McAulay
3. **Approval of Minutes** Sarah McAulay
ACTION REQUESTED: Approve the February 2013 meeting minutes as presented.
4. **Citizen Comment Period**
5. **2013 Meeting Schedule** Robert Cook
ACTION REQUESTED: Approve modified 2013 meeting schedule.

BACKGROUND: See attached memorandum.

ATTACHMENT: Memorandum (including proposed 2013 schedule).
6. **2040 Long Range Transportation Plan**
 - a. **Roadway Project Ranking Methodology** Radha Swayampakala
ACTION REQUESTED: Approve the proposed roadway project ranking methodology to be used to rank candidate projects for the 2040 LRTP.

BACKGROUND: See attached memorandum.

TCC RECOMMENDATION: The TCC unanimously recommended that the MPO approve the ranking methodology as presented.

ATTACHMENT: LRTP Roadway Project Ranking Methodology memorandum.
 - b. **Goals & Objectives** Nicholas Landa
ACTION REQUESTED: FYI

BACKGROUND: See attached memorandum.

ATTACHMENTS: Goals & Objectives memorandum; stakeholder comments.
 - c. **Plan Update** Nicholas Landa
ACTION REQUESTED: FYI

BACKGROUND: Information will be provided about the LRTP update process.
7. **Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendments**
 - a. **Prosperity Church Road NW Arc TIP Amendment (TIP #U-5507)**) Dan Leaver

ACTION REQUESTED: Amend project U-5507 in the 2012-2018 TIP to:

- 1. Change allocation of STP-DA funds from \$4.8M for construction to \$3.1M for construction and \$1.7M for right-of-way acquisition;*
- 2. Make the funds available for right-of-way in FY13 and construction in FY14, instead of FY15; and*
- 3. Split U-5507 into two projects to allow for phased construction.*

BACKGROUND: Construction costs on the project have decreased from original estimates; however, real estate costs have increased significantly due to impacts on an environmental justice community. By receiving funding in FY13 the City can request right-of-way (ROW) authorization immediately after the required environmental clearances are received. The project also needs to be split into two projects to allow for phasing of the project's construction. Due to the length of time required to relocate residents in the environmental justice community, the City will not be able to have ROW authorization complete until late 2014. Construction will need to begin in summer of 2014 so that part of the roadway can be open to traffic to meet the I-485 schedule.

TCC RECOMMENDATION: The TCC unanimously recommended that the MPO amend the TIP as presented.

b. US 74 TIP Amendment (TIP #U-5526)

Scott Cole

ACTION REQUESTED: Approve the proposed amendment to the 2012-2018 TIP as presented.

BACKGROUND: NCDOT is requesting an amendment to the 2012-2018 TIP in order to study the feasibility of converting the existing and proposed busway to managed lanes on US 74 (Independence Boulevard) from I-277 to I-485. The amendment is for Planning and Environmental studies only, and does not impact existing TIP funding.

TCC RECOMMENDATION: The TCC unanimously recommended that the MPO amend the TIP as presented.

8. Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

Robert Cook

a. FY 2013 UPWP Amendments

ACTION REQUESTED: Approve the amendment to the FY 2013 UPWP as presented.

BACKGROUND: See attached memorandum.

TCC RECOMMENDATION: The TCC unanimously recommended that the MPO approve the amendment as presented.

ATTACHMENT: FY 2013 UPWP amendment memorandum; proposed amendment spreadsheet.

b. Draft FY 2014 UPWP

ACTION REQUESTED: FYI

BACKGROUND: An update on the status of the draft 2014 UPWP will be provided. See the attached memorandum for more information.

ATTACHMENT: FY 2014 UPWP memorandum; proposed funding allocation spreadsheet.

9. I-77 HOT Lanes Project

Bill Cox

ACTION REQUESTED: FYI

BACKGROUND: An update on the status of the project will be provided.

ATTACHMENT: I-77 timeline.

10. Memorandum of Understanding Subcommittee
a. New MPO Name

Robert Cook

ACTION REQUESTED: Approve “Charlotte Regional Transportation Planning Organization” as the new MPO name.

BACKGROUND: At its January meeting, the MOU Subcommittee considered a variety of names to identify the expanded MPO. Its recommendation was to present “Charlotte Regional Transportation Planning Organization” to the MPO as the recommended new name.

TCC RECOMMENDATION: The TCC unanimously recommended that the MPO approve “Charlotte Regional Transportation Planning Organization” as the MPO’s new name.

b. MOU Subcommittee Update

ACTION REQUESTED: FYI

BACKGROUND: A report from the Subcommittee’s March 20 meeting will be provided.

11. Adjourn

MECKLENBURG-UNION METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center, Room 267
February 20, 2013 Meeting
Summary Minutes

Members Attending:

David Howard (Charlotte), Chuck Travis (Cornelius), Brian Jenest (Davidson), Sarah McAulay (Huntersville), Dumont Clarke (Mecklenburg County), Carl Ellington (Mint Hill), Lynda Paxton (Stallings), Frank Aikmus (Union County), Barbara Harrison (Weddington), Brad Horvath (Wesley Chapel)

Non-Voting Members Attending:

Greg Phipps (Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission)

1. Call to Order

MPO Chairwoman Sarah McAulay called the special February 2013 MUMPO meeting to order at 7:07 PM.

2. Ethics Awareness & Conflict of Interest Reminder

Mr. Cook read the ethics awareness and conflict of interest reminder to the MPO.

3. Approval of Minutes

Chairwoman McAulay requested action on the January 2013 meeting minutes.

Motion:

Barbara Harrison made a motion to approve the January 2013 meeting minutes as presented. David Howard seconded the motion. Upon being put to a vote, the January 2013 minutes were unanimously approved.

4. Citizen Comment Period

Two citizens addressed the MPO.

Ed Toney discussed the status of NC 160 (Steele Creek Road) noting the current congestion, the lack of sidewalks and the need to improve the road in light of the outlet mall being proposed at the I-485 interchange. He urged the MPO to support improvements to NC 160.

Sharon Hudson represented a group known as WidenI-77.org. She expressed the group's opposition to the current proposal to widen I-77 by implementing HOT lanes. A printed list of reasons why the MPO should not support HOT lanes was presented to the MPO members.

5. Congestion Management Process

Presenter:

Scott Kaufhold, Town of Indian Trail

Summary:

Mr. Kaufhold chairs the Task Force established by the Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC) to manage the development of the Congestion Management Process (CMP). He stated that the request before the MPO was to endorse the CMP by approving the goals, objectives and performance measures included in the CMP memorandum included in the agenda packet. The CMP was briefly described. Mr. Kaufhold stated that the TCC unanimously recommended that the MPO take the requested action. Mr. Cook thanked Radha Swayampakala and Beverly Davis of RS&H for the work on the CMP, and Mr. Kaufhold for his leadership of the Task Force.

Motion:

Mr. Howard made a motion to endorse the Congestion Management Process and to approve the goals, objectives and performance measures. Chuck Travis seconded the motion. Upon being put to a vote, the motion passed unanimously.

6. 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan

a. Plan Preparation Update

Presenter:

Nicholas Landa

Summary:

Mr. Landa discussed the following topics related to preparation of the 2040 LRTP:

- a. Plan preparation oversight: LRTP preparation is being guided by a Steering Committee (five core staff members), as well as a larger Advisory Committee consisting of staff and other professionals from a variety of backgrounds and disciplines.
- b. Goals & objectives: a 21-day comment period began on February 11 for feedback on draft goals and objectives. The MPO will be asked to adopt final goals and objectives in March 2013.
- c. Roadway project ranking: approximately 250 projects were received. Project ranking will begin immediately after the methodology's adoption.
- d. Funding scenarios: the MPO will need to determine if additional revenue (beyond traditional sources) should be included in the LRTP's financial plan. The MPO will be asked for further guidance on this topic at the March 2013 meeting, and final action in April 2013.
- e. Project ranking methodology: the MPO's existing ranking methodology has been under review by the Steering and Advisory Committees in order to streamline the process, allow for more consistency, and incorporate quantitative components that will align with the NCDOT's adopted prioritization process.

b. Roadway Project Ranking Methodology

Presenter:

Radha Swayampakala, RS&H

Summary:

Mr. Swayampakala presented information to the MPO via a Power Point presentation, the contents of which are incorporated into the minutes. The presentation's purpose was to present the draft criteria to the MPO for comment in advance of a request for adoption to be made at the March 2013 meeting. The following key points were addressed in the presentation.

- a. The proposed methodology is a data-driven process, and is divided into two parts: Tier 1 will assess all candidate projects in three areas: congestion, safety and accessibility to employment. It will be used as a filter to determine which projects continue in the ranking process and move to Tier 2. Tier 2 will assess projects in six categories: environmental justice impacts, natural resource impacts, historic resource impacts, community resource impacts, system connectivity and benefit cost ratio.
- b. Of the approximately 250 candidate projects, it is anticipated that 70-80 will move from Tier 1 to Tier 2. 70-80 is twice the estimated number of projects for which it is expected that funding will be available.
- c. Tier 1 scoring will be produced through the transportation modeling process. Tier 2 scoring will be produced by a TCC subcommittee.
- d. The ranking process should be complete by June 2013.

