


NRPC APPROVED MINUTES
NRPC TRANSPORTATION TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
12/13/17

Members Present:

Gordon Leedy, Town of Amherst	Sarah Marchant, City of Nashua
George Thebarga, Town of Hudson	Joe Mendola, City of Nashua
Mark Chamberlain, Town of Lyndeborough	Jeff Gowan, Town of Pelham
Dawn Tuomala, Town of Merrimack	Camille Pattison, Nashua Transit
Julie Chizmas, City of Nashua	Jeff Gowan, Town of Pelham
Wayne Husband, City of Nashua	

Others Present

Suzanne Fournier, Brox Environmental Citizens	Leigh Levine, FHWA
Linda Dusenberry, NHDOT	Lucy St. John, NHDOT
Sylvia von Aulock	

STAFF PRESENT

Jay Minkarah, Executive Director	Jen Czysz, Assistant Director
Gregg Lantos, Principal Transportation Planner/MPO Coord.	Matt Waitkins, Senior Transportation Planner
Sara Siskavich, GIS Manager	Ryan Friedman, Senior GIS Planner
Karen Baker, Program Assistant	

CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

Czysz opened the meeting at 12:03pm on one of Nashua Transit System's (NTS) new CNG buses, asking all aboard to introduce themselves. She passed the floor to Pattison who provided a handout and brief overview of the process that NTS took to acquire their new fleet of buses. Pattison noted that the old fleet is 15 years old and has between 550,000 to 600,000 miles on it. She noted that the process has been in the works for about 2 years to purchase a new fleet. Pattison stated that the busses are made in Livermore, CA and are actually driven out here south through Bakersfield and take about a week to arrive. Once they arrive, they have to be prepped and inspected and take about 6 weeks to roll out. Pattison noted that they have 4 in service so far and the remainder will be out by the end of the year. She introduced Ray Blethen to review the safety features of the buses.

Blethen stated that when the process started about 2 years ago, they had to decide if they wanted to build the buses for 2017 or 2030. They felt it was important to plan ahead and decided to build for 2030. The focus was on safety and customer service. He reviewed some of the safety features:

- Wheelchair Tie Downs: 20-30 seconds to load a wheelchair
- Yellow Wheelchair Symbol
- Ramp for loading wheelchairs with least pitch available for off/on loading
- Security Cameras on the inside and outside on the mirrors for blind spots
- Backup Cameras
- Strobes on side of bus to prevent mirrors from getting clipped
- Yield sign on back of bus and Stop sign on front of bus
- Mobile Eye detection system with warnings on following distance, potential hazards and bikes and pedestrians (reaction time). 6 seconds is the limit; buses set for 2 seconds
- Annunciation System (Title 6 –ADA) for announcements both inside and out of the bus for major stops, in English and Spanish, and for driver focus and safety. Customer service and safety announcements will also be incorporated in as well as other languages as needed.

Blethen took the TTAC members for a quick bus ride through Merrimack and brought members back to the NRPC office.

MEET GREGG LANTOS, NRPC'S NEW MPO COORDINATOR

Czys introduced and welcomed Gregg Lantos as NRPC's new Principal Transportation Planner/MPO Coordinator. Lantos provided a brief background himself, noting that he was a second timer with the NRPC and back then it was mostly big highway projects. He added that most recently he had been with the Boston MPO for 18 years where he was involved in traffic model development and application of the model to project analysis.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE OCTOBER 11, 2017 MEETING

Czys referred to the minutes of October 11, 2017 included in the agenda packet as Attachment 1. She asked if there were any corrections. Thebarga referred to the 1st page under the "Call to Order and Introductions" bullet starting with *Thebarga*, and noted that it should read: "The Circumferential Highway.....**but he has heard estimates ranging from 30 million to 300 million** to connect the Sagamore". Gowan motioned with a second from Husband to approve the minutes as amended. All were in favor and the motion passed with 3 abstentions from Chamberlain, Chizmas, and Leedy.

MPO PERFORMANCE MEASURES (ACTION ITEM)

Waitkins reviewed the MPO Performance Measures with the group. He provided a brief background stating that on March 15th, 2016 the Federal Highway Administration published the final rule on the Highway Safety Improvement Program that requires State DOTs and MPOs to establish targets for each of five Safety Performance Measures (SPMs). NHDOT was required to adopt targets by August 31, 2017 and MPO's are required to adopt targets within 6 months of NHDOT (by February 27, 2018). For the first year, FHWA recommended that MPOs adopt the statewide targets in the first year.

