

MECKLENBURG-UNION METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center Conference Room 267
May 20, 2009
Summary Minutes

Members Attending:

Anthony Foxx (Charlotte), Jim Bensman (Cornelius), Brian Jenest (Davidson), Brian Sisson (Huntersville), John Quinn (Indian Trail), Lee Myers (Matthews), Dumont Clarke (Mecklenburg County), Ted Biggers (Mint Hill), Bob Smith (Monroe), Jim Eschert (Pineville), Lynda Paxton (Stallings), Tracy Kuehler (Union County), Daune Gardner (Waxhaw), Nancy Anderson (Weddington), Brad Horvath (Wesley Chapel), Bill Braswell (Wingate), Marion Cowell (NC Board of Transportation), Mark DiBiasio (Union County Planning Board)

1. Call to Order

Chairman Myers called the May 2009 MUMPO meeting to order at 7:05 PM. The Chairman moved the I-485 item to the top of the agenda.

2. I-485 Funding Plan

Summary:

NCDOT Secretary Eugene Conti was present to discuss I-485. He began his remarks by stating that right-of-way (ROW) acquisition on I-485 would begin in the summer of 2009. Mr. Conti's comments then moved to a discussion of Governor Perdue's February announcement that construction would begin later this year on the final segment of I-485, despite it not being programmed in the TIP until 2015. He acknowledged that no formal funding plan had been prepared by NCDOT and that no new money was available, therefore, if the Governor's schedule is to be met, funding from an existing project(s) would have to be used and he suggested the following projects as potential sources: I-85 widening in Cabarrus County; Independence Boulevard widening from Albemarle Road to Conference Drive (U-209B); Monroe Connector/Bypass.

Following Mr. Conti's remarks, MPO members posed questions and made comments. Mr. Sisson asked about the state's loop priorities. Mr. Conti replied that there was no prioritization process in place for loop projects, but that one was being developed. Mr. Sisson then stated that the three projects identified by Mr. Conti were regionally significant, and then asked Mr. Conti if he expected the MPO to determine which of those regionally significant projects was our most important. Mr. Conti replied that if the MPO tells NCDOT that I-485 is its top priority, NCDOT needs to figure out a way to make it its priority. Tracy Kuehler asked why the Monroe Connector/Bypass was suggested as a funding source since its status as toll road makes it different from the other two projects. Mr. Conti answered that the TIP funds may not be needed to build the project since the General Assembly approved project gap funding. Vice-Chairman Foxx stated that none of the three projects were projects the MPO wanted to take funds from, but that does not mean I-485 is not a priority. He added that he was disappointed that no funding plan had been provided by NCDOT and that he would prefer to see funds gathered on a statewide basis instead of delaying a local project. Chairman Myers voiced concerns with using funds from equity formula projects on a loop project, and asked what happens to the loop funds promised for the I-485 project if equity funds are directed to it. Mr. Conti promised to obtain an answer to this question.

3. Approval of Minutes

Summary:

Chairman Myers asked if the MPO members had had a chance to review the March minutes.

Motion:

The March minutes were approved by acclamation.

4. Citizen Comment Period

Summary:

The following individuals addressed the MPO:

1. Charles Strickland addressed the MPO and thanked Secretary Conti for starting ROW acquisition on I-485.
2. Kim Bueh asked questions about when I-485 ROW acquisition would start.
3. Charlotte City Council member Nancy Carter stated that, when deliberating the I-485 topic, air quality, congestion and safety all must be given strong consideration. Council member Carter also emphasized the importance of Independence Boulevard.

5. Long-Range Transportation Plan – Financial Assumptions

Presenter:

Andy Grzymiski, CDOT

Summary:

Mr. Grzymiski reviewed assumptions that will go into the development of MUMPO's updated LRTP. The assumptions were included in a Power Point presentation and are included in these minutes by reference. (Contact the MUMPO secretary if you wish to obtain a copy of the presentation.)

Mr. Clarke asked why an assumption was made that costs would double. Mr. Grzymiski replied that the current effort to update project costs is indicating that that is what has occurred. Bob Smith requested that the NCTA confirm its figures for staff. Mr. Grzymiski concluded his presentation by noting that the TCC reviewed the assumptions at its April meeting and unanimously recommended that they be endorsed by the MPO.

Motion:

Mr. Sisson made a motion to endorse the LRTP financial assumptions as presented. Mr. Bensman seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

6. Long-Range Transportation Plan – Status Update

Presenter:

Robert Cook

Summary:

Mr. Cook updated the MPO on the LRTP's status. His presentation reviewed past activities, including public involvement, consultation with regulatory agencies, cost estimate updates, etc. Also discussed were the schedule for proceeding to LRTP adoption in early 2010, with the first major step being the completion of the project ranking list and its presentation to the TCC and MPO in July.

7. Monroe Connector/Bypass

Presenter:

Reid Simons, NCTA

Summary:

This item was not on the agenda; however, Reid Simons of the NCTA was present and briefly updated the MPO on the project. She stated that the public meetings to receive comment on the draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) and recommended alternative were underway and that the turnout had been strong. Ms. Simons also noted that the project would require some of the TIP funds mentioned previously in the meeting during the discussion of methods to advance the I-485 project.

8. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 7:57 PM.