Dumont Clarke asked if citizens would have an opportunity to advocate for projects. Mr. Landa replied that public involvement opportunities will be provided. He added that all projects were submitted by member jurisdictions and are assumed to be important to those communities. Mr. Cook stated that the TCC and MPO will have to apply professional judgment to the ranking process outcomes.

Mr. Swayampakala noted that development of the ranking methodology is being guided by the Steering and Advisory committees noted above, and thanked the MPO and TCC members who participated in a January focus group that helped formulate the methodology presented at this meeting. Mr. Cook stated that NCDOT highlighted MUMPO's proposed methodology at a February 19 meeting of the Joint Legislative Transportation Oversight Committee.

7. Memorandum of Understanding Subcommittee

Presenter:

Robert Cook

Summary:

Mr. Cook provided the MPO with an overview of the MOU Subcommittee's recent discussions:

- a. Current Non-Voting Jurisdictions: staff is reaching out to current non-voting jurisdictions to gauge their interest in participating in the MPO in light of the Subcommittee's recommendation to eliminate the population minimum currently found in the MOU. Non-voting jurisdictions are Mineral Springs, Hemby Bridge, Lake Park, Unionville and Fairview.
- b. New MPO Name: the Subcommittee endorsed a new name-Charlotte Regional Transportation Planning Organization. The new name was selected in order to better identify the region where the organization is located, and to better reflect the organization's responsibilities.
- c. TCC Representation: the Subcommittee has recommended that TCC membership be extended to include the following members:
 - i. a member representing greenway interests (from a public agency)
 - ii. representatives from the cities, towns and counties that will be MPO voting members
 - iii. the NCDOT Division 12 engineerNo recommendation was made on Mecklenburg County representation. Additional discussion will be needed.
- d. February MOU Subcommittee Meeting Recap:
 - i. Voting: the Subcommittee will need additional time to make a recommendation on voting. There is disagreement about how voting should be handled. The Subcommittee acted in December to recommend a voting arrangement that reflects the current system by retaining Charlotte's vote share at 42% and gives one additional vote to any jurisdiction (other than Charlotte) for each 20,000 in population. Mr. Howard has expressed serious concerns with the recommendation. A working group of the TCC met on February 18 and developed a similar recommendation, but did not include the 20,000 increment provision. Both recommendations would require Charlotte's vote share to be matched by at least six other votes in order for a motion to pass. At least three jurisdictions will be needed for this to occur.
 - ii. Quorum: the Subcommittee agreed to recommend a change to how the MPO's quorum is determined. A quorum is currently constituted by seven eligible voting members representing a minimum of 51% of the votes. The recommended quorum will be constituted by a simple majority (51%) of the eligible voting members OR a minimum 60% or the weighted vote of eligible members present. In addition, any member that misses two consecutive meetings will be ineligible to count towards the quorum until the next meeting they attend.
 - iii. Local match & MPO fees: additional time will be needed to finalize a recommendation on this topic. Mr. Cook noted that Mr. Howard has requested information from staff on how much Charlotte spends to support the MPO.

8. I-77 HOT Lanes Project

Presenter:

Bill Coxe, TCC Chairman

Summary:

Mr. Coxe stated that the request before the MPO was to permit the TCC to initiate a public comment period for proposed improvements to I-77 North, upon receipt of relevant documents from NCDOT. The request was based upon the assumption that the TCC may need to initiate the comment period in order to keep the project on schedule. The comment period would be for anticipated modifications to the 2035 LRTP and 2012-2018 TIP, as well as for an air quality conformity determination. Mr. Coxe stated that the following documents are needed: LRTP and TIP amendment reports; draft air quality conformity determination report; information related to transportation performance of proposed options; financial feasibility; tolling assumptions. He added that the public be provided with adequate information about what is being proposed, and why HOT lanes are necessary. The TCC unanimously recommended that the MPO take the requested action.

Motion:

Dumont Clarke made a motion to allow the TCC to initiate a public comment period upon the receipt of adequate information from NCDOT. Mr. Travis seconded the motion. Upon being put to a vote, the motion passed unanimously.

9. New Ozone Standard Conformity Determination

Presenter:

Eldewins Haynes, CDOT

Summary:

Mr. Haynes stated that the request before the MPO was to approve the start of a public comment period to receive input on a draft Conformity Determination Report (CDR) related to the implementation of the 2008 ozone standard. He stated that last year, the standard for 8-hour ozone was revised to reflect improved scientific understanding of ozone's health impacts, and that effective July 20, 2012, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) declared the Metrolina area as being "marginal nonattainment" for the 8-hour standard. Under air quality conformity regulations, the new standard triggered a 12-month clock in which MPOs are required to demonstrate that their plans and programs conform to the new standard. MUMPO's specific action will be to demonstrate conformity on the 2012-2008 Transportation Improvement Program and 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan. Mr. Haynes concluded by stating that the TCC unanimously recommended that the MPO approve the start of the comment period.

Motion:

Mayor Paxton made a motion to approve the start of a public comment period. Ms. Harrison seconded the motion. Upon being put to a vote, the motion passed unanimously.

10. 2013 Meeting Schedule

Presenter:

Robert Cook

Summary:

Mr. Cook stated that the MPO will need to address several major tasks in 2013, and that doing so in a timely and efficient manner will likely require additional meetings. The tasks include HOT lanes, LRTP development, draft TIP, etc. Mr. Howard requested that staff present a draft meeting schedule at the MPO's March meeting. That's all I have in my notes for this item.

11. Other Business

Chairwoman McAulay stated that Mayor Taylor was unable to attend the meeting due to a last minute work matter, but asked that she present his concerns with the new ethics requirements. Mayor Taylor has started the process to fulfill the requirements, but has found them needlessly burdensome and unnecessary since elected officials are already subject to ethics requirements. He also believes TCC members should not be subject to the requirements, and that it could affect the TCC by causing some members to resign. Chairwoman McAulay stated that she was planning to meet soon with Speaker Tillis and that she would raise the ethics issue.

12. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 PM.



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TO: Mecklenburg-Union MPO Members
FROM: Robert Cook, AICP
 MUMPO Secretary
DATE: March 11, 2013
SUBJECT: 2013 Meeting Schedule

REQUESTED ACTION

The MPO is requested to adopt the revised 2013 meeting schedule shown below.

BACKGROUND

The MPO must address several challenging tasks in 2013: expansion of the planning area and the integration of new members; updating the Long Range Transportation Plan; decisions on HOT lanes; consideration of a draft TIP; etc. The ability to keep these tasks on schedule will require a meeting frequency that exceeds the six meetings required by the bylaws (January, March, May, July, September and November).

Listed below is a proposed meeting schedule for the remainder of 2013. Meeting dates shown in italics are proposed new dates, or currently scheduled meetings requiring a date change. The MPO's bylaws allow the chairperson to cancel meetings if there is insufficient business to warrant holding a meeting.

Proposed Revised 2013 MPO Meeting Schedule		
Date	Status	Reason for Meeting/Change
<i>April 17</i>	Proposed meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve LRTP goals & objectives • Approve 2008 ozone standard conformity determination • Potential actions related to MOU revision
<i>May 22</i>	Reschedule from May 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conflict with annual NC MPO conference • Potential actions related to MOU revision
<i>June 19</i>	Proposed meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on roadway ranking process • Possible action on I-77 HOT lanes project
<i>July 17</i>	Scheduled meeting	N/A
<i>August 21</i>	Proposed meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and comment on draft LRTP roadway project list; final approval scheduled for September
<i>September 18</i>	Scheduled meeting	N/A
<i>October 16</i>	Proposed meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential action on LRTP-related matters • Potential discussion of draft TIP
<i>November 20</i>	Scheduled meeting	N/A

Memorandum

To: MPO Delegates & Alternates
From: Nicholas Landa, MUMPO
Radha Krishna Swayampakala, RS&H
Subject: 2040 LRTP Project Ranking Methodology
Date: March 11, 2013

Action Requested: Approve the Roadway Project Ranking Methodology as outlined in this memorandum.

TCC Recommendation: The TCC unanimously recommended that the MPO approve the ranking methodology.