Waitkins explained that Safety Performance Measures are:

- number of fatalities
- rate of fatalities per 100 million VMT
- number of serious injuries.
- rate of serious injuries per 100 million VMT.
- number of non-motorized fatalities and serious injurie

Waitkins summarized target development informing the group that States establish HSIP targets and report them for the upcoming calendar year. Targets apply to all public roads and must be identical to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) Highway Safety grant program. He noted that in NH, the annual Highway Safety Plan process formed the basis for establishing these targets with coordination between NHDOT and the 4 MPOs, using currently available data and calculated using a 5 year rolling average and projected values for 2018.

Waitkins stated that as part of the target adoption for 2018, the MPO agrees to support the State of NH HSIP targets in all mandated areas which include:

- Work with stakeholders to address areas of concern for fatalities or serious injuries within the MPO area.
- Coordinate with the State to include the SPM and targets for all public roads in the MTP.
- Integrate the safety goals, objectives, performance measures and targets described in other plans into the MTP.

- Include a description in the TIP of how the safety targets will be achieved.

Lastly, Waitkins showed the Statewide Target Summary. Thebarga questioned the rate for serious injuries, observing that it appeared to be a downward trend, what was meant by target and what do you do to achieve the target. Siskavich said that it would appear that the rates are based on the historic trend. Lantos added that they appear to be aggregate measures for targets and it should be done at the highway level. He noted that there is a lot of number crunching and that he would also like to have target rates for the improvements. Lantos added that the focus is just on injuries and accidents, but he would like to expand the data analysis put forth by the State. Husband felt that local intersections should also be included. Lantos explained the two types adding that we already know where the high accident areas are. Chizmas noted that the 5% report shows the top intersections but there is currently no ability by DOT to run any analysis. She added that the data is evolving and getting better and there is more accuracy as the data gets better. Czysz stated that we are looking to establish a baseline to meet the federal requirements, adding that this can all be firmed up in the future. Chizmas noted that in the individual MTP's and TIP's the targets will be more regional. . Mendola asked how the fatality rate by 100,000 miles is measured. Chizmas said it comes from the HPMS submittal of traffic counts and statewide reports done for all roads.

Waitkins stated that action was required from the TTAC to recommend that the NRPC Policy Committee adopt the NH DOT Safety Performance Targets as the Nashua MPO targets for 2018. Chamberlain motioned with a second from Gowan that TTAC recommend the NRPC Policy Committee adopt the NH DOT Safety Performance Targets as the Nashua MPO targets for 2018. All were in favor.

TIP/MTP AMENDMENT 3 (ACTION ITEM)

Czysz informed the TTAC about TIP Amendment #3 to the adopted Nashua Metropolitan Area 2017 – 2020 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). She stated that NRPC is amending the TIP to account for changes to projects within the Nashua Region and to maintain consistency with the Statewide TIP (STIP). The NRPC is also updating the 2017 – 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) project list and fiscal constraint analysis to maintain consistency with the amended TIP project list. NRPC staff has reviewed this amendment in consultation with the NH DOT, NH DES, US EPA, FHWA, FTA and representatives of the MPOs, and recommends approving the proposed changes in this amendment. Regional projects are as follows:

- **Bedford -Merrimack 16100:** Improvements to the Bedford Tolls to implement Open Road Tolling (Turnpike Capital Program), moving construction funds in FYs 17 & 18 to FYs 19 & 20 and increasing construction funds due to need for greater rehab and addition of Traffic Management System
- **Brookline 40662:** Construction of SB left turn lane from NH13 onto Old Milford Rd; bringing into TIP because PE moving from FY23 to FYs 20 & 21 (Estimate shows ROW moving from FY25 to FY23) Construction still in FY26
- **Nashua-Concord 29408:** ITS Deployment on the FE Everett Turnpike: Decreasing FY17 construction funds & adding in FYs 18 & 19 and increasing construction funds because proposals higher than estimated
- **Nashua-Merrimack-Bedford-Manchester 13761:** FE Everett Turnpike widening of 2-lane sections from Exit 8 (Nashua) to north of I-293 (Manchester), increasing PE in FYs 18 – 20 (culvert and bridge issues) and removing ROW in FY18 and decreasing in FY19 (more refined layout)
- **Wilton-Milford-Amherst-Bedford 13692:** Corridor improvements from NH 31 in Wilton to Wallace Rd in Bedford, removal of project from the TIP and funds to be moved to individual child projects
- **Wilton-Milford-Amherst-Bedford 13692D:** Traffic and safety improvements consistent with the intent of the 2002 corridor study; adding PE in FYs 18 & 19 and adding ROW in FY19 with estimate showing construction in FY2021.

