



**POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING  
SUMMARY MINUTES  
November 17, 2017 – 12:00 p.m. (NOON)  
Manchester Meadows Conference Room**

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:** Doug Echols; Brian Carnes; George Sheppard; Britt Blackwell (proxy); Guynn Savage; Bill Harris; Kathy Pender; Michael Johnson (proxy); Jim Reno; Wes Climer; Gary Simrill (proxy); and Gene Branham (proxy).

**ADMINISTRATIVE / TECHNICAL / MANAGEMENT STAFF PRESENT:**

Vic Edwards (SCDOT); Susan Britt (City of Tega Cay); Cliff Goolsby (City of Rock Hill); Diane Dil (Town of Fort Mill); Berry Mattox (SCDOT); Bill Meyer (City of Rock Hill); Audra Miller (York County); David Gamble (SCDOT); Penelope Karagounis (Lancaster County); Jeremy Winkler (City of Rock Hill); Josh Meetze (SCDOT); Patrick Hamilton (York County); Rob Ruth (City of Rock Hill); Keith Powell (SCDOT); Steve Willis (Lancaster County); Cindi Howard (City of Rock Hill); Steve Allen (York County); Jessica Hekter (FHWA); Kara Drane (CRCOG); David Vehaun (City of Rock Hill); David Harmon (York County); Crystal McCutcheon (SCDOT); Dean Hendrix (York County); Jimmy Bagley (City of Rock Hill); Emily Lawton (FHWA); Randy Imler (CRCOG); Mike Sullivan (SCDOT); Chris Herrmann (RFATS); and David Hooper (RFATS).

**CITIZENS / VISITORS PRESENT:** Frank Myers (CAC); Larry Huntley (Fort Mill Town Council); Cleopatra Allen (CAC); Jim Van Blarcom (CAC); Hisham Abdelaziz (CDM Smith); Kenneth Johnson (AECOM); Teresa Thomas (Office of Sen. Lindsey Graham); John Marks (Fort Mill Times); Merrit King; Jorge Luna (HDR); Amy Massey (Kimley-Horn); and David Kerns (HDR).

**1. CALL TO ORDER:**

**a. Welcome** – Chairman Echols called the meeting to order at 12:05 P.M. and welcomed all in attendance. Mr. Echols noted that Ms. Savage holds the proxy for Mr. Johnson, and Mr. Climer holds the proxies for Dr. Blackwell, Mr. Simrill, and Commissioner Branham.

**b. Citizen Comment Period** – No comments were made at this time.

**2. REVIEW / APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mr. Echols asked if there were any changes, deletions, or comments to the minutes of the June 23, 2017 meeting. Mr. Sheppard then made a motion to approve the minutes as presented; this was seconded by Ms. Savage and the motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Echols asked if there were any changes, deletions, or comments to the minutes of the September 22, 2017 meeting. Mr. Sheppard then noted a spelling error on page three of the minutes and asked for that change to be reflected. Mr. Sheppard then made a motion to approve the minutes as corrected; this was seconded by Ms. Savage and the motion was unanimously approved.