Background

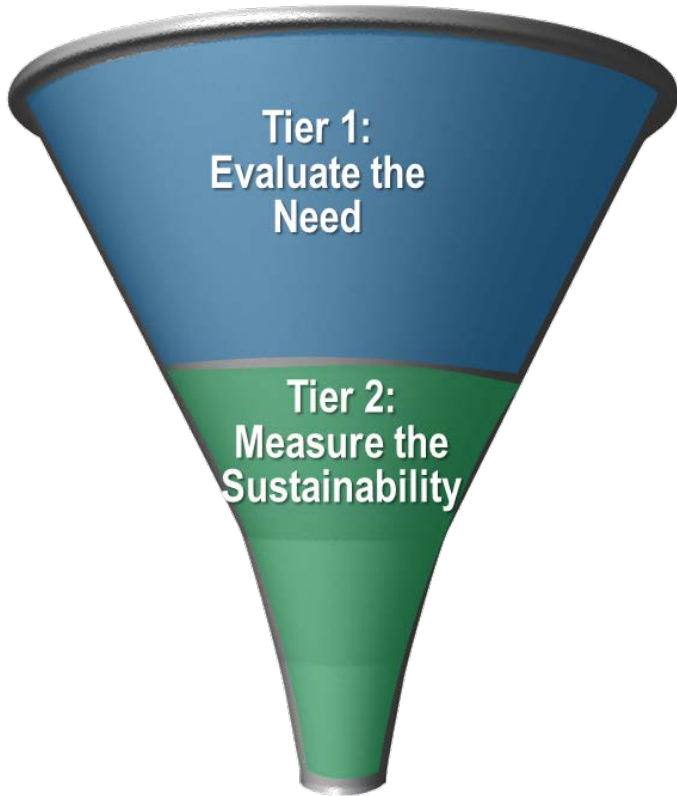
Currently, MUMPO is in the process of developing its 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). As part of this process, each potential project must be evaluated for the development of the final prioritized project list. To effectively manage this process, the TCC formed two committees, a Steering Committee and a broader Advisory Committee. These two committees met regularly over the last several months to develop a quantifiable process for ranking roadway projects. The following were the major tasks involved in this effort:

- Peer MPO research to identify the best practices
- Survey of the TCC members and key stakeholders regarding various ranking criteria
- Evaluation of each potential ranking criteria
- Workshop held with MPO board members and TCC members
- Development of potential Project Prioritization Criteria and recommendations for the TCC and MPO board

Using the information from these tasks, the Steering and Advisory Committees developed a two-tiered Roadway Project Ranking Methodology. The methodology was presented to the TCC and MPO in February 2013 for information. The graphic on the following page outlines the two tiered process and the associated criteria in each tier.

Advisory Committee Recommendation

At its February 11 meeting, the LRTP Advisory Committee continued its discussion of the proposed Project Prioritization Criteria, which concluded with a recommendation to endorse the criteria shown below for evaluating candidate projects for the 2040 LRTP:



Tier 1 Criteria	Points
Congestion	100
Safety	50
Accessibility to Employment	50
Total	200

Tier 2 Criteria	Points
Environmental Justice Impacts	9
Natural Resource Impacts	9
Historic Resource Impacts	9
Community Resource Impacts	9
System Connectivity	14
Benefit Cost Ratio	50
Total	100



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TO: MPO Members & Delegates
FROM: Nicholas Landa
MUMPO Principal Planner
DATE: March 13, 2013
SUBJECT: **2040 LRTP Goals & Objectives**

BACKGROUND

The MPO is currently in the process of updating its LRTP. One of the first tasks undertaken by the LRTP Steering and Advisory committees was to review the MPO's goals and objectives from the existing 2035 LRTP. The goals and objectives will provide the vision and framework for what ultimately goes into the Plan. The following outlines the process by which the attached Draft 2040 LRTP Goals & Objectives were developed:

- 1) Steering Committee and Advisory Committee review and comment (timeline)
 - Advisory Committee consensus on first draft of revised goals and objectives
 - Advisory Committee identified appropriate stakeholders to send draft goals and objective to for comment
- 2) Goals and objectives sent out for stakeholder review and comment (December 21, 2012 – January 11, 2013)
 - Three stakeholders responded (comments attached)
 - Advisory Committee reviewed stakeholder comments
- 3) 21-day public comment period for review of draft goals and objectives (February 11 – March 4, 2013)
 - Media release issued, goals and objectives posted on the MUMPO website (with comment form) and the Town of Huntersville website, email blast sent out to regional transportation planning agencies
 - Two agencies provided a joint set public comments
- 4) Steering Committee reviewed all comments received from the Advisory Committee, stakeholders and the public, and made adjustments to the Goals & Objectives based on those comments
 - Draft goals and objectives are attached based on the above process

ATTACHMENTS

Draft 2040 LRTP Goals & Objectives
Stakeholder Comments
Public Comments

2040 LRTP GOALS & OBJECTIVES

- 1. Provide, manage and maintain a safe, efficient and sustainable transportation system for all modes, intended to serve all segments of the population.**
 - Designate resources to maintain the existing transportation system.
 - Minimize congestion on the existing transportation system.
 - Develop an efficient street and highway network capable of providing an appropriate level of service for a variety of transportation modes.
 - Encourage design features that minimize crash potential, severity and frequency.
 - Enable all users to choose a convenient and comfortable way to reach their destination, regardless of location, personal mobility level, age or economic status.
 - Promote future opportunities for inter-regional mobility through enhancements to inter-city rail service and the provision of high-speed rail service.

- 2. Encourage walking, bicycling and transit options, integrated with motor vehicle transportation, by providing a transportation system that serves the public with mobility choices.**
 - Increase the connectivity of the existing street network, including minimizing barriers and disconnections of the existing roadways, and improving access to activity centers.
 - Improve the transportation system by developing streets and highways that are accessible to, or compatible with, multiple modes of transportation by utilizing design standards consistent with NCDOT's Complete Streets policy.
 - Include sidewalks and bicycle facilities in the design of roadways to accommodate and encourage pedestrian and bicycle travel, and maximize linkages to off-road facilities and transit services.
 - Support the operation of safe and efficient scheduled transit services that minimize travel times and distances.
 - Encourage programs and incentives that encourage ridesharing (or eliminate barriers to ridesharing).
 - Facilitate pedestrian and bicycle safety through public awareness programs.
 - Support the implementation of the Charlotte Area Transit System's currently adopted Corridor System Plan.

- 3. Provide a transportation system that improves the quality of life for residents, promotes healthy living and is sensitive to significant features of the natural and human environments.**
 - Encourage the designation of truck routes that minimize exposure to neighborhoods and to historic and cultural resources.
 - Plan transportation facilities that protect natural, cultural and historic resources.
 - Develop transportation systems and programs that maintain or improve air quality, water quality, safety, and health outcomes.
 - Promote transportation facility designs that minimize the impact of traffic noise on surrounding properties.
 - Emphasize designing transportation systems and facilities that preserve and complement the area's natural features.
 - Plan transportation facilities that minimize neighborhood disruption and related impacts.

- 4. Promote equitable transportation options for low income and minority neighborhoods, as well as the aging population.**
 - Support opportunities to serve the elderly and transportation-disadvantaged populations with convenient transportation to needed services.
 - Provide meaningful opportunities for public involvement in the transportation planning process.
- 5. Practice quality growth management by encouraging regional coordination and linkages between transportation and land use planning.**
 - Develop streets and highways in a manner consistent with adopted land use plans.
 - Support community standards of appearance in order to encourage a transportation system design that is compatible.
 - Encourage land use strategies that maximize the potential for transit patronage and coverage.
 - Encourage land use and density criteria for transit centers and corridors.
 - Provide linkages for pedestrians and/or bicyclists with neighborhoods, employment centers, services, commercial areas and other business districts, parks, greenways and cultural facilities such as schools and churches.
- 6. Support economic competitiveness by making investment decisions for transportation modes that make the most efficient use of limited public resources, as well as by pursuing sustainable funding possibilities.**
 - Develop a transportation system supporting Charlotte's position as a major distribution center, improving and maintaining access for freight to other markets via a network of highways, railroads and airports.
 - Explore opportunities to minimize implementation and operation costs of transportation projects.
 - Encourage the development of transportation projects that enhance the local and regional economies.
 - Foster innovative financing and partnership opportunities for project development and implementation.
- 7. Maximize travel and transportation opportunities for the movement of people and goods.**
 - Promote a freight transportation system that supports the movement of goods.
 - Develop regionally significant streets and highways in a manner which manages congestion and minimizes travel times and distances.
 - Promote the integration of, or coordination among, different transportation modes by supporting intermodal terminals that facilitate the movement of goods.
 - Reserve designated rail and transit corridors for future needs, and identify opportunities to share rail corridors with transit and active transportation.
 - Encourage regional efforts to maximize the region's competitiveness in freight and logistics.
 - Support initiatives at international and regional airports that increase the attractiveness of the airport as a major passenger and cargo facility.
 - Establish measures to enhance the inter-city, inter-regional and intra-regional capacities of major transportation corridors.
 - Encourage land use planning that supports and promotes the movement of freight by railroad.

MUMPO's draft LRTP Goals & Objectives were sent to the stakeholders identified in the attached 2040 LRTP Stakeholder List in order to solicit comments. The stakeholders were given approximately 3 weeks to respond to this request. Comments were received from 3 of the identified stakeholders. The following represents the comments received from the Catawba Indian Nation, ACWR and the SELC:

Catawba Indian Nation

General Comments:

- Make a brief comment to explain "Complete Streets."
- While all major transportation planning issues seem to be addressed well, I think there needs to be a keen awareness that the general public focuses on motor vehicle transportation.
- I believe intermodal initiatives are of primary importance; I also believe public transportation, including light rail, is very important.
 - These are longer term initiatives and they will have huge benefits.
 - While these important segments of transportation are being developed, citizens need to hear more and more often, how roads are being maintained and routes are being improved.
- There is a lot of opportunity to improve freight movement by use of more intermodal routing.
 - The main obstacle to routing long haul freight through railroads is the time it takes to have products delivered when rail is involved; expediting rail freight could take a lot of pressure off our highways.
- MUMPO has considered a monetary contribution to the regional Freight Movement Study; I encourage MUMPO's participation in this project and would encourage you to use your influence to have other planning organizations and private industry to support this study.
 - Other metro areas like Dallas Fort Worth have benefited through these studies, and Charlotte needs this more thorough freight planning work.