Czys summarized the various statewide projects as well and stated that NRPC placed a legal notice in the Nashua Telegraph and on the NRPC website. Public comments were accepted through December 13, 2017. The amendment is fiscally constrained and meets applicable conformity requirements and there will be a public hearing will be held on Wednesday, December 20th @ 7 pm at the NRPC Office. Public comments are as follows:

- Tad Putney, Brookline Town Administrator: Given the small scale of Brookline Project #40662, Route 13 southbound left turn lane onto Old Milford Road project, is there any possibility of also advancing the construction phase of the project?

Czys also noted that there was public comment not related to TIP Amendment #3 from a Maurice Bechard of Nashua suggesting that the “scope of Project 10136 be extended to evaluate the traffic congestion impact and feasibility of completing the connection of Deerwood Drive to Perimeter Road in Nashua as such a connection may relieve congestion on NH101A from Somerset Parkway to Charron Avenue”.

Leedy asked for clarification on the 101 project. Chizmas commented that it did not involve widening and only spot improvements. Marchant motioned with a second from Leedy that the TTAC recommend approval by the Commission on TIP Amendment #3 with the caveat that Putney’s comment be followed up with NHDOT. All were in favor.

December Minor Revisions

Czys informed the TTAC of the December minor revisions, adding that she had reached out to all municipalities involved.

- **Amherst (10136C):** Removal of Signals from Construction Estimate: -\$422,703
- **Nashua (10136A):** Widening of 101A Sunapee St-Blackstone Dr., delayed fiscal years, the agreement is being reviewed then the consultant process takes at least 9 months: -\$7,626
- **Nashua (10136B):** NH 101A Phase II, delayed FYs for consultant selection process: \$0
- **Nashua (16314):** East Hollis St Intersection Improvements, Bridge St from C St to the Hudson Town Line, NEPA delay: -\$70,891
- **SNHPC MPO Projects:** Salem to Manchester (10418T) Corridor service patrol: -\$2,671
- **Statewide Projects:** FTA 5311 (Rural Formula Program): +\$691,857

Leedy asked who made the decision and how was it made regarding the removal of the signal from the Amherst 101a eastbound ramp project. Chizmas stated that it was removed based on input from a public meeting where concern was expressed over the number of signals in the corridor. She added that DOT Project Manager Reczek was asked to consider having the signal built into the design so that it could be added back in if necessary in the future. Czys informed the group that Reczek would be at the December 20th Commission meeting to discuss the Route 101/101a projects. She added that any comments should can be brought to the December meeting or be addressed to Lantos on the 101/101a projects or the minor revision.

CMAQ PROJECT SCORING UPDATE

Czys informed the TTAC that 4 out of the 5 projects submitted for CMAQ funding were selected.

Projects Meeting Proposed Funding Threshold Cutoff:

- Nashua Heritage Rail Trail East
- Nashua Transit System Amherst 101A Expansion
- Pelham Mammoth Rd and Sherburne and Marsh Roads Intersection Improvements
- Hudson Lowell Rd/NH 3A Intersection Improvements

Projects Below the Proposed Funding Threshold Cutoff:

- Milford Nashua Street and Ponemah Hill Road Signalization

Czys noted that we had previously discussed removing the Pelham project from the TYP to allow another project to be advanced since it has been recommended for CMAQ funding, but stated that Pelham would prefer to keep their project in the TYP since the town's CMAQ match has to be approved at Town Meeting and they want it to move forward, one way or another. Gowan stated that if the voters say no, then there is no CMAQ application for us and we will not know this until March when we vote. He added that it is tough to ask voters for \$2million for a state project. Czys asked the TTAC to forward any general comments regarding the DOTs ranking to NRPC, adding that DOT is looking for input. After further discussion, Gowan motioned with a second from Marchant to concur with DOT's ranking of the CMAQ projects. All were in favor.

