



**POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING
SUMMARY MINUTES
March 28, 2014 - 12:00 p.m. (NOON)
Manchester Meadows Conference Room**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Danny Funderburk; Wes Hayes; Brian Carnes; Doug Echols; Britt Blackwell; Kathy Pender; Bill Harris; and Michael Johnson

ADMINISTRATIVE/TECHNICAL/MANAGEMENT STAFF PRESENT:

Greg Shaw (SCDOT); John McCarter (SCDOT); Kara Drane (CRCOG); Joy Shealy (SCDOT); Susan Britt (Tega Cay); Kevin Bronson (Rock Hill); Brian Klauk (SCDOT); Ryan Blancke (York County); Joe Cronin (Fort Mill); Bill Meyer (Rock Hill); Steve Allen (York County); Steve Willis (Lancaster County); Penelope Karagounis (Lancaster County); Phil Leazer (York County); David Vehaun (Rock Hill); Kevin Sheppard (SCDOT); Vic Edwards (SCDOT); Bill Jordan (SCDOT); Allison Love (York County); Elizabeth Harris (CIN); Jimmy Bagley (Rock Hill); Chuck Chorak (Rock Hill); William Long (RFATS); and David Hooper (RFATS)

CITIZENS/VISITORS PRESENT: Carl Manns (CAC); Frank Myers (CAC); Jim Van Blarcom (CAC); Luther Dasher (CAC); Amy Massey (Kimley-Horn); Mike Fry (CAMPCO); John Delfausse (Indian Land); Jennifer Stalford (Tega Cay); Larry Huntley (Fort Mill); Jim Reno (Rock Hill); and Preston Lyerly (Fort Mill)

1. CALL TO ORDER:

- a. **Welcome** – Chairman Blackwell called the meeting to order at 12:15 P.M. and welcomed all in attendance.
- b. **Citizen Comment Period** – Dr. Blackwell asked for any citizen comments. There were no comments.
- c. **Recognition of Service** – Mr. Echols thanked Mr. Reno for his nearly 10 years of service to RFATS. Dr. Blackwell then presented a plaque on behalf of the RFATS Policy Committee.

2. REVIEW/APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Dr. Blackwell asked if there were any changes, deletions, or comments to the minutes of the February 28, 2014 meeting. Hearing no comments, Mr. Funderburk made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Harris seconded and the minutes were unanimously approved.

3. UPDATE ON CURRENT PROJECTS:

- a. **SCDOT Report** – Mr. Klauk provided a status update on projects administered by SCDOT.

- SC 121 (Albright Road) is 90% complete.
- Riverview Road / Riverchase Blvd is in ROW with construction expected to begin in Fall 2015.
- Dave Lyle Blvd / Chamberside Dr is in ROW with construction expected to begin in Spring 2015.
- Mt. Gallant Road / Celanese Road is 40% complete with utilities relocation slated for completion in late Summer 2014.
- SC 160 / Gold Hill Road is in final design with ROW and utilities both progressing. This work is expected to be complete in Fall 2014.
- S-650 Bridge over Wildcat Creek is to be completed in late June 2014.
- S-101 Bridge over Wildcat Creek is slated for letting in Fall 2014.
- S-72 Bridge over Fishing Creek is in ROW with a letting expected in Fall 2014.
- SC 5 / S-81 Bridge is in design with a letting in Summer 2015.
- S-50 Bridge over Manchester Creek is in ROW with a letting slated for Winter 2015.

Dr. Blackwell then asked a broader question about SCDOT's check and balance system when road projects are put out for bid as well as oversight regarding the quality of work performed. In response, Mr. McCarter stated that SCDOT monitors and inspects all projects / contractors whenever work is active. With regard to the bidding process, Mr. McCarter noted that the starting point involves an evaluation of the lowest bid that meets and / or exceeds the established qualification requirements. That said, if a bid is received that is 10% higher or lower than the in-house engineer's estimate – it will be monitored closely for any requested adjustments. Lastly, Mr. McCarter did note that exceptions to this approach can be implemented in emergency situations.

4. REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS:

- Congestion Management: Priority Intersections** – Mr. Hooper briefly reviewed a map illustrating all existing CMAQ projects throughout the RFATS Study Area. As a point of reference, Mr. Hooper noted that these projects effectively represent the highest priority intersections that have received funding over the last 4 to 5 years – and are now in various stages of implementation. Mr. Hooper then transitioned to a summary of work completed by the Technical Team identifying other locations with heavy traffic congestion and development activity that should be evaluated for operating deficiencies and needed improvements. Specific intersections mentioned included: Carowinds / Pleasant Road, SC 49 / 557 / Hwy 274, Gold Hill / Pleasant Road, and India Hook / Celanese Road – the latter representing the highest Act 114 ranked intersection in the RFATS Study Area. Technical Team members then briefly summarized each location:

Carowinds / Pleasant Road: Mr. Leazer briefly summarized existing operating challenges at this location and noted the recent announcement that Cabela's will be locating at the old Plaza Fiesta site and is expected to attract nearly 100,000 visitors per year. As a point of reference, Mr. Leazer also noted that Carowinds has already announced their own expansion plans which could increase visitors by 50%. Recognizing these important developments, Mr. Johnson emphasized the need for early and active coordination with both Carowinds and Cabela's as the planning process moves forward.

SC 49 / 557 / Hwy 274: Ms. Love said that this intersection is one of the major convergence points for traffic movement from western York County and southern Gaston County in the area. As a point of reference, Ms. Love noted that recent traffic studies

have shown that this location is already operating at Level of Service E or F – which means that traffic is essentially bumper-to-bumper during the peak periods. Lastly, Ms. Love noted that more residential and commercial development is coming to the area and will be channeled through this intersection.

Gold Hill / Pleasant Road: Mr. Leazer briefly referenced some of the development activity in the area (i.e., Publix, Quik Trip, etc.), and then noted that although a double crossover diverging diamond is slated for implementation further down Gold Hill Road at I-77, that as the operating efficiency of this area is improved, that nearby intersections like Gold Hill / Pleasant Road will need follow-up attention as well to maintain effective corridor performance.

Mr. Hooper then summarized the multitude of steps involved when using federal funding and the extended implementation period that frequently results. Against this backdrop, Mr. Hooper stated that undertaking small area studies at these locations would enable the development of detailed project scope and cost information as well as early coordination with SCDOT; and thereby, expedite those areas of project pre-planning that can shorten the amount of time ultimately needed from project initiation to completion. The Policy Committee then indicated that they were comfortable with staff undertaking this work.

- b. MAP-21 Transit Representative on the Policy Committee** – Mr. Hooper briefly reviewed the requirement of MAP-21 (Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century), that all Metropolitan Planning Organizations classified as a Transportation Management Area or TMA (as RFATS is), are required to have a transit representative on their Policy Committee no later than October 1, 2014.

Mr. Hooper then noted that this requirement was reviewed with the Policy Committee during 2012-13 as they worked on incorporating the latest census information and updating the MPO boundary – but that federal guidance for addressing this requirement was not yet available. Given that this guidance has since been received, Mr. Hooper stated that he wanted to share this information with the Policy Committee and ask for their guidance before staff initiated any next steps.

Mr. Hooper then briefly provided background information on notable changes contained in MAP-21; in particular, the increasing emphasis placed on performance management and achieving an outcome based approach to transportation decision-making. With this in mind, Mr. Hooper noted that roads, bridges, congestion reduction, safety, and freight movement (which are all extremely important), frequently draw the majority of planning attention and resources – but that transit is another important component to a multi-modal transportation system that is expected to be part of the performance management framework contained in MAP-21.

Against this backdrop, FHWA & FTA have provided guidance that a “specifically designated” transit representative must serve on the Policy Committee of all MPO’s that serve Transportation Management Areas (as RFATS does). Additionally, Mr. Hooper noted that the federal guidance states that the transit representative must come from a provider or administrator of public transportation, and also must be a direct recipient of urbanized area transit funding. Given this qualifying criteria, Mr. Hooper stated that two municipalities satisfy this requirement within the RFATS Study Area: the City of Charlotte (CATS 82X) and the City of Rock Hill (York County Access and CATS 82X).