Aberdeen, Carolina & Western Railway Company

I believe that generally the goals outlined conform to how we see rail effecting transportation and logistics in the Mecklenburg market place with one exception:

- Either the county or the region as a whole needs to maintain sites where new industry can be located and obviously it needs to be done on both short-lines as well as Class I railroads.
- The second piece of this is to take areas (industrial parks) that have buildings that don't meet current market needs and perhaps create public private partnerships to take down buildings that no longer suit modern logistic needs so that the region can continue to attract new industry and sustainable jobs.
 - Much like Eastland Mall received millions to revitalize it for the community, doesn't it make sense to look at sites that don't serve to attract viable and sustainable jobs and a new tax base?

SOUTHERN ENVIRONMENTAL LAW CENTER

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January 11, 2013

VIA E-MAIL AND U.S. MAIL

Nick Landa
Senior Principal Planner
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Charlotte, NC 28202-2853
nlanda@ci.charlotte.nc.us

RE: 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan – Draft Goals & Objectives

Dear Mr. Landa,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Mecklenburg-Union Metropolitan Planning Organization's ("MUMPO") draft Goals & Objectives ("the Draft"), for its 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan ("LRTP"). The Southern Environmental Law Center ("SELC") submits these comments for your consideration as MUMPO moves forward with preparation of this important roadmap.

We recognize that North Carolina, and the MUMPO region in particular, will experience considerable changes over the next thirty years. The State is expected to experience dramatic population growth, but traditional transportation revenue streams are likely to fail to keep up with this growth, resulting in significant changes to the overall financial landscape. Further, demographics are changing as North Carolina's population continues to age and diversify, resulting in a significant shift in transportation needs and preferences. At the same time, the State and the MUMPO region continue to urbanize at a dramatic pace.

The MUMPO region will continue to be a major driver of the State's projected population increase and future economic opportunity, with Charlotte's 2040 population expected to grow to an excess of 2 million.¹ In addition, the population makeup is expected to change as well, with the aging population increasing² and employment increasingly shifting from manufacturing to service-providing industries.³

¹ NCDOT, *2040 NC Statewide Transportation Plan: Challenges and Opportunities*, at 19 (September 2011).

² NCDOT projects that the number of seniors (defined as 65 years and older) will experience a 108% increase in the 2010-2040 time period, while the 85 and older bracket is expected to show a 165% increase. *Id.* at 20.

³ *Id.* at 22-23.

The Draft does an admirable job of responding to these shifting demographics and identifying many of the Mecklenburg-Union area's transportation policy challenges and opportunities over the next thirty years. MUMPO recommends seven laudable goals and objectives that can be implemented to help address some of these challenges. For example, MUMPO's decision to prioritize investments on our pressing safety and infrastructure health needs is commendable goal. Similarly, the focus on logistics needs and the goal to increase transportation access for all of the region's citizens are two important focus areas. Further, the priority placed on sustainability and the suggestion to integrate transportation and land use planning are highly commendable. These will serve as important goals and benchmarks to foster livable and economically competitive communities in the 21st Century. Below we detail how each of these goals could be further strengthened to meet the evolving transportation needs of the MUMPO region.

In addition to strengthening the goals and objectives stated in the Draft, we also suggest the inclusion of an additional goal articulating a commitment to environmental stewardship principles. This goal would include a commitment to conserving and protecting environmentally-sensitive areas, enhancing stewardship of water resources, promoting energy-efficient land development and infrastructure investments, encouraging infill and adaptive reuse of the built environment, and reducing VMT. Many of the transportation and development challenges facing the MUMPO region now and in the future stem from unsustainable growth that is de-coupled from land-use planning. In our comments below we include suggested language for an additional goal that would tackle these challenges head on.

I. MUMPO's Proposed Goals

1. "Provide, manage and maintain a safe, efficient and sustainable transportation system for all modes, intended to serve all segments of the population."

Maintenance and Repair

We commend MUMPO's first proposed goal. We agree that one of the greatest challenges facing North Carolina's transportation system is the massive backlog of unmet maintenance and repair needs for our roads and bridges, which has earned us a "D-" grade from the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE).⁴ The ASCE also found that 27% of North Carolina's roads are in poor or mediocre condition,⁵ and 30% of North Carolina's bridges are structurally deficient or functionally obsolete.⁶ The Federal Highway Administration ("FHWA") estimates that inadequate maintenance and repair of bridges and roads factors into 30% of all fatal highway accidents,⁷ and the ASCE found that North Carolina experiences 10% more fatalities than the US average.⁸ Poor roads also cost North Carolina drivers an estimated \$1.7

⁴ American Society of Civil Engineers, *North Carolina Infrastructure Report Card 2009*, available at <http://www.infrastructurereportcard.org/state-page/north-carolina>.

⁵ *Id.*

⁶ *Id.*

⁷ *Id.*

⁸ American Society of Civil Engineers, *Report Card for North Carolina's Infrastructure – 2009 Update: Roads*, available at http://sections.asce.org/n_carolina/ReportCard.html.

billion each year in extra vehicle repairs and operating costs — far more than would be spent for an adequate highway maintenance budget.⁹ And by failing to address our critical safety needs, North Carolina runs the risk of a true infrastructure catastrophe, as occurred in Minneapolis in 2007.

We encourage MUMPO to implement this goal by supporting a “Fix-It-First” approach to transportation spending. This strategy has been employed by at least 17 other states to date, which have reprioritized transportation dollars to ensure allocation of sufficient funds over time to protect transportation infrastructure investments.¹⁰ Notably, a “Fix-It-First” policy does not prohibit no new capacity until the state’s entire maintenance backlog is eliminated; instead, it simply calls for a reprioritization of transportation dollars such that we can provide for the adequate maintenance and repair of our existing transportation framework.

Nor does “Fix-It-First” mean sacrificing local economic benefits that flow from transportation spending. Dollar for dollar, maintenance and repair fuels more job creation than new road construction.¹¹ Maintaining and repairing existing roads and bridges creates 16% more jobs per dollar spent than building new highways, in part because less money is spent on right-of-way purchases and impact studies. In addition, a Fix-It-First approach creates local jobs faster because less money has to be spent upfront on equipment and planning.¹² And a Fix-It-First policy would provide considerable savings for future generations; the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (“AASHTO”) estimates that every dollar spent on road maintenance saves \$6 to \$14 that would be spent to rebuild the road if it were allowed to deteriorate.¹³

Enhanced Multi-modal Transportation

We also support MUMPO’s focus on multi-modal transportation, particularly its commitment to enabling pedestrian-, bicyclist-, and rail-based transportation. North Carolina’s shifting demographics provide an important opportunity to look to new approaches for moving people and goods more efficiently and safely. In this rapidly changing landscape, it is time to rethink our practice of relying almost exclusively on highways and automobiles for our transportation needs. As such, we agree that North Carolina should dramatically increase its investment in expanded opportunities for inter-regional mobility, including intercity passenger rail and high-speed rail options as a means to improve quality of life and ensure the economic vitality of the MUMPO region.

⁹ American Society of Civil Engineers, *North Carolina Infrastructure Report Card 2009*, available at <http://www.infrastructurereportcard.org/state-page/north-carolina>.

¹⁰ These states include: California, Delaware, Illinois, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Jersey, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, and Wisconsin.

¹¹ See Surface Transportation Policy Partnership, *An Analysis of the Federal Highways Administration JOBMOD Computer Model*, developed in conjunction with Boston University and Battelle Memorial Institute (2004).

¹² Arthur C. Nelson et al., *The Best Stimulus for the Money: Briefing Papers on the Economics of Transportation Spending*, University of Utah’s Metropolitan Research Center and Smart Growth America (2009).

¹³ The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, *Rough Roads Ahead, Fix Them Now or Pay for It Later* (2009), available at http://www.roughroads.transportation.org/RoughRoads_FullReport.pdf.

In addition, we encourage MUMPO to include a commitment to continue exploring bus rapid transit (“BRT”) as an objective under this goal. BRT is a permanent, integrated system of buses or specialized vehicles on roadways and dedicated lanes that quickly and efficiently transports passengers to their destinations. In addition to high-speed rail, expanded BRT can be a flexible, high-capacity, lower-cost public transit solution with the ability to significantly decrease congestion and improve urban mobility. We urge MUMPO to expressly include expanded BRT as an aspect of its long term transportation planning.

2. “Encourage walking, bicycling and transit options, integrated with motor vehicle transportation, by providing a transportation system that serves the public with mobility choices.”

As explained above, we are highly supportive of MUMPO’s prioritization of expanded transportation options and the integration of these options with motor vehicle transportation. In particular, we commend MUMPO’s inclusion of a commitment to utilizing Complete Streets design standards. Incorporating these design standards as a matter of course will help the MUMPO region’s transportation system to safely and comfortably accommodate all users, including bicyclists, pedestrians, and transit users.