Chizmas commented on the amazing job done by NRPC staff getting the info and air quality analysis done and into DOT with a short timeframe of just 2 weeks. Thebarga asked if there was any possibility that the Hudson project might get pushed out of the funding area. Czys stated that we would know by the December 20th GACIT meeting if the project would fall below the funding line. Thebarga asked if there was a way to challenge the project scoring with regard to "Stewardship and Sustainability". Czys suggested calling Bill Watson and that noted that all criteria are on the DOT website. There was discussion from Lantos and Chizmas on the 2009 CMAQ round and the air quality analysis and the process taken during that round. Minkarah felt that the NRPC should be consistent in its approach to the DOT scoring, but also reach out to the Executive Councilors on the importance of the Hudson project and to the DOT on why the sustainability scoring was so low.

NHDOT TYP UPDATE AND PROPOSED TOLL INCREASE DISCUSSION

Czys reviewed the changes to the Ten Year Plan and the Proposed TYP Toll Increase.

Changes to the Ten Year Plan

- **Nashua to Manchester:** Capitol Corridor Study (Preliminary Engineering, Environmental Requirements, Financial Plan); Total cost \$4million transferred from Boston UZA (FTA5307) Statewide Programmatic to this new project
- **Milford 41587:** Rehabilitation of Swing Bridge; Advance PE and ROW from 2028 to FY2020; Advance Construction from FY2028 to 2025; Decrease total cost \$66,581 (avoided inflation).
- **Statewide: Flex 25% (\$2.7M/year) of CMAQ to STBG-Flexible for:**
 - Statewide Corridor Study Program (New) \$700,000 per year to fund 2 studies annually from FY 2021 to FY 2028 for a total of \$ 5,600,000;
 - Statewide Sound Wall Program (Type 2 noise policy) (New) \$2,000,000 per year Flexed CMAQ funds (FY 2021 to FY 2028) and TPK funds; \$ 16,000,000.

Leedy asked if this was 100% Federal money. Dusenberry believed it was. Czys agreed but she did not have a breakdown and said it is subject to the Governor and Council vote. Lantos questioned using CMAQ funding for the Sound Wall program. He added that there were comments and concerns at the Concord & Portsmouth TYP hearings due to areas that were supposed to get a sound wall but never did get it. He also questioned whether flexing should occur and asked if we felt it was something we should address due to the potential impacts of diverting non-CMAQ projects. Husband agreed. There was further discussion from Levine and Chizmas on this. Minkarah asked where the \$4million in UZA funds would come from and wondered if the CMAQ funds were not flexed, whether it would lower the black line on the CMAQ scoring sheet. Czys said it was not related. He asked if the flexing will result in projects being less likely to be funded. Czys suggested calling Glenn Davison or Bill Watson at DOT. Husband felt there were more objections and concerns over the Statewide Flexing. Lantos commented that he would hate to lose a project over flexing and would like to know what the potential

implications of the flexing are. Von Aulock felt there was a lot of concern and serious emotional debate on how to fund the Sound Wall and Corridor Studies projects.

Czys proposed a motion for TTAC on the changes to the TYP and the proposed TYP toll increase. Gowan motioned with a second from Leedy that the TTAC supports for the first two amendments but has concerns with #3. Statewide: Flex 25% (2.7M/year) of CMAQ to STBG Flexible without additional information regarding the potential implications of taking away funds from the CMAQ. All were in favor.

TYP Toll Increase Proposal

- New Toll Structure w/ Frequent User Commuter Plan (27% increase); Hookset, Bedford, Hampton ML Plazas - \$0.50 increase, commercial toll \$1 increase; Hampton Side, Dover & Rochester ML, Hookset Ramp Plazas - \$0.25 increase, commercial toll \$0.50 increase; Estimated \$36M annual toll revenue per year, 54% out of state travelers.

Anticipated Benefits:

- Increased revenue for Capital Investment and Acceleration of Major Projects; Removal of FEET Exit 10 and 11 Ramp Tolls in Merrimack; Acceleration of FEET Widening between Exit 8 & Bedford tolls, Construction complete in 2023 instead of 2026; Funding for Type II Soundwall Program (\$4M/year); Transportation Demand Management Program (\$3M/year); Extension of Turnpike to Merrimack River Bridges in Concord completes entire Bow-Concord with Project Turnpike funds by 2027 and frees up over \$210M of Fed funds to be used for Red List Bridges and Highway Projects.

Marchant stated that Nashua was not taking a position on the proposed toll increase and were neither for nor against it, but were in favor of safety improvements on the Turnpike. Lantos questioned if diversion and trip generation were taken into account when the revenue analysis was done. He added that he also heard there was a 25% reduction in accidents as a result of the last widening. Chizmas noted that from 2006-2015 there was a higher crash rate in the segment of the Turnpike proposed to widen when compared to other areas. Marchant felt that as a region, we should show some type of support, noting that you are just making a recommendation to have the Commissioners vote on it. Gowan motioned with a second from Chamberlain that the TTAC recommend approval by the Commission on proposed TYP Toll Increase and the anticipated benefits and safety of the transportation system. All were in favor.