**3. UPDATE ON CURRENT PROJECTS:**

**a. SCDOT Project Status Report** – Mr. Mattox provided an update on the following projects:

- US 521 / Marvin Road Intersection Improvement – ROW is anticipated to begin in FY 2018 and construction is planned for FY 2019. A more finalized cost estimate will be available once preliminary design has been completed. As a point of reference, it was noted that since current funding reflects a partial initial funding commitment, further funding will be requested once the full budget estimate is completed.
- Celanese Road / India Hook Road Intersection Improvement – ROW is anticipated to begin in FY 2018 and construction is planned for FY 2019. Coordination with the City of Rock Hill is ongoing regarding the scope of the project.
- Celanese Road / Riverview / Riverchase Intersection Improvement – Mr. Mattox noted that a March construction letting is anticipated pending final utility coordination; ROW acquisition and final design are complete.
- Pleasant Road / Carowinds Blvd Intersection Improvement – preliminary design is currently underway and ROW acquisition is anticipated to begin in FY 2019; construction is planned for FY 2020.
- E White St / Firetower Road / E Main St Intersection Improvement – ROW acquisition and final design are complete; construction letting is anticipated once utility coordination is finalized.
- Clebourne St / N White St Intersection Improvement – ROW acquisition is anticipated to begin in FY 2018 and construction is planned for FY 2019.
- SC 160 / Gold Hill Road Intersection Improvement – Project is substantially complete and project closeout is ongoing.
- Cel-River Road Widening Phase I – construction is approximately 35% complete and full project completion is anticipated by May 2018. Project should be completed under budget.
- SC 160 Phase 2 Widening Project – project is currently under construction with completion anticipated by November 2019.
- I-77 / SC 160 Interchange Reconfiguration – SCDOT will advertise for consultant services in early FY 2018 for preliminary design and environmental documentation. Mr. Mattox noted that construction funding will need to be added. As a point of reference, it was noted that the construction component will need to be programmed, given the status of the SIB application, and the decision not to include on the Pennies IV referendum as originally envisioned.
- I-77 / US 21 (Cherry Road) / Celanese Road Interchange Reconfiguration – Consistent with the previous project (i.e., SIB application; Pennies IV referendum), the construction component will need to be programmed.
- Lake Ridge Trail – project is substantially complete and project closeout is ongoing. Mr. Mattox noted that the project was completed under budget.
- Nation Ford High School Pedestrian Project – project scope has been revised and SCDOT is currently coordinating with the Town of Fort Mill on the project development plan.
- Windjammer Drive Sidewalk – SCDOT has met with the City of Tega Cay to develop a preliminary scope and will continue coordination on the project development plan.

Mr. Mattox then gave brief updates on Area Federal-Aid Bridge Projects including: S-81, SC 5, SC 72 (Fishing Creek), US 21 BUS, S-50, S-654, S-655, S-55, S-560, S-166, and S-103.

#### **4. REPORTS:**

**a. I-77 Corridor Analysis** – Mr. Hooper briefly reviewed the study scope for the evaluation of planning options for further improving east-west and north-south traffic movement along the I-77 Corridor. As a point of reference, Mr. Hooper noted that the study area includes Gold Hill Road, SC 160, Celanese Road, US 21, and Pleasant-Sutton Road. Mr. Hooper then transitioned into an overview of the principal project types for managing traffic congestion levels in both static and high growth environments.

In terms of structure, it was noted that the study would begin with a historical evaluation of corridor development; in particular, the cumulative effect of area land use decisions and resulting operational outcomes. Focus areas of the evaluation will include an assessment of corridor level of service, volume-to-capacity ratios, and broader travel shed characteristics, among other variables. This assessment will provide a clear and accurate description of the nature and extent of traffic congestion (i.e., its intensity, duration, and recurring / non-recurring causes, etc).

Mr. Hooper next explained that with this portion of the evaluation complete, the consultant team will proceed into the development of improvement options, which will include capacity, operational, and policy oriented alternatives – which can be applied individually as well as working in concert with other complimentary strategies. Mr. Hooper then noted that the study will incorporate all of the findings from previous area studies in a matrix of planning options. Mr. Hooper stated that the cost estimate for such a study would range from \$150,000 to \$200,000 and would require a timeline of 7 to 8 months for completion. As a point of reference, it was noted that this study would require a separate procurement action. Lastly, Mr. Hooper briefly referenced prior discussions regarding the creation of a steering committee of six members from the Policy Committee to guide this work effort.

Mr. Reno then asked for an estimate of the remaining budget for the on-call contract? Mr. Hooper responded that the remaining balance is roughly between \$50,000 to \$60,000. Mr. Reno then made a motion to amend the study scope reflecting the evaluation component along the Celanese Corridor (along with the Cherry Road and Cel-River components) to be undertaken with the understanding that this scope would not include any version of a Catawba River Bridge crossing. Ms. Savage then asked about the reasoning for proposing to amend the study scope with a more condensed focus principally along the Celanese Corridor. In response, Mr. Reno noted that taking account of the original intent of the Catawba River Bridge Feasibility Study, that such an amended focus would effectively advance the underlying purpose of the original study, while excluding any further consideration of a bridge alternative.