A commitment to these standards also fits in with other goals in this draft, particularly MUMPO’s goals to encourage “healthy living” and promote equitable transportation options for low-income communities. The region’s shifting demographics, described above, favor a transportation system with expanded transportation options. Lack of transit options in both urban and rural areas has a disproportionate impact on many of our elderly, disabled, and low-income citizens. The percentage of the population that consists of these “needs-based riders” far exceeds the percentage of transportation funds we currently spend on transit, and these demographics continue to grow.

Similarly, the new generation of younger adults also favors expanded pedestrian, bicycle, and public transportation options. A recent study showed that by 2011 the average American was driving 6 percent fewer miles per year than in 2004, a trend which is being led primarily by young people (16-34 year olds), whose annual VMT dropped by an impressive 23% in the last decade.¹⁴ During the same time period the number of passenger miles traveled by young people increased by 40%, demonstrating that young people are not any less mobile. Reasons behind this shift include a conscious choice by many young people to favor transit options and reduce their environmental footprint, the rising cost of driving, the compatibility of transit options with a peer-to-peer life style, and the choice by many of American’s youth to live in areas characterized by “nearby shopping, restaurants, schools, and public transportation as opposed to sprawl.”¹⁵

The growth of the sectors of North Carolina’s population with a need or preference for expanded multi-modal transportation options makes it clear that the State needs to designate

¹⁴ U.S. PIRG, *Transportation and the New Generation, Why Young People Are Driving Less and What It Means for Transportation Policy* (April 2012), available at <http://www.uspirg.org/reports/usp/transportation-and-newgeneration>.

¹⁵ *Id.* at 2-3.

substantially more resources to and increase its planning capacity for alternative modes of transportation. We applaud MUMPO for its recognition of this pressing need.

3. “Provide a transportation system that improves the quality of life for residents, promotes healthy living and is sensitive to significant features of the natural and human environments.”

We also support MUMPO’s goal to promote healthy living and quality of life through transportation planning. This objective is in keeping with the recent focus in North Carolina on the connection between public health and transportation. For example, the N.C. Board of Transportation recently approved the NCDOT’s commendable “Public Health Policy,” which acknowledges the strong connection between the built environment and public health. The Policy acknowledges the importance of increased physical activity, noting its impacts on healthcare costs, workforce productivity, and economic growth.¹⁶ The policy encourages NCDOT employees to develop transportation solutions that address the health and well-being of North Carolina residents and notes specific considerations such as expanding multi-modal transportation options and cognizance of “the potential for the transportation system to support human health.”¹⁷

We encourage MUMPO to pursue this goal by incorporating a Health Impact Assessment (“HIA”) into the transportation planning process. In a HIA transportation planners draw from a range of data sources, analytic methods and stakeholder input to determine the potential effects of a proposed policy, plan, program, or project on a population’s health and the distribution of those effects within the population.¹⁸

Several states and localities have relied on HIA as a mechanism to incorporate health considerations into planning,¹⁹ and North Carolina is poised to become an HIA leader in the Southeast. At least two HIAs have been completed in North Carolina, one in association with the comprehensive bicycle plan for Haywood County (November 2011), and another with regard to the Aberdeen pedestrian transportation plan (December 2011).²⁰ In Raleigh, two HIA efforts have been under way since early 2012, one regarding the Blue Ridge Road District study and the other, the New Bern Avenue Corridor study, and several other HIAs are planned for a variety of projects throughout the state.²¹ MUMPO should capitalize on this growing trend in transportation planning as a tool to meet its goal to be sensitive to various projects’ health impacts and to develop a transportation system that promotes healthy living and quality of life throughout the region.

A continued commitment to promoting alternative modes of transportation such as walking and biking, rather than automobile-centric transportation, is also an important aspect of

¹⁶ NCDOT, *NCDOT’s Transportation - Public Health Policy* (adopted Oct. 4, 2012).

¹⁷ *Id.*

¹⁸ Katherine A. Hebert, *Health Impact Assessments in North Carolina: Promoting Public Health Through Informed Decisions*, NORTH CAROLINA MEDICAL JOURNAL, vol. 73 no. 4 at 297-300 (August 10, 2012).

¹⁹ For example, both Massachusetts and Washington have legislation requiring an HIA for transportation projects.

²⁰ Hebert, at 298.

²¹ *Id.*

planning a transportation system with “healthy living” and quality of life as a core guiding principles. We note that inactivity contributes to higher rates of chronic diseases, as well as lower levels of overall health and well-being, and therefore higher health care costs.²² Increased physical activity has been shown to improve health outcomes and decrease healthcare costs, and the benefits of a healthier population include a more productive workforce, a more robust economy and a more globally competitive region and state. By providing more facilities for walking, biking, and active transportation, MUMPO will be helping to combat a major public health crisis. As such, we again praise MUMPO’s incorporation of this goal.

4. “Promote equitable transportation options for low income and minority neighborhoods, as well as the aging population.”

We applaud MUMPO’s recognition of the significant transportation issues faced by low-income, minority, and elderly communities. We agree that to serve these communities, it is necessary to expand transportation options beyond policies centered solely on automobiles.

As discussed above, public transit options are essential to aging individuals, which includes many who can no longer drive, bike, or walk due to loss of senses or personal mobility.²³ Without such options, older adults are often left without access to important services such as grocery stores, doctor’s offices, the library, and social or religious organizations, and with limited ability to participate in their community or visit friends and family.²⁴ Addressing the transportation needs of this demographic will become increasingly critical as the Baby Boomer generation continues to age.

Similarly, expanded transportation options are essential for low-income communities, which can be highly affected by limited access to reliable automotive transportation and the high cost of automobile ownership, gasoline, and automobile insurance. The average low-income family spends fifteen percent of its household budget on transportation, typically its greatest cost after housing.²⁵ For families living on a thin margin, any cost increase in such a major budget item can have significant effects. And these costs are higher for low- and moderate-income families who live in low-density, suburban-fringe neighborhoods, as those families often must rely on private automobiles and drive long distances to access needed destinations.²⁶ Such transportation barriers can serve to limit access to employment opportunities, health care, schools, and other needed services. As such, we support MUMPO’s efforts to ensure that transportation is not a prohibitive obstacle to self-sufficiency for low-income individuals.

²² For example, in 2009, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention noted that over 100 recent studies have shown a connection between obesity and automobile dependence. Center for Disease Control, *Recommended Community Strategies and Measurements to Prevent Obesity in the United States*, RECOMMENDATIONS AND REPORTS 58, at 1-26 (July 24, 2009).

²³ Transportation for America, *Aging in Place: Stuck Without Options* (2011), available at www.t4america.org/docs/SeniorsMobilityCrisis.pdf.

²⁴ *Id.* at 12.

²⁵ The Mineta Transportation Institute, *Getting Around When You’re Just Getting By: The Travel Behavior and Transportation Expenditures of Low-Income Adults*, at 11 (January 2011).

²⁶ *Id.* at 13.

5. “Practice quality growth management by encouraging regional coordination and linkages between transportation and land use planning.”

Integrating Transportation and Land Use Planning

We also commend MUMPO for its decision to encourage linkages between transportation and land use planning. This integration will be important to meet many of MUMPO’s stated goals, and is a federally required aspect of transportation planning.²⁷

The disconnect between transportation and land use planning across North Carolina, and the Charlotte region in particular, has encouraged pervasive low-density, auto-dependent development. A new highway, typically on the fringes of a growing metro areas, spurs an avalanche of new development and puts overwhelming pressure on local officials to revise land use plans and zoning. This sprawl results in “induced traffic” that often absorbs new highway capacity investments within only a few years. Integrated transportation and land use planning is thus an important tool for achieving livable communities, and reducing VMT.

MUMPO should be encouraged by the many other states that have made local land use plans an explicit and important part of their criteria for allocating state transportation funding.²⁸ These states likewise understand that scarce transportation dollars should support land use outcomes that are consistent with local needs, not undermine them. Infrastructure investments should instead focus on areas that desire more intensive development, and funding should be prohibited for projects that are inconsistent with local land use plans.

A great example of this type of integration is Charlotte’s work towards focusing growth in “Growth Corridors” and in “Activity Centers” that support high-density mixed use development and rapid transit. Similarly the Centralina Council of Governments current multi-jurisdictional planning effort to integrate land use, economic, and workforce development, transportation, and infrastructure investments provides another example of this type of integration.²⁹ An additional example is the Atlanta Regional Commission’s (“ARC”) Statewide Transportation Plan for 2040, PLAN 2040, which adopts the policy to concentrate on filling in the regional footprint, rather than continuing to sprawl outward.³⁰ Under the plan, projects that

²⁷ 23 C.F.R. 450.306(a)(5) (“The metropolitan transportation planning process shall be continuous, cooperative, and comprehensive, and provide for consideration and implementation of projects, strategies, and services that will address the following factors, [including] promot[ing] consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns.”).

