



## **POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING**

### **SUMMARY MINUTES**

**May 21, 2021 – 12:00 p.m.**

**Rock Hill City Hall – Council Chambers / Zoom**

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:** David O’Neal; John Gettys; Guynn Savage (proxy); Tom Audette; Kathy Pender (proxy); Jim Reno (proxy); Bill Harris; and Wes Climer (proxy).

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

Berry Mattox (SCDOT); Patrick Hamilton (York County); Penelope Karagounis (Town of Fort Mill); Diane Lackey (SCDOT); Susan Britt (City of Tega Cay); Christopher Stephens (York County); Rob Ruth (City of Rock Hill); Vic Edwards (SCDOT); Jason Johnston (SCDOT); Betsy McCall (SCDOT); Erin Porter (SCDOT); Leah Youngblood (City of Rock Hill); Cliff Goolsby (City of Rock Hill); Josh Meetze (SCDOT); Chris Herrmann (RFATS); and David Hooper (RFATS).

**CITIZENS / VISITORS PRESENT:** Scot Sibert (WSP); Jim Van Blarcom (CAC); Luther Dasher (CAC); Frank Myers (CAC); Aaron Barnes (CAC); Brandon Murr (Kimley-Horn); Jorge Luna (HDR); Adam Howell (Atkins Global); Carol Jones (Mead Hunt); Phil Leazer (KCI); John Fargher (ESP Associates); Ed Evans (Mattern & Craig); Dave Kerns (HDR); Rachel Richardson (CN2 News); John Marks (The Herald); Matthew Kreh (WRHI); Liz Duda; Al Rogat; Eric Burgess; Mike Moore; Agustin Rodriguez (CRTPO); and Bill Jordan (AECOM).

#### **1. CALL TO ORDER:**

- a. **Welcome** – Chair O’Neal called the meeting to order at 12:01 P.M. and welcomed all in attendance.
- b. **Citizen Comment Period** – No comments were made at this time.

#### **2. REVIEW / APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mr. O’Neal asked if there were any changes, deletions, or comments to the minutes of the April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2021 meeting. Mr. O’Neal then made a motion to approve the minutes as presented; this was seconded by Mr. Gettys and the motion was unanimously approved.

#### **3. REPORTS:**

- a. **SCDOT Project Status Report** – Mr. Mattox provided a brief update on the following projects:
  - Clebourne / N White Street Intersection Improvement – construction is largely completed with some minor adjustments being finalized.
  - US 521 / Marvin Road Intersection Improvement – ROW Acquisition is currently underway. Mr. Mattox noted a challenge action that will need to be resolved in the court system. Once that issue has been resolved construction is anticipated to be initiated in FY 2022.
  - Celanese / India Hook Road Intersection Improvement – ROW Acquisition is currently underway, utility coordination is being finalized, and construction is anticipated to begin in 2022.
  - Carowinds / Pleasant Intersection Improvement – ROW Acquisition is currently underway. Mr. Mattox explained that cost overruns during ROW Acquisition has caused a need for additional funding in the amount of \$340,000. Mr. Hooper then explained that this project has evolved from

the original concept due to the new access for Carowinds Amusement Park, which has impacted the original estimates for ROW.

- SC 160 Phase II Widening Project – construction is currently being finalized as SCDOT is coordinating with Lancaster County to tie in to work recently completed on MacMillan Park Drive.
- Tega Cay Drive / Heron Harbor Crosswalk Improvement – Mr. Mattox noted that project implementation is being scheduled for summer and should be completed by fall 2021.
- SC 160 / I-77 Interchange Reconfiguration – preliminary design and environmental permitting is currently underway. ROW Acquisition is anticipated to begin in the near term. Construction obligation is anticipated to begin in FY 2022.
- Exit 82 Interchange Reconfiguration – Mr. Mattox explained that SCDOT will soon be accepting consultant proposals for the design / build process. It is anticipated that a consultant will be selected during the summer and preliminary engineering should begin in fall 2021.

Mr. Mattox then gave brief updates on Area Federal Aid Bridge Projects including: US 21 BUS over Steele Creek, S-654 over Burgis Creek, SC 72 over Stony Fork, S-50 over Manchester Creek, S-1069 over Manchester Creek, S-103 over Fishing Creek, S-560 over Stony Fork, S-884 over Fishing Creek, and S-82 over South Fork Creek.

Mr. Mattox then summarized project coordination regarding projects impacting the I-77 Corridor including Carowinds / Pleasant, SC 160 Widening, Gold Hill / I-77 Interchange Improvement, US 21 Widening through Pennies for Progress, and the SC 160 / I-77 Interchange.