Ms. Savage then stated that while she recognized the logic in this approach, she would like for any newly initiated study to include all the corridors along I-77 to be evaluated based on current and projected demand conditions. With this in mind, Ms. Savage then asked when additional funding would be available to accomplish this objective. Mr. Hooper then noted that once the on-call contract is re-bid (which would take roughly 4 months), sufficient funding would be available at that point. Mr. Climer then asked for a brief summary of the funding support for these types of studies? Mr. Hooper noted that an on-call contract is in place to assist in expediting work efforts such as corridor and small area studies.

Mr. Hooper then briefly reviewed the larger budgetary picture; specifically, the priorities in the Long Range Transportation Plan (i.e., the interchange projects at Exit 82 and Exit 85, the widening of Cel-River Road, the widening of SC 160 to US 521, and the interchange project at Exit 77). As a point of reference, it was noted that these five projects largely consume all available funding for the next 30 years; noting that the only meaningful change would be the \$40M which was committed to the Cel-River Road widening project that will now become available; though, Mr. Hooper noted that it is important to emphasize that this funding would not be available for programming for roughly 10 years or more with the more immediate implementation work and costs associated with the interchange reconfigurations at SC 160 and Celanese Road.

Mr. Sheppard then inquired whether all 16 corridors outlined in the study scope could be considered under one study? Mr. Hooper responded in the affirmative with the qualifier that this study would have to be a separate procurement action because the cost of such a study exceeds the existing on-call services contract; noting that this will require an additional 3-4 months to rebid the contract and select a consultant. Mr. Reno then suggested that the on-call services contract could be utilized to initiate the study analyzing improvements for the Celanese and Cherry Road corridors as well as Cel-River Road.

Mr. Carnes then asked if it would be acceptable to modify Mr. Reno's motion to begin a study on the three corridors he previously identified and to also move to initiate a separate procurement action to begin a study on the remaining 13 corridors highlighted in the study scope? Mr. Hooper responded in the affirmative. Mr. Carnes then moved to amend Mr. Reno's motion to initiate a more focused study of the Celanese Road corridor, Cherry Road corridor, and Cel-River Road under the existing on-call services contract (removing the Catawba River Bridge from consideration), with the understanding that staff will then initiate a rebid to undertake the 2<sup>nd</sup> component of the study for the remaining 13 corridors. This motion was seconded by Mr. Climer.

Mr. Sheppard then expressed a concern to voting on this matter without all of the proper data and information; noting that the traffic volume data discussed does not consider the impact of the Kingsley development or the proposed developments at the Cato Property. Discussion then followed regarding how current and projected traffic volumes are collected and updated in the regional travel demand model and utilized for these types of planning purposes. Mr. Echols then asked if there was any further discussion? Ms. Savage asked if a timeline could be determined to finalize the separate procurement action that is required. Mr. Hooper stated that staff would request four months to complete the process. Mr. Echols then asked for a vote on the amended motion made by Mr. Carnes and seconded by Mr. Climer; the motion then passed with a vote of 11-1 (Mr. Sheppard dissenting).

Mr. Echols then asked for a vote on the motion made by Mr. Reno regarding the formation of a sub-committee to take part in these studies; the motion then passed with a vote of 11-1 (Mr. Sheppard dissenting). Ms. Savage then made a motion for the sub-committee to include Mr. Carnes, Mr. Johnson, Ms. Savage, Mr. Reno, Mr. Climer, and Dr. Blackwell. Mr. Reno seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

**b. MPO Agreement** – Mr. Hooper briefly reviewed the information presented by SCDOT and FHWA in September noting that there are no state or federal concerns that would warrant re-designation of the MPO. As a point of reference, Mr. Hooper then briefly noted the applicable regulations regarding the designation of an MPO; specifically, that 75% of the planning area population must be in agreement for any change to be considered; and that, federal regulations also require that this consensus level must include concurrence from the single largest incorporated city.

Mr. Hooper then reviewed the role of urbanized areas in the designation of MPOs, as well as in periodically adjusting their boundary. As a point of reference, Mr. Hooper then noted that the funding allocated to an MPO is a direct result of these same urbanized areas. With this in mind, the principal source of funding for the MPO is generated by the Rock Hill Urbanized Area; the Charlotte Urbanized Area that covers Fort Mill, Tega Cay and Lancaster County; and lastly, there is a very limited amount of funding that comes from the extension of the Gaston Urbanized Area above Clover.