²⁸ See, e.g., N.J. STAT. § 27:1B-21.19 (mandating “planning technique that embraces a collaborative, interdisciplinary process and recognizes the uniqueness of the community in planning transportation projects.”); MD. STATE FINANCE AND PROCUREMENT CODE ANN. § 5-7A-02 (designating areas that are protected from development by the regulation of funding for any federal or state funded project); WIS. STAT. § 1.13(2)(b) (providing incentives for “neighborhood designs that support a range of transportation choices”).

²⁹ Centralina Council of Governments, Request for Proposals, HUD Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant, available at http://www.onencnaturally.org/pages/SC_NC_Regional_Planning_Groups.html.

³⁰ Atlanta Region Commission, PLAN 2040 at 2-20-24 available at http://documents.atlantaregional.com/plan2040/docs/tp_PLAN2040RTP_ch2_072711.pdf.

are recommended through the region's successful Livable Centers Initiative would be given higher priority for funding.³¹

6. Support economic competitiveness by making investment decisions for transportation modes that make the most efficient use of limited public resources, as well as by pursuing alternative funding possibilities.

We strongly support MUMPO's commitment to explore options that efficiently utilize limited transportation dollars. We agree that shrinking transportation funding sources require that transportation planning must increasingly rely on more innovation solutions to address local needs. We have several comments and recommendations to address MUMPO's objectives for meeting this goal.

Freight Rail

In its effort to develop Charlotte's position as a major distribution center, we urge MUMPO to focus on improving and maintaining freight rail. With our ports and major metro area transportation hubs, North Carolina has tremendous untapped potential to move more freight from trucks to rail, and rail freight is less expensive for longer trips and far better for the environment. Every ton-mile of freight that moves by rail instead of long-haul truck reduces greenhouse gas emissions by at least two-thirds.³² Because large trucks cause the vast majority of wear and tear on our highways, such an effort would also dramatically reduce the amount spent on maintenance and repair, not to mention making highways safer, less congested, and more enjoyable to use. And, because North Carolina's rail freight system is largely privately owned, strategic public investment here can pay especially large dividends. Further, moving freight to rail keeps trucks off the road network, reduces congestion, and returns the road network for use by local communities.

Minimization of Implementation and Operation Costs

We support MUMPO's efforts to seek ways to minimize the implementation and operation costs of transportation projects in general, but encourage MUMPO to reexamine the need for costly projects in the first place. Many projects slated for construction in the Charlotte region come from a list of projects that was signed into law in 1989 when gas prices and construction costs were a fraction of what they are today. No comprehensive study has even been completed to justify from a traffic engineering or economic development perspective the construction of this extremely expensive highway capacity investment.

While we agree that some increased capacity may be needed — such as those in areas of high density and that align with the existing transportation spines along the interstates — much is not. Instead, much of the increased highway capacity planned in the region is primarily geared towards serving a cycle of congestion by encouraging increased VMT and longer commute

³¹ *Id.*

³² American Public Transportation Association, *Advocates For Environment, Freight And Passenger Rail And Transportation Reform Unite To Promote Rail Investment — OneRail Coalition Encourages Transportation Policies that Increase Mobility, Reduce Emissions, Promote Economic Growth*, press release (January 15, 2009).

times. Accordingly, it no longer makes sense to assume the construction of these increased-capacity projects; instead, increased-capacity projects should be reconsidered based on logistics needs, financial realities, density projections and environmental factors.

Exploration of New Revenue Sources

Similarly, we agree that some alternative methods of funding will be necessary to meet the transportation needs of the growing State. But before embarking on alternative funding mechanisms, we urge MUMPO to first establish a true picture of the region's transportation needs. Once this picture of actual identified needs is established, appropriate policies can be directed at how best to meet them. New funding streams can be tailored to reinforce these objectives.

We also emphasize that when considering alternative transportation revenue strategies and pursuing "innovative partnership opportunities for project development and implementation," it is most essential that transportation policies and objectives be the driver behind the selection of new financing schemes. In the context of exploring new funding opportunities, MUMPO must ensure that the reverse does not occur — the financial strategy must not become the tail wagging the transportation policy dog.

For example, many of the choices associated with the toll road projects currently being pursued are driven primarily by the ability to generate toll revenue. The ability to generate tolls has become the primary motivation of such projects, setting realistic assessments of need, alternative approaches, and calculations as to societal and environmental harms, aside. As such, rather than consider upgrades to existing infrastructure, focus shifts to the construction of projects that can generate tolls to help pay part of the project cost. Not only does this approach result in outcomes that are inconsistent with MUMPO's other transportation goals — such as promoting equitable transportation option, practicing quality growth management by encouraging linkages between transportation and land use planning, or maximizing travel and transportation opportunities — but such an approach also not cost-effective.

Additionally, we encourage MUMPO to ensure that this goal is implemented in a way that is consistent with the other articulated goals. In particular, we are concerned that financing solutions centered on tolling conflict with MUMPO's fourth articulated goal to promote equitable transportation options for low income communities. Low-income individuals already spend a disproportionate share of their income on transportation costs, and instituting toll roads would impose an even greater financial burden. Additionally, tolling can result in commuting inequities, providing a faster route for drivers of means but a slower, more congested road for lower-income drivers. This issue may be exacerbated where tolling relies on cashless, electronic technology, as drivers lacking credit cards and bank accounts or who cannot afford large deposits may be unable use tolled roads at all. If MUMPO chooses to explore tolling, we urge a focus on using the toll revenue to provide ancillary benefits to address these inequities, such as through coordinated transit investments and providing benefits to existing congested corridors.

“Encourage the development of transportation projects that enhance the local and regional economies”

We strongly support the goal to enhance local and regional economies, and encourage MUMPO to examine development-driving capabilities of a variety of different modes. In particular, we urge MUMPO to emphasize its support of transit-oriented development (“TOD”). TODs, or high-density, mixed-use commercial and residential areas designed to maximize public transport access, have been shown to have strong economic benefits such as linking workers to employment centers, creating construction and maintenance jobs, encouraging investment in areas that have suffered neglect and economic depression, and reducing overall VMTs.³³

For example, the Charlotte region’s Blue Lynx line is transit-oriented project that has been hugely successful and exemplifies this goal. The Blue Lynx line, which opened in November 2007, carries over 15,000 passengers a day³⁴ and has helped to increased land values within Charlotte’s core and increased tax revenues.³⁵ The Blue Lynx line underscores the opportunities in the Charlotte region to use smart transportation planning to explore economic expansion and encourage in-fill development, rather than sprawl.

We also encourage MUMPO to consider Community Transportation Enhancements, or transportation projects including, but not limited to, biking and walking facilities, acquiring scenic or historic sites, historic preservation and rehabilitation or operation of historic transportation buildings, structures or facilities.³⁶ These projects, designed to maximize the potential of transportation to enhance communities, can often efficiently move people, improve local economies and tourism, enhance the environment and create community gathering places.³⁷ For more information, please see our report entitled “Beyond the Bypass: Addressing Rural North Carolina’s Most Important Transportation Needs.”³⁸

7. Maximize travel and transportation opportunities for the movement of people and goods.

As outlined above, we are generally supportive of MUMPO’s efforts to expand transportation choices in the region in a way that serves the whole community.

³³ Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco, *Community Investments: Transit-Oriented Development* (Summer 2010), available at <http://www.frbsf.org/publications/community/investments/1008/index.html>.

³⁴ American Public Transportation Association, *Transit Ridership Report: Third Quarter 2012*.

³⁵ Peter Zeiler, City of Charlotte, NC, *Charlotte LYNX Blue Line Economic Development Impacts and Land Use Patterns*, presentation to the National Governors Association (Nov. 2010), available at <http://www.nga.org/cms/home/nga-center-for-best-practices/meeting--webcast-materials/page-eet-meetings-webcasts/col2-content/main-content-list/policy-academy-on-shaping-a-new.html>.

³⁶ US Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, *FHWA Guidance: Transportation Enhancement Activities*, at 4 (March 2010).

³⁷ See Billy Fields, *ENHANCING AMERICA’S COMMUNITIES: A GUIDE TO TRANSPORTATION ENHANCEMENTS* (March 2007, 3rd ed.).

³⁸ See Southern Environmental Law Center, *Beyond the Bypass: Addressing Rural North Carolina’s Most Important Transportation Needs*, at 9 (2012), available at <http://www.southernenvironment.org/publications/>.

II. Suggested Additional Goal: Commitment to Environmental Stewardship

In addition to the seven goals outlined above, we suggest that MUMPO include an additional goal demonstrating an overall commitment to environmental stewardship. Federal law states that MPOs must engage in transportation planning that “minimize[es] transportation-related fuel consumption and air pollution.”³⁹ And this planning process must also address the needs of non-motorized users,⁴⁰ “[p]rotect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve the quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns.”⁴¹

As an example of incorporating environmental stewardship in transportation planning, we point to the ARC’s PLAN 2040, which highlights “sustainability” as a key influence overarching its plan development.⁴² The ARC’s sustainability focus mirrors other agencies’ and organizations’ efforts to integrate a balanced approach to community development, design and long range planning. The ARC notes that its approach was based in part on the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, U.S. Department of Transportation, and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s Partnership for Sustainable Communities, which has outlined six “Principles of Livability” promoting planning decisions that incorporate principles such as expanded transportation options, transit-oriented development, and integration of transportation and land use planning.⁴³

The ARC accompanied this overarching sustainability focus by including a commitment to “[i]mprove energy efficiency while preserving the region’s environment” as one of PLAN 2040’s five objectives.⁴⁴ PLAN 2040 outlines four principles to support meeting this objective:

- Conserving and protecting environmentally-sensitive areas and increasing the amount and connectivity of greenspace.
- Continuing to enhance stewardship of water resources throughout the region.
- Promoting energy-efficient land development and infrastructure investments that foster the sustainable use of resources and minimize impacts to air quality.
- Encouraging appropriate infill, redevelopment and adaptive reuse of the built environment to maintain the regional footprint and optimize the use of existing investments.^[45]

We encourage MUMPO to incorporate similar concepts into the next draft of its Goals and Objectives. As the region grows, preservation and expansion of greenspaces, protection of

³⁹ 23 C.F.R. 450.300(a).