TMA PROGRAMMING PROCESS DRAFT UPDATE

Czys stated that at the February 2017 TTAC meeting, staff provided an overview of the proposed Transportation Management Area (TMA) Programming Authority Process and its effect on the NRPC region. Since that time, discussions have continued between Southern NH Regional Planning Commission (SNHPC) staff, NRPC staff, and NHDOT staff with respect to implementing a TMA programming authority process. The discussions resulted in some refinements to the proposed process. She referred to the *draft Nashua UZA TMA Programming Authority Process* document included in the agenda packet. She provided a brief presentation to the TTAC.

The TMA Programming Authority Process involves 2 States, 4 MPO's, 17 Communities and 226,400 people and includes portions Amherst, Hollis, Hudson, Litchfield, Merrimack, Milford, Mont Vernon, Nashua, Pelham and Wilton. An urbanized area with a population over 200,000 automatically becomes a federally-designated Transportation Management Area (TMA). Under federal transportation regulation the MPO has the authority to prioritize and program projects into the regional Transportation Improvement Program through sub-allocation of Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) funds for all projects on non-NHS Federal-aid eligible roads. Massachusetts' STBG allocation is not part of the NRPC/SNHPC TMA. DOT then is supposed to compile the

regions TIPs into a Statewide Transportation Improvement Program, but in NH we have the Ten Year Plan which while, well intentioned differs from the federal process. Czysz noted that the draft NRPC/SNHPC TMA Agreement was set up with the Nashua MPO as the lead agency, SNHPC as the coordinating agency and DOT as the consulting agency with committee itself consisting of 1 representative from each of the 14 TMA towns and include 1 representative each from NHDOT, FHWA, FTA, and the public transit provider. TMA Committee duties would include:

- Determining emphasis areas for transportation investments
- Soliciting TIP projects from TMA municipalities, transit providers and NHDOT
- Evaluating and prioritizing TIP projects
- Selecting and programming TIP projects in consultation with NHDOT

Matching Funds Sources would include:

- NHDOT: State roads (Class I, II, III)
- TMA Municipalities: City/Town Roads (Class IV, V)
- Public Transportation Providers: Local transit projects
- NHDOT: Statewide transit projects

Czysz provided a timeframe for this to happen as follows:

- **Fall/Winter 2017:** Finalize Process with input from NRPC & SNHPC TACs and Policy Committees, NHDOT & FHWA/FTA
- **Winter/Spring 2018:** Establish and convene TMA Committee, adopt TMA By-laws
- **Spring/Summer 2018:** Define emphasis areas and review/confirm project evaluation criteria
- **Summer/Fall 2018:** Solicit, evaluate and prioritize TMA projects for the 19–22 TIP and Select and program 19-22 TIP Projects in consultation with NHDOT

Czysz noted that SNHPC is soliciting comments from their Commission. Gowan asked if Pelham was included. Chizmas pointed out that there was a small piece of Mammoth Road in the Nashua UZA even though Pelham is part of the Boston UZA. Minkarah stated that no action is required at this time; we are just looking for input. Lantos asked if there was a model out there somewhere for the proposed structure. Chizmas said no, that former Director Roache and Miller worked on this, though they did look at other TMA docs out there. Thebarga asked if NRPC was looking for additional input to what is already in the document. Czysz said yes. He then asked if the same representatives on the TTAC could be on the TMA subcommittee. Czysz said it was likely, but that they would need to be appointed by the town governing bodies. Marchant commented that other committees are based on population; shouldn't that be the same for this new committee? There was some discussion between Lantos, Chizmas, Marchant, and Levine. Czysz suggested the group email their comments to Lantos and talk to your Commissioners so they can submit comments at the December 20th Commission meeting.

St. John reminded the group of the GACIT Public Hearing in Manchester that evening. Minkarah said it would be helpful to have participation at the hearing. Czysz informed the group that Lantos would be running the next TTAC meeting and he would preview the MTP with the group, St. John would have a presentation and there would be further discussion on the TMA.

ADJOURN

Motion to adjourn came from Gowan with a second from Chamberlain. The meeting ended at 2:00pm.