

 **NRPC APPROVED MINUTES**  
**NRPC TRANSPORTATION TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**09/14/16**

**Members Present:**

Tad Putney, Town of Brookline	Steve Dookran, City of Nashua
Troy Brown, Town of Litchfield	Manny Espitia, City of Nashua Mayor's Office
Tom Young, Town of Litchfield	Wayne Husband, City of Nashua
Kyle Fox, Town of Merrimack	Camille Pattison, Nashua Transit System
Dawn Tuomala, Town of Merrimack	James Vayo, Downtown Specialist-City of Nashua
	Jeff Gowan, Town of Pelham

**Others Present**

Suzanne Fournier, Milford-Brox Environmental Citizens  
Carol Macuch, NHDOT  
Tim White, NHDES

**STAFF PRESENT**

Tim Roache, Executive Director	Matt Waitkins, Field Data/Transportation Planner
Julie Chizmas, Senior Transportation Planner	Karen Baker, Program Assistant

**CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Chizmas opened the meeting at 12:15pm with introductions.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE JULY 13, 2016**

Chizmas referred to the minutes of July 13, 2016 included in the agenda packet as attachment 1 and informed the group that they could not be approved at this time due to the lack of a quorum.

**TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT AREA PROGRAMMING AUTHORITY (TMA)**

Chizmas explained what a TMA is and how it relates to the NRPC Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO): A TMA is an urbanized area with a population over 200,000, as defined by the Census and this happen after the 2010 Census. The Nashua MPO implements the metropolitan planning process for the Nashua Urbanized Area (UZA). Per the Federal rules (23 CFR §450.332(c)), the Nashua MPO has the authority as a TMA to select and program projects within the UZA in consultation with the communities within the TMA (which includes four Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission communities), state DOT and public transportation operators.

TMA's undergo a Certification Review by the FHWA and FTA every 4 years and in November 2015, the first official TMA Certification Review was conducted. The Review found the Nashua UZA's planning process is substantially compliant with federal regulations, but there was a Corrective Action directed to NHDOT and the Nashua MPO with respect to the TMA programming authority.

Roache further explained the urbanized area and how it does not include on 13 NRPC communities, and includes 4 municipalities in the Southern NH Regional Planning Commission (SNRPC) area. He also informed the group of the FFY2016 apportionment of approximately \$3,500,000 that could be sub-allocated to the Nashua MPO for programming as part of FHWA's Surface Transportation Block Grant Program.

Roache noted that to date, the Nashua MPO has not exercised this programming authority and that he was hoping to form an MPO TMA subcommittee or Policy committee with a primary charge of working with NRPC, SHRPC, DOT and public transportation operators in the UZA (NTS and CART), the Nashua MPO UZA towns (Amherst, Hollis, Hudson, Litchfield, Merrimack, Milford, Mont Vernon, Nashua, Pelham and Wilton),

and the Southern NH MPO UZA towns (Windham, Derry, Londonderry and Auburn) to prioritize projects into the TIP that are ready to move in the next 2-4 years. He also informed TTAC of an idea which he would push to DOT, to treat the 3.5mil as programmatic funds, similar to CMAQ or TAP funds, as a way to get the projects into the TIP. He felt this would be a real value by actually getting projects done. He asked the group for their thoughts.

Gowan said that if Pelham is in the Boston UZA, does that mean there is no programming authority for Pelham. Roache said he was not going to say no yet and wanted to have more discussion on the UZA over the next 20 years because it is census based and he knows that the population will change.

Chizmas added that we are not sure what the area is going to look like after the 2020 Census, adding that the boundaries are pretty evident between Nashua and Manchester.

Husband referred to the Exit 5 project which has a safety benefit, have already coordinated with NHDOT on it and everyone has agreed; if this is the type of project Roache was talking about. Roache said that part of the details is that it needs to be ready and eligible (non NHS roads). He added that it is a good opportunity for existing and new projects. Macuch said that the Exit 5 project would not full under programmatic but if there is a program for it, the project can be put into that category. Roache commented that it could potentially, if it was eligible, and that you could put money to design if it was ready to go and is already a priority.

Putney asked if the 3.5mil was every year. Roache said it was his understanding that it is every year. Chizmas elaborated on this adding that it is all relative to population and goes up a little every year (2% from FAST Act). Roache added that this is what MPO's have been wanting for years; to identify ready to go priorities and kept out of the political frame. He added that he would be getting everyone up to speed at the Sept. 21 Commission meeting.

Pattison asked if there was a timeframe with DOT and if they were resistant. Roache said they were not and this is part of what they have to do. He felt that the timeframe was reasonably with the next TIP update. He added that the details will be worked out on how to get folks from Auburn, Derry, Londonderry & Windham. He added that the money was for the whole UZA except MA when asked by a TTAC member. There was further discussion amongst the group on how to address the corrective action, the 3.5 mil and getting more weight out of the programming.