⁴⁰ *Id.* at § 450.306(a)(2)-(4), (6).

⁴¹ *Id.* at § 450.306(a)(5).

⁴² *See, e.g.*, Atlanta Regional Commission, VOLUME I: PLAN 2040 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN, at 1-5 (June 2011); Atlanta Regional Commission, *PLAN 2040 Framework*, at 5.

⁴³ Atlanta Regional Commission, *PLAN 2040 Framework*, at 16; *see also* Partnership for Sustainable Communities, *Livability Principles*, available at <http://www.sustainablecommunities.gov/aboutUs.html>.

⁴⁴ Atlanta Regional Commission, *PLAN 2040 Framework*, at 17.

⁴⁵ *Id.* at 19.

water quality and future sources, and attention to air quality protection measures are critical for the health of the MUMPO region’s residents and economy. The region must continue to plan for growth while better coordinating transportation planning with management of environmental resources, recognizing that attracting, creating, and retaining dynamic and robust communities requires that transportation planning proceed with a focus on environmental stewardship. Further, incorporating this goal would support MUMPO’s federal duty to “consult . . . with State and local agencies responsible for land use management, natural resources, environmental protection, conservation, and historic preservation concerning the development of a long-range transportation plan,”⁴⁶ including “comparison of transportation plans with State conservation plans or maps [and] inventories of natural or historic resources.”⁴⁷

Reduced Vehicle Miles Traveled

We also urge MUMPO to incorporate a commitment to reduce overall regional vehicle-miles-traveled (“VMT”) as an additional objective under this goal. Many of the transportation challenges currently facing the Charlotte region stem from the low density, single-use land development plans that are prevalent in area, which are designed with automobile needs in mind and with little regard for other transportation modes. Decades of investment in a single-occupancy-vehicle-oriented transportation system have created a system which is costly to maintain and fails to meet the transportation needs of the Charlotte region. Each investment in roadway expansion doubles down on a strategy that has failed to improve air or water quality, coordinate with land use planning, address climate change concerns, or reduce congestion. A decrease in VMT puts less wear on existing facilities, decreases automobile-caused pollution, and alleviates congestion, among other benefits. As such, a policy shift towards reducing VMT — rather than rewarding congestion with more capacity that is quickly filled from latent demand — is necessary to achieve the goals and objectives outlined in the Plan.

⁴⁶ 49 U.S.C. 5303(i)(5)(A).

⁴⁷ *Id.* at § 5303(i)(5)(B).

Draft Language

We suggest the following language for the new goal and associated objectives:

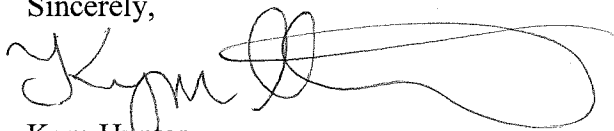
8. Develop a sustainable, environmentally sensitive transportation system incorporating environment stewardship principles

- Conserve and protect environmentally-sensitive areas and increasing the amount and connectivity of greenspace.
- Enhance stewardship of water resources throughout the region.
- Promote energy-efficient land development and infrastructure investments that foster the sustainable use of resources and minimize impacts to air quality.
- Encourage appropriate infill, redevelopment and adaptive reuse of the built environment to maintain the regional footprint and optimize the use of existing investments.
- Emphasize designing transportation systems and facilities that reduce regional Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT).

III. Conclusion

We commend MUMPO on their hard work in preparing these draft goals. We hope these comments provide valuable input as the plan is finalized. We look forward to continuing to work with MUMPO to see that the entire 2040 LRTP is successfully developed and implemented.

Sincerely,



Kym Hunter
Staff Attorney



Kate Asquith
Associate Attorney

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2040 LRTP
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Nancy McCoy Duncan <i>Director of Business Development</i>	Union County Chamber of Commerce	nancy@unioncountycoc.com

MUMPO's draft LRTP Goals & Objectives were posted and distributed in order to solicit comments from the public. The public was given 21 days to provide comments. The following represents the public comments received:

- The Natural Resources Defense Council and Sustain Charlotte provided public comments. Please see the pages that follow to review those comments.



NATURAL RESOURCES DEFENSE COUNCIL



Nicholas Landa
Senior Principal Planner
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center
600 E. Fourth Street
8th Floor
Charlotte, NC 28202

Dear Mr. Landa,

The Natural Resources Defense Council (“NRDC”) and Sustain Charlotte are grateful for the opportunity to submit comments on the 2040 LRTP Goals & Objectives, and is committed to acting as a resource to MUMPO throughout this process. Through the co-authorship and ongoing implementation effort of California’s Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act (SB 375), NRDC’s staff has experience in working with MPOs to link land use and transportation planning and create cleaner, healthier and more efficient communities. Locally, and in partnership with NRDC, Sustain Charlotte works to achieve these same outcomes for the greater Charlotte region.

We believes that the 2040 LRTP can achieve its goal of an efficient, sustainable, and accessible transportation system by setting overarching, measurable goals and investing in a balanced mix of transportation choices. This mix can be achieved by fostering walking, biking, and improved transit service. Additionally, MUMPO should emphasize smart growth patterns by focusing new development inwards. With a balanced transportation mix and good growth patterns, MUMPO can improve the region’s economic competitiveness by improving mobility, creating a variety of choices for prospective businesses and residents, and reducing the societal costs of pollution and traffic congestion.

According to public opinion research conducted for NRDC in June 2012, residents of Mecklenburg County strongly favor investing in public transportation rather than new roads as a solution to worsening traffic problems congestion. The polling revealed that:

- 61 percent of respondents in Mecklenburg County said improving public transportation (39 percent) and developing communities where people don’t have to drive as much (22 percent) are the best “long term solutions to reducing traffic” in their area.
- In contrast, only 25 percent favored building new roads
- 72 percent said they have no alternative but to drive while 56 percent regarded the transportation infrastructure as “outdated, unreliable and inefficient”
- 58 percent said they would prefer to use public transportation if it were convenient
- 71 percent support increased local government spending to expand public transportation options

Setting Measurable Goals

Measurable goals for the LRTP will help unify the region's planning and decision-making, as well as monitor its progress in implementing the new plan. Broader regional goals include VMT reductions, greenhouse gas emissions, and oil savings. More specific goals can help to achieve individual objectives outlined by MUMPO in the 2040 LRTP Goals & Objectives.

For the first goal, a quantifiable objective would be to achieve as close to 100% state of good repair (SOGR) as possible for roads and transit lines. For the second goal, the county could aim to achieve a 10% mode share for biking and walking, as well as 10% for transit. These goals could even be set higher given the time period.

For the third goal, there are various metrics that are self-evident given the individual objectives such as having 100% of neighborhoods not being subject to pollution from trucks and other mobile sources; the region meeting all national air quality standards; reducing loss of valuable habitat and open spaces from fringe and leapfrog development to zero; stormwater runoff pollution reduced to 50% of current level. There is also the opportunity for a climate preparedness objective. Please see the attached fact sheet based on the new draft of the National Climate Assessment.

For the fifth goal, the first objective should be re-stated so as to be about consistency between road development and land-use plans since it's a two-way street and management of land use is as important as that of transportation facilities. For example, if you build a new highway that is meant to serve as an expressway to other settlements, access management should be a priority so that sprawl is not encouraged along the route, generating traffic that clogs the highway. The language used in the fourth bullet point should also be strengthened. Every center and corridor should mix land uses and density in order for load factor to be high enough to be 1) cost-effective and 2) environmentally beneficial. A potential measurable goal is that every transit center and corridor will benefit from development, or at least development planning, that will boost ridership and make the service viable, while 100% of them are also easily accessible to pedestrians and bicyclists.

For the sixth goal, the language needs to be strengthened as well. 100% of new transportation projects should enhance local and regional economies, and the region should develop new sources of revenue for transportation. Additionally, the plan should acknowledge that young people (millennials) seek out attributes such as walkability, transit accessibility, and online connectivity when choosing which metro area to live and work in. To attract and retain an impressive workforce, Charlotte should design as high a percentage as possible of new residential and commercial development so it meets these criteria (i.e., walkability, transit accessibility and online connectivity).