**b. Beyond 77 Corridor Study** – Mr. Hooper provided a brief overview of the initial conceptualization of the I-77 Corridor Study from Exit 77 in Rock Hill to roughly Statesville, NC – in an effort to preserve and enhance broad operational capability on I-77 as well as adjacent roadways. As part of his comments, Mr. Hooper noted the existing emphasis the Policy Committee has placed on the importance and functionality of the Interstate (both operational and safety); and the significant budgetary commitments that have been made to date (i.e., Exit 88, Exit 85, Exit 82, Exit 81, and Exit 77). Mr. Hooper then summarized the developed study approach, vision statement and principal goals of the Beyond 77 work effort.

Mr. Hooper then discussed an evolution in the focus of the study beyond I-77 to include a broader range of considerations – concurrently with a departure from outputs that would support effective regional coordination (i.e., the planning responsibility and expectations of MPOs) towards a planning philosophy commonly referred to as “regionalism.” As a point of reference, Mr. Hooper noted that while “regionalism” is indeed a valid planning philosophy – it is not fundamentally the same as effective regional coordination – as it does reflect a different orientation (i.e., a Center City – Region underlying premise is its core assumption as a general matter) towards recommended actions that involve the establishment of new governmental and/or agency structures, rather than a focus on effective regional coordination among existing planning agencies supporting the promotion of good planning outcomes among and between different development environments (i.e., urban core; suburban, semi-urbanizing, etc).

Mr. Hooper then highlighted representative recommendations from a working list of 176 potential actions that appear to be emerging from this study. Specifically, recommendations that seem to fit the scope of the original study include: rail grade separations; high capacity transit corridors; ramp metering; Incident Management and Intelligent Transportation Systems; and Transit / Travel Demand Modeling. Mr. Hooper then noted recommendations that seem to extend beyond the original scope, and appear to have elements of regionalism that include: adaptive signal control technology; coordinated electric vehicle adoption strategy; ensuring deployment of approved and appropriate connected vehicle infrastructure; central data management and performance measurement system related to land development actions; and a

regional coalition of planning; specifically a program covering the coordination of consistent planning needs around land, transportation and associated infrastructure. As this point Mr. Hooper noted that while some of the objectives of these recommendations have utility, they are effectively mixed in with recommended actions that transition towards principal components of regionalism such as centralization and a shift in focus to land development actions – which fundamentally is municipal level business that is to be coordinated more broadly with adjacent planning areas, rather than directed at a much broader regional level.

Mr. Hooper then referenced recommendations that are clearly reflective of regionalism versus effective regional coordination and these included: development of funding and design standards policy; dense parking and housing policies; health food policy; and a recommendation supporting the consolidation of existing planning agencies and the establishment of a single unified agency. Mr. Hooper cautioned that this last recommended policy would result in the abolishment of the RFATS as a planning agency with a new organization being established in Charlotte. Mr. Hooper noted that the development of these recommendations are well beyond the I-77 Corridor and adjacent roadways; emphasize centralization versus effective regional coordination for the promotion of good planning outcomes; and ultimately, is attempting to raise an organization question that has previously been discussed and addressed on multiple occasions – each time with all planning agencies outside of Charlotte stating their opposition to such an approach over the course of the past 10-12 years.

Mr. Hooper then stated that beyond these concerns, there are many good planning recommendations that are also contained within this study; and that, RFATS would look forward to coordinating with our adjacent planning partners on in the years ahead. Mr. Hooper then introduced Mr. Rodriguez from the Charlotte Regional Transportation Planning Organization (CRTPO) and Mr. Howell from Atkinsglobal who are the principal leads for this work effort.

Mr. Rodriguez then provided additional points on the project overview and schedule as well as work completed to date on the study. Mr. Rodriguez noted that staff and the consultant team are currently refining the strategies and solutions outlined by Mr. Hooper. The next steps will focus on developing the framework for recommendations. Mr. Howell then explained that they are attempting to create a toolkit of planning solutions that can be utilized by all of the jurisdictions across the greater Charlotte region.

Mr. Audette then noted a concern with recommendations being developed without coordination with all impacted parties and agencies such as York County and the City of Tega Cay, among others. Mr. Audette also expressed concern with the recommendations that have elements of regionalism being developed; specifically noting concern with funding being tied to these recommendations. As a point of reference, Mr. Hooper then noted that Mr. Rodriguez has been seeking more participation and input from various jurisdictions; and that the preferred format utilized at RFATS (i.e., targeted participation among members of the Policy Committee and presentation / discussion with the full Policy Committee) resulted in a more focused approach based on the original conception of the study. That said, Mr. Hooper stated that he would email Mr. Rodriguez the contact information for Mr. Audette; Mr. O’Neal and Ms. Savage.

