



**POLICY COMMITTEE WORKSHOP
SUMMARY MINUTES
October 23, 2020 – 12:00 p.m.
Rock Hill City Hall – Council Chambers**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: David O’Neal; Michael Johnson; Kathy Pender; Jim Reno (proxy); John Gettys; Bill Harris; Britt Blackwell; and Brian Carnes.

ADMINISTRATIVE / TECHNICAL / MANAGEMENT STAFF PRESENT:

Jessica Hekter (FHWA); Patrick Hamilton (York County); Diane Dil (York County); Alex Moore (Town of Fort Mill); Vic Edwards (SCDOT); Berry Mattox (SCDOT); Diane Lackey (SCDOT); Erin Porter (SCDOT); Allison Love (SCDOT); David Gamble (SCDOT); Bill Meyer (City of Rock Hill); Christopher Stephens (York County); Dean Hendrix (York County); David Hudspeth (York County); Josh Meetze (SCDOT); Kara Drane (CRCOG); Dennis Fields (City of Rock Hill); David Vebaun (City of Rock Hill); Rob Ruth (City of Rock Hill); Jimmy Bagley (City of Rock Hill); Cindi Howard (City of Rock Hill); Chris Herrmann (RFATS); and David Hooper (RFATS).

CITIZENS / VISITORS PRESENT: Steve Yaffe (Bike Ped Coalition of York County); Scot Woodward; Scot Sibert (WSP); Frank Myers (CAC); Jim Van Blarcom (CAC); Cleopatra Allen (CAC); David Keely (CAC); Frieda Price (CAC); Carol Jones (Mead Hunt); William Jordan (AECOM); Michael Dennis (Ramey Kemp); John Fargher (ESP Associates); Ed Evans (Mattern & Craig); and Phil Conrad (Mobility Solutions).

1. CALL TO ORDER:

a. Welcome – Vice-Chair O’Neal called the meeting to order at 12:10 P.M. and welcomed all in attendance.

2. 2050 LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN (LRTP) UPDATE:

a. Overview and Purpose of Work Session – Mr. Hooper provided a brief overview of the LRTP process and the necessary components and explained that transportation conformity continues to apply to the RFATS Area due to the maintenance area status regarding air quality.

b. Update on Public Participation / Outreach Activities – Mr. Herrmann briefly reviewed the public participation process specifically noting a comprehensive outreach to all stakeholder groups requesting input and guidance; as well as virtual outreach meetings that were held requesting input from all interested parties. Mr. Herrmann then summarized the common themes received. Topics of discussion did include:

- Operations & Maintenance (Dobys Bridge Road, Cel-River Road, Sutton Road)
- Road Widening (US 21 from the Catawba River to SC 160)
- Bicycle / Pedestrian (Access & Safety; Improved System Connectivity)
- Public Transit – Network availability; access to rapid transit options such as the LYNX LRS; Commuter Rail, etc.
- Concerns about the impact of the Dave Lyle Blvd extension
- Concern regarding the impact COVID-19 has had on funding
- Connected & Autonomous Vehicles

- Role of Collector Street Planning

Mr. Hooper then noted that the public input received represented a rotation from the majority of comments received during the 2045 LRTP Update focused on traditional operational improvements and road widenings – with the majority of comments received this cycle focusing on a broader mix of improvement strategies such as bicycle and pedestrian enhancements; proactive collector street planning, and augmenting transit services.

c. Socio-Economic Data & Horizon Year Projections – Mr. Sibert briefly reviewed the socio-economic data projections from the Metrolina Regional Model; specifically, population and employment, as well as the build-out projections for the planning area through 2050. Mr. Sibert then explained that the horizon year projections portray a robust development pattern through 2025; and then leveling out longer term. Discussion then followed regarding the continuation of expected growth into western York County, and extending further down beyond the panhandle in Lancaster County. Lastly, Mr. Hooper noted the continued operational and planning importance both Hwy 49 and US 521; particularly in how and on what conditions subsequent development occurs (i.e., commitment on collector roads positioning prior to approval, etc).

d. Regional Initiatives – Mr. Hooper briefly summarized a number of cooperative planning initiatives with adjacent agency partners (CRAFT), in North Carolina. As a point of reference, these include the Connect Beyond Initiative (regional transit plan); Beyond I-77 (corridor study from RFATS to I-40); continued planning coordination on the development of a bi-state ITS / TIM Strategic Action Plan as well as ongoing work on the evolving technological and operational innovations related to connected and autonomous vehicles. Lastly, Mr. Hooper noted that he is a member of the steering committee of the Catawba Crossings Feasibility Study (Gaston, NC), which is evaluating a potential new bridge crossing from New South Hope Road to I-485. Mr. Hooper stated that such a network addition would likely influence driver behavior in the Lake Wylie area; and will of course provide more information as it becomes available.

e. Potential Projects and Needs – Mr. Hooper briefly reviewed the existing cost constrained project list which includes: the SC 160 / I-77 Interchange Reconfiguration; Celanese / Cherry Road / I-77 Interchange Reconfiguration; Cel-River Road Widening (Phase II); SC 160 Widening (Phase II); and an Exit 77 Interchange Upgrade. As a point of reference, Mr. Hooper noted that SIB funding has been awarded for the SC 160 / I-77 Interchange Reconfiguration and RFATS funding has been approved for the 4 to 6 lane widening component of this project from Pleasant / Sutton to US 21.