In California, SB 375 utilizes greenhouse gas emissions targets as its overarching goals, while each region can individually adopt performance measures to guide their planning and decision-making. The Sacramento region in particular (SACOG) took a performance-based approach to its existing RTP process and created a world-class plan to 2035 that reduces congested VMT per capita despite adding 870,000 new residents, focuses growth into downtown areas and near job centers, and accommodates strong population growth with little increase in urbanized footprint. This plan set the bar high for California's

other regions by providing new transportation choices to residents that didn't have them, while concentrating new growth around existing transit areas. MUMPO can follow SACOG's example in performance-based goal setting to create a successful and influential plan.

Balancing Investments

A November study conducted by NRDC found that Mecklenburg County has the fourth highest level of per capita oil consumption in the nation. Continued investment in roadway widening and expansion projects will only propagate this problem. A balanced portfolio of investments that provides stronger support for public transit and alternative forms of transportation will allow the region to decrease its dependence on oil and tackle many of its objectives for the 2040 LRTP, particularly with regards to a safe and efficient transportation system and the encouragement of walking and biking. Additionally, balanced investments will help the county reduce congestion and pollution, save families money at the pump, and provide a foundation for long-term economic viability.

Sincerely,

Amanda Eaken
Deputy Director, Sustainable Communities, NRDC

Shannon Binns,
Executive Director, Sustain Charlotte



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

TO: MPO Members & Delegates
FROM: Robert Cook, AICP
MUMPO Secretary
DATE: March 12, 2013
SUBJECT: **Proposed FY 13 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Amendments**

REQUEST

Amend the FY 2013 Unified Planning Work Program as presented in the attached spreadsheet entitled "MUMPO FY 2013 UPWP Amendment, February 28, 2013."

BACKGROUND

The TCC took action at the February 2013 meeting to recommend to the MPO that it amend the FY 2013 UPWP to shift funds to tasks associated with development of the Congestion Management Process and revisions to the project ranking criteria, as well as Phase III of the Fast Lanes study. The shift was necessary due to several projects/initiatives being cancelled or delayed that were programmed for funding when the FY 2013 UPWP was originally prepared.

Since the February meeting, CDOT has determined that PL funds will not be needed for the Fast Lanes study, therefore staff recommends that the funds be allocated to support on-call contractual services.

All funds proposed for reallocation are Planning (PL) funds; no Section 5303 funds are proposed to be reallocated.

TECHNICAL COORDINATING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

The TCC unanimously recommended that the MPO approve the proposed amendments.

MUMPO FY 2013 UPWP Amendment
 February 28, 2013
TCC action March 7, 2013: recommend MPO approval

CURRENT ALLOCATION					
Task Code	Task Description	Original Funding Amount	Proposed Funding Amount	Proposed Reduction	Reason for Change
II-10	GIS Analysis & Mapping	\$80,000	\$30,000	\$50,000	Delay in hiring temporary employee
IV-1	Community Goals & Objectives	\$125,000	\$25,000	\$100,000	Decision made not to pursue operational scenario assessment tool
IV-8	Freight Element of LRTP	\$50,000	\$15,000	\$35,000	Regional freight study will not be pursued this year; remaining funds needed for freight-related analysis
IV-2	Highway Element of LRTP	\$100,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	Delay CTP ordinance review until FY 14
		\$355,000	\$120,000	\$235,000	
PROPOSED ALLOCATION					
Task Code	Task Description	Original Funding Amount	Proposed Funding Amount	Proposed Additional Funding	Reason for Change
V-1	Congestion Management Strategies	\$225,000	\$426,656	\$201,656	Additional funding needed for CMP and ranking methodology
VI-10	Corridor Protection & Special Studies	\$228,000	\$261,344	\$33,344	Ensure adequate funding for on-call services
				\$235,000	



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TO: MPO Members & Delegates
FROM: Robert Cook, AICP
MUMPO Secretary
DATE: March 11, 2013

SUBJECT: Draft FY 2014 Unified Planning Work Program.

BACKGROUND

The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) is adopted annually in accordance with joint Federal Highway Administration/Federal Transit Administration (FHWA/FTA) transportation planning guidelines. The UPWP describes the planning activities that are anticipated for the coming fiscal year and documents the allocation of state and federal funds associated with each planning activity.

The attached spreadsheet presents the proposed funding in five broad categories. Future work on the draft UPWP will allocate funds to specific task codes.

FUNDING & LOCAL PROJECTS

Anticipated funding for FY 2014 is as follows:

PL funds	\$836,448 (FHWA)
Section 5303	\$345,969 (FTA)
TIP Supplement	\$800,000
Total	\$1,982,417

PROPOSED LOCAL PROJECTS

Indian Trail: traffic count program & Chestnut Parkway	\$24,000
Huntersville: traffic count program	\$14,000
Huntersville: Downtown Multimodal Transportation Plan	\$50,000
Total	\$88,000

ACTION REQUESTED

No action is requested at this time. Final adoption of the UWPW is anticipated in May 2013.

**Draft FY 2014
Unified Planning Work Program**

March 11, 2013

TASK CODE	Charlotte DOT		Char-Meck Planning		CATS		Huntersville		Indian Trail		
	PL Funds	5303	PL Funds	5303	PL Funds	5303	PL Funds	5303	PL Funds	5303	
II. Continuing Transportation	300,000		80,000								\$380,000
Ongoing data updates (traffic counts & accidents; demographic changes; travel time updates); GIS											
III. Travel Demand Model	300,000	172,984				172,984					\$645,968
Tasks associated with updating and maintaining the regional travel demand model											
IV. Long-Range Transportation Plan	75,000		271,248								\$346,248
Tasks associated with the preparation of the Long Range Transportation Plan											
V. Continuing Programs	75,000		220,000								\$295,000
Tasks related to air quality conformity, development of the TIP, development of the UPWP and the congestion management process											
VI. Administration	30,000		200,000				61,200		24,000		\$315,200
Ongoing and basic tasks associated with the implementation of the metropolitan planning process; includes allocations for local projects											
	\$780,000	\$172,984	\$771,248	\$0	\$0	\$172,984	\$61,200	\$0	\$24,000	\$0	\$1,982,416

I-77 P3 Project Timeline: Updated 2/28/2013

Compiled by Bill Coxe, Chairman MUMPO TCC and Bill Thunberg, Executive Director LNTC

- 2007: “Fast Lanes” study of managed lanes in region begins.
See <http://www.charmeck.org/fastlanes/>.
- April 29, 2009: MUMPO directs the inclusion of widening of I-77 into the 2015 horizon year of the 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) as “managed lanes.”
- March 2010: The adopted MUMPO 2035 LRTP ranked the widening I-77 North from I-85 to NC 73 as priority # 92. It was included as a programmed project only because of the funding construct under the now defunct project known as Augustalee.
- July 2011: A new project, I-5405, is included in the 2012-18 NCTIP. This would change the existing HOV lanes on I-77 to HOT lanes and extend one HOT lane in each direction to Catawba Ave. All needed funding is identified and the project is fully public.
- February 2012: Industry forum held by NCDOT to discuss potential Public/Private Partnership (P3) process for larger I-77 HOT lanes project. Project is proposed to have 3 sections, I-277 to I-85, I-85 to Catawba Ave., and Catawba Ave. to NC 150. All sections are to be delivered by the same P3 team.
- March 2012: Interested industry teams short listed to 4 teams for further evaluation under a “Request for Proposals” process.
- April 2012: MUMPO Technical Coordinating Committee sets up technical team to work with NCDOT on I-77 issues.
- April –ongoing: TCC technical team meets regularly and communicates substantial issues of local importance to NCDOT and requests information on how P3 project will address the issues. The goal is to imbed the issues in the final RFP instructions to the private concessionaires.
- June 2012: NCDOT releases 2nd version of the RFP. Includes a project description that stretches from I-277 (Brookshire Freeway) to NC 150 in Mooresville.
- June 20, 2012: In special called meeting, MUMPO endorses changing existing HOV lanes on I-77 to HOT lanes and extending two HOT lanes to Catawba Ave (no widening approved south of I-85.)
- July 12, 2012: NCDOT prioritizes projects for use of “Mobility Fund” dollars, I-77 ranks # 3 in state. However, this is based on a \$27.6 M contribution of Mobility funds to a total project cost of \$513 M.
- July 31, 2012: NCDOT & FHWA approve a “Categorical Exclusion” environmental document for I-77 from Brookshire Freeway (actually from I-85) to Catawba Avenue will have no substantive affect on the natural or human environment.
- October 2012: NCDOT released draft TIP showing no change to funding construct for I-77 project. This draft document has been withdrawn and a new draft is anticipated in Fall 2013 with MPO adoption in late spring 2014.
- Mid December 2012: NCDOT P3 Team meets with TCC technical team to review project schedule and financial considerations.
- Late December 2012: NCDOT released the 3rd version of the RFP.
- March 2013: release final RFP.
- March/April 2013: MUMPO public involvement on amendments to Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and TIP for NCDOT proposal
- April 2013: release of draft Environmental Assessment on entire project including previously approved central section. At least one public workshop will be held.
- May 2013: requested MUMPO action date for amendments to LRTP and TIP
- June 2013: final environmental approval for project – all sections.
- August 2013: selection of preferred bidder.
- October 2013: financial close.