Mr. Hooper then reviewed the different types of members which comprise the Policy Committee; specifically, Jurisdictional Members, Agency Representatives, and Coordinative Representatives. As a point of reference, Mr. Hooper noted that when MPOs are designated that only the Jurisdictional Members vote in that process.

Mr. Hooper then reviewed the distribution of the urban area population from the 2010 Census; noting that the composition of the Policy Committee is derived from the urbanized area population. Consistent with the relative population distribution, the City of Rock Hill has three seats, York County two seats, Town of Fort Mill one seat, Lancaster County one seat, City of Tega Cay one seat, and the Catawba Indian Nation one seat. As a point of reference, Mr. Hooper noted that while York County was closer to three seats and the City of Rock Hill closer to four seats during prior Census updates – each of these jurisdictions

voluntarily gave up one of their seats so that the Town of Fort Mill and the City of Tega Cay could each have an independent vote.

Mr. Hooper then stated that with the upcoming 2020 Decennial Census there will be updated urbanized area designations made within the MPO as the growth continues in the area. This is important to any discussion of the designation process, since any material change to the single largest member can trigger another designation action –,effectively producing successive adjustment processes.

## **5. PROPOSED POLICY COMMITTEE ACTION ITEMS:**

**a. TIP Amendment** – Mr. Herrmann reviewed the TIP Amendment for the programming of \$100,000 in Recreational Trail funding from SCPRT for a York County Culture and Heritage Commission trail project located along the Catawba River near the Mason’s Bend development. Mr. Herrmann then asked the Policy Committee to grant approval of this TIP Amendment and authorize staff to initiate a 21-day public comment period. A motion to grant approval was made by Mr. Sheppard; seconded by Ms. Savage and the motion was unanimously approved.

**b. 2018 Policy Committee Meeting Schedule** – Mr. Herrmann briefly reviewed the proposed meeting schedule for 2018 and then requested consideration of its approval. A motion to approve was made by Ms. Savage and seconded by Mr. Reno; the motion was unanimously approved.

## **6. OTHER BUSINESS:**

**a. Administrative Report** – Mr. Hooper briefly reviewed the Administrative Report.

**b. Guideshare Funding** – Mr. Hooper referenced the most recent legislative audit committee report of SCDOT; and in particular noted the recommendation that the Department of Transportation should only distribute mandatory amounts to the state’s MPOs (this recommendation would also impact COGs), and retain the remainder in the department’s budget. Mr. Hooper then noted that follow-up on this recommendation is expected prior to the end of 2017. With this in mind, Mr. Hooper noted that a workshop is planned for the SCDOT Commission on Wednesday, December 6<sup>th</sup> to review all relevant planning and budgetary considerations.

As a point of reference, Mr. Hooper noted that implementation of this recommendation would represent a substantial policy shift, and would materially alter the budgetary estimates on which an MPOs long range planning priorities are based. Mr. Climer then stated that he is a new member of the Legislative Audit Council, noting that he was not a member when the latest audit was completed. Mr. Climer then noted that he has communicated to Commissioner Branham the importance of allowing local decisions to be made by the local jurisdictions who have more expertise regarding local issues. As a point of reference, Mr. Climer also noted that he was directly opposed to SCDOT retaining any of the available Guideshare funding that is made available to the state’s MPOs. Mr. Climer then encouraged other members of the Policy Committee, administrative staff, and/or local constituents to voice their opinions as well to Commissioner Branham concerning this issue.

**c. Retiring Members (Recognition of Service)** – Mr. Hooper presented a plaque thanking Mr. Sheppard (8 years) and Mr. Echols (20 years) for their service to the community.

**d. Next meeting** – Mr. Echols noted that the next Policy Committee meeting will be held on January 26, 2018 at the Manchester Meadows Conference Room. Mr. Hooper noted that Christy Hall, Secretary of Transportation will make a presentation outlining SCDOT’s plans for utilizing the additional funding provided by the gas tax increase, as well as provide some guidance on transportation performance management requirements.

**7. ADJOURNMENT:**

The motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Sheppard and seconded by Mr. Carnes; the motion was unanimously approved and the meeting was adjourned at 1:30 P.M.