Mr. Hooper then highlighted that SIB funding has also been awarded for the Celanese / Cherry / I-77 Interchange Reconfiguration project; though it was noted that following completion of the alternatives analysis phase, supplemental funding from RFATS is expected. Therefore, the recent SIB award and the existing project funding commitment should be maintained until a final recommended alignment has been reviewed and finalized. Mr. Hooper then noted that the widening of Cel-River Road from Eden Terrace to Dave Lyle Blvd was approved for Pennies IV and is fully funded at this point.

Mr. Hooper then reviewed the Draft Project List for the 2050 LRTP Update, which includes road widenings, new alignments, intersection improvements, bicycle / pedestrian improvements, and public transit services. Mr. Hooper noted that these projects are drawn from plans and studies such as the Collector Road Plan, Bicycle/Pedestrian Connectivity Plan; corridors studies as well as input from the Technical Team and public outreach meetings. As a point of reference, Mr. Hooper noted that the Policy Committee had previously requested that the unfunded road and intersection improvement sections be condensed to focus on a more focused list of projects likely to be funded by either RFATS or Pennies during the next 5 to 7 years – rather than a more comprehensive listings of likely unfunded needs that

would extend beyond this time period. With this in mind, Mr. Hooper then reviewed relevant changes and project specific emphasis points across the transportation network. Mr. Hamilton then highlighted those projects on the updated project list that appeared to represent the types of projects typically selected for inclusion with the Pennies Program for funding consideration. Specifically, Mr. Hamilton described the following project needs: US 21 Widening (Sutton Road to SC 160); Sutton Road (6th Baxter to I-77); Fort Mill Parkway; Mt Gallant / Cherry Road Intersection as well as Gold Hill / Pleasant Road Intersection. Lastly, Mr. Hooper then requested that the Policy Committee review the draft project list for any potential additions and/or adjustment that they may want considered prior to a request for final approval – which is slated for the Friday, November 20th meeting.

Mr. Johnson then noted the recent approval on the Lancaster County Local Option Sales Tax Program for partial funding of a US 521 infrastructure improvement effort from the state line to Marvin Road; and the need to ensure all relevant operational and planning data is gathered and updated down of Waxhaw Hwy – so that we’re proactively planning for consideration of all potential upgrade options as well as funding sources much further down consistent with current and projected growth patterns as outlined earlier. Mr. Hooper then stated that he would recommend completing a comprehensive corridor study from the State Line past Waxhaw Hwy to gather all relevant data. Mr. Johnson and Mr. Carnes then agreed that this is desired to be added to the Comprehensive Project List for November.

Mr. Gettys then asked whether bicycle and pedestrian improvements listed on the Comprehensive Project List have been ranked and funding identified? Mr. Hooper responded that no ranking or funding has been completed to date, rather cost estimates have been provided as a reference point. Mr. Hooper then noted that historically the Policy Committee has funded bicycle and pedestrian improvements through a grant specific sources such as TAP and/or CMAQ programs. That said, Mr. Hooper noted that if the Policy Committee would like to consider incorporating a specific funding commitment as part of the overall Guideshare allocation, that is a permissible option.

In closing, Mr. Hooper emphasized that in addition to project specific improvement efforts, that there are a range of supporting policy and programmatic actions that can assist in addressing operational challenges in the built environment, by evaluating for appropriateness the positioning of collector roads; application of access management strategies and related actions during the development review and approval process. Such action would advance the linkage between expected operational outcomes related to a specific development – with how the transportation network will be impacted more broadly than has traditionally been completed in prior planning periods more generally among different agency and planning area geographies.

f. RFATS Financial Status and Revenue Forecasting – Mr. Hooper briefly reviewed the current financial outlook and expected funding availability over the 2050 LRTP planning period. As a point of reference, Mr. Hooper noted relevant variables to these assumptions as including the decennial census and impacts from COVID-19 on broader budgetary planning at the state and federal levels. Mr. Hooper then noted that while long-term it seems that there is a large amount of uncommitted funds, given annual cash flow projections, the significant budgetary commitment related to upgrading the SC 160 / I-77; Celanese / I-77 Interchange as well as the new interchange at “Exit 81” – that if history is any guide, that one of these project locations (while currently fully funded), may need supplemental funding at a later point. Therefore, it would be prudent to maintain on a transitional basis a higher level of uncommitted funds until all three have passed meaningful project milestones.

g. Project Ranking Criteria – Mr. Hooper briefly reviewed Act 114 regarding project ranking and its applicability to the programming of Guideshare funded projects.

h. Next Steps – Mr. Hooper briefly reviewed next steps in the update process, and that approval of the draft project list will be requested at the November Policy Committee meeting.

6. ADJOURNMENT:

The motion to adjourn was made by Mr. O’Neal and seconded by Mr. Gettys; the motion was unanimously approved and the meeting was adjourned at 1:20 P.M.