Mr. Howell then gave an overview of the process involved in identifying the types of strategies and solutions for this study. Mr. Howell summarized that staff and the consultant team considered a broad range which covered policymaking, programming, project implementation, and funding concepts for each. Mr. Gettys then inquired as to what type of funding concepts were being evaluated? Mr. Howell responded that the consultant team had explored property and sales tax programs, vehicle and registration fees, and analyzed the York County Pennies for Progress program as well. Mr. Howell then explained that the solutions and strategies were evaluated across six key factors during the process: safety, mode choice, land use, travel efficiency, equity, and regional impact. Mr. Howell added that the solutions and strategies are also being evaluated in terms of short and long term impacts. Discussion then followed

regarding the solutions and strategies being considered and the potential timeline for implementation. Mr. Howell then outlined next steps for this process, noting that recommendations will be finalized over the summer and final presentations are expected to be made in September 2021.

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

**a. FY 21-22 CMAQ Program** – Mr. Herrmann briefly reviewed the CMAQ Program, noting that \$2M in CMAQ funding was available this year. Mr. Herrmann then explained that multiple applications were submitted requesting more than the available funding. Mr. Herrmann gave a brief summary of a joint application submitted by York County and the Town of Fort Mill for the Whites Road Sidewalk Project. Mr. Herrmann highlighted that the application is requesting \$620,105 in federal CMAQ funding and provides a local match of \$192,400. Mr. Herrmann then gave a brief summary of the application submitted by the City of Tega Cay for the New Gray Rock Road Multi-Purpose Trail Project. Mr. Herrmann highlighted that the application is requesting \$1,672,000 in federal CMAQ funding and provides a local match of \$418,000. Mr. Herrmann next gave a brief summary of the application submitted by the City of Rock Hill for the Downtown Traffic Management Project. Mr. Herrmann highlighted that the application is requesting \$1,015,993 in federal CMAQ funding and provides a local match of \$596,598.

Mr. Herrmann then explained that the recommendation from the CMAQ Sub-Committee was to approve the request for the City of Rock Hill project and the Town of Fort Mill project for CMAQ funding. Mr. Herrmann noted that the Sub-Committee also recommended funding the City of Tega Cay project with federal Guideshare funding. Mr. Gettys then made a motion to allocate \$2,090,000 in Guideshare funding for the City of Tega Cay project; \$620,105 in CMAQ funding for the York County / Town of Fort Mill project; and \$1,015,993 in CMAQ funding for the City of Rock Hill project. This motion was seconded by Mr. O'Neal and was unanimously approved.

**b. FY 21-22 Transportation Alternatives Program** – Mr. Herrmann briefly reviewed the Transportation Alternatives Program and the application submitted by the City of Rock Hill for the Jack White Trail Extension Project. Mr. Herrmann highlighted that the application is requesting the full allocation of TAP funds for FY 21-22 as well as Guideshare funding. Mr. Herrmann then noted that the application has been reviewed by the TAP Sub-Committee and is being forwarded for full consideration by the Policy Committee. Mr. Herrmann then requested preliminary approval of the TIP Amendment to reflect \$112,987 in federal TAP funding and \$183,766 in Guideshare funding; also requesting authorization to initiate a 21-day public comment period. Mr. O'Neal then made a motion for approval; seconded by Mr. Audette and the motion was unanimously approved.

**c. 2045 LRTP & FY 21-27 TIP Amendment** – Mr. Hooper briefly noted that as part of Transportation Performance Management Requirements, transit providers are required to coordinate with MPOs on establishing transit safety targets. Mr. Hooper noted that this has been completed, and the LRTP and TIP needed to be amended to reflect these performance targets. Mr. Hooper then requested that the Policy Committee grant preliminary approval of this action and authorization of a 30-day public comment period. Mr. Gettys then made a motion for approval; seconded by Mr. Audette and the motion was unanimously approved.

**d. Metrolina Regional Model Maintenance Agreement** – Mr. Hooper briefly noted that RFATS is partner to a regional travel demand model maintenance agreement, and it is time to update the project planning period and budget supporting upcoming work efforts. Mr. Hooper then requested approval of the updated agreement with the City of Charlotte. Mr. Gettys then made a motion for approval; seconded by Mr. Audette and the motion was unanimously approved.

**5. OTHER BUSINESS:**

**a. Next Meeting** – Mr. O’Neal noted that the next Policy Committee meeting is scheduled for June 25, 2021.

**6. ADJOURNMENT:**

The motion to adjourn was made by Mr. O’Neal and seconded by Mr. Audette; the motion was unanimously approved and the meeting was adjourned at 1:45 P.M.