Dr. Blackwell then referenced the regional importance of Charlotte-Douglas International and asked whether they might be considered as an appropriate representative in satisfying this requirement. In response, Mr. Hooper noted that although the airport does influence many important aspects of a multi-modal transportation system and is a common destination for transit service in North Carolina – that they would not satisfy the requirements of MAP-21 as outlined; notwithstanding their important role within the region. As a point of reference, Ms. Hekter emphasized that the essential aspect of the qualifying criteria for the transit representative is that they be a direct recipient of urbanized area transit funding; and that, they are also a provider or administrator of public transportation within the RFATS Study Area. Lastly, Ms. Hekter noted that the Policy Committee should give some thought to current transit service provision as well as expected changes to transit services overtime and who they see providing that service.

Discussion then followed regarding the nature of current transit service provision as well as potential service enhancements envisioned over time. Currently, Mr. Hooper noted that transit service is fundamentally “trip specific,” given that the necessary densities that would support a fixed route system are not present at this time. Mr. Hooper went on to briefly summarize the existing services that are supported by urbanized area transit funding and their function within the RFATS Area.

Specifically, Mr. Hooper noted that the CATS 82X collects riders along the I-77 Corridor and transports them to the Charlotte Transportation Center to access an expanded base of employment opportunities Monday through Friday during the morning and evening peak periods. Whereas York County Access is operated to meet a combination of basic mobility and regional employment needs within RFATS, and is similarly operated Monday through Friday from 6:00am to 6:00pm. As a point of reference, Mr. Hooper noted that a demand response based approach is the mode that has the strongest roots within RFATS and is operated throughout the area (i.e., in the Rock Hill Urbanized Area as well as in the rural portions of York County; the Catawba Indian Nation has a Demand Response service known as Tribal Transit; and Lancaster County has the LARS Demand Response service.

Against this backdrop, Dr. Blackwell then asked who would seem to be the logical agency to serve as the transit representative on the Policy Committee? In response, Mr. Hooper noted that given the current operating structure of transit within RFATS – and the expected evolution towards some form of a fixed route system overtime – that the City of Rock Hill as the direct recipient of urbanized area transit funding would logically be central to any such planning and funding activity. Mr. Hayes then recommended that staff request that the City of Rock Hill put forward a recommendation for a transit representative to serve in this capacity.

Dr. Blackwell then asked a clarifying question about the potential for a representative from the City of Charlotte. In response, Mr. Hooper noted that while the City of Charlotte does meet the qualifying criteria, that they may not view their limited presence in RFATS via the CATS 82X (which is a grandfathered arrangement – not really open to substantial augmentation), as sufficient to warrant a role on the Policy Committee. Dr. Blackwell then asked about the expected contribution of the transit representative; specifically, whether it is anticipated that this person should serve more as a transit mediator or as someone possessing more technical knowledge. Mr. Hooper stated that this person is expected to serve more as an initiator of discussion regarding transit by prompting questions about identified transit priorities as reflected in RFATS key planning documents such as the Long Range Transportation Plan and Transportation

Improvement Program. Additionally, it would be expected that questions about how we are tracking performance; how things are changing from an operational standpoint; as well as whether we are advancing identified recommendations are being addressed, among other items.

5. PROPOSED POLICY COMMITTEE ACTION ITEMS:

- a. Title VI Plan – Consider final approval of draft Title VI Plan** – Mr. Long summarized the development of the MPO Title VI Plan. He then noted that all activities and efforts included have always been undertaken as a part of the Public Participation Plan, but that FHWA has requested the establishment of a separate stand-alone document focusing on this part of the transportation planning process. Mr. Long then asked the Policy Committee to grant final approval to the Title VI Program. Dr. Blackwell asked for a motion. Ms. Pender made a motion to approve the Title VI Program; Mr. Funderburk seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

6. OTHER BUSINESS:

- a. Administrative Report** – Mr. Hooper pointed out that the TAP / CMAQ Subcommittee will meet in mid-April.
- b. Next Regular Meeting** – Dr. Blackwell announced that the next regular meeting will be held on Friday, May 16, 2014 at the Manchester Meadows Conference Room.

7. ADJOURNMENT:

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:00 P.M.