### **2018-2019 UPWP UPDATE**

The Unified Planning Work Program is intended to document the planning priorities and work tasks that the Nashua MPO will undertake in the 2-year UPWP period. NRPC is actively working with NHDOT on the 2018 – 2019 UPWP and are seeking TTAC input on how to structure the Program to best serve the needs of the Nashua Region. Chizmas noted that the NRPC UPWP is essentially a document outlining how we spend our planning dollars. Roache said it is sort of a scope of work or a strong guideline for what we do with DOT funds.

Roache posed the question if they should for this UPWP take a corridor based approach, similar to how Southwest RPC does there UPWP. He added that we have to take it upon ourselves to get information into the scope. Roache referred to the Local Technical Assistance piece of the UPWP and asked the group what they need and that now is the time to let him know so it can be included in the UPWP. White asked if for the review cycle on the UPWP if the Household Travel Survey is used. Roache said that is 15 years old and that he uses model based assumptions from more than 15 years ago which need to be updated and captured. Husband commented that they need more Synchro training or funding for local training.

Roache asked the group if they have any problem areas in their communities which need to be addressed. Brown commented that Cutler Road and Rte. 102 and Page Road are issues in Litchfield. Young commented on the 2 speed limit signs (1 just put in for 35mph & one existing for 40mph) coming into Litchfield on 3A, in an area where there is a near crash at least once a week.

Vayo commented on a challenge in the City with existing roadway infrastructure beyond what development can support and finding a way to identify a funding mechanism for it. Roache said that NRPC could provide data with growth scenarios for the community, but not for a developer.

Fournier had concerns with future traffic congestion issues with the new CVS going into Milford, close to downtown in an area that has existing high traffic congestion but does not meet the LOS requirements to justify a signal.

Roache asked the group to think about local technical assistance needs and transit needs. Dookran commented that NRPC does public relations well and that we should expand on that. He added that NRPC takes an objective view when involved with a project. Roached asked the group to send their ideas and that NRPC would be presenting a draft in January to DOT. He added that he would be bringing the draft UPWP back to the group 2-3 more times and to the full Commission

#### **TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) AND THE METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN (MTP) UPDATE**

Chizmas noted that it was anticipated that a draft TIP would be ready for a recommendation at this September meeting, however that was delayed at the State level but as indicated on the TTAC agenda, she had a draft MTP project list which she proceeded to distribute. She asked TTAC members to take the project list back to their communities for confirmation that the projects in the MTP, especially the older ones that have not moved forward after several update cycles and are still priorities. She also asked that the scopes, estimates and timeframes be updated as necessary.

Chizmas proceeded with a presentation on the MTP, TIP, Ten Year Plan (TYP) process and reviewed each project asking the community representative, if present, if they were aware of the status of the project and if it was still a priority for the municipality and worthy to advance to the TIP and TYP.

**Hudson - Litchfield - Merrimack – Nashua: US3/NH 3A (ID LRTP4): Construct a northern crossing of the Merrimack River:** 2017 TYP Ranked as 29 out of 32 - Identified as a top priority at the Transportation Workshop held in Hudson. Chizmas asked the group if this was still a priority and should there be a summit. She added that the project keeps being bumped out for fiscal constraint. Husband felt it was still a priority but there was just so much controversy and the need will not go away. Dookran suggested a public/private partnership but heard it was prohibited. Chizmas did not think that was the case and Macuch did not think that was the case either and referred to the I-93 rest areas. The group felt it should stay in and there was still a need. Chizmas commented that it would have to be bumped to #1, 2 or 3 to have anything happen. Dookran suggested tying it in with the rail corridor.

**Nashua - Manchester - Concord: Capitol Corridor: Establish Passenger rail in New Hampshire:** 2017 TYP Ranking: 7 out of 32 - Identified as Top Priority at Transportation Workshop held in Milford. Espitia commented that it barely made it last time due to a partisan issue and that maybe it would change with elections and new council. Putney asked why there is 50% opposition. Husband said it is considered negative, is not self-sustaining and needs to break even. Chizmas commented on the economic benefits around rail which is often subsidized so there is a lot of opposition. Vayo commented that it could expand downtown so much if there was rail within walking distance. There was further discussion between Espitia,

Vayo, Macuch, and Fournier on coal vs diesel, locations for the train yards and the opposition due to length of time to warm up depending on fuel used, noise and commuter rail engines that run 24/7.

**Nashua - Tyngsborough, Ma: F.E. Everett Turnpike: Addition of southbound off-ramp to Exit 36:** 2017 TYP Ranking: 13 out of 32 - Identified as Top Priority across all Transportation Workshops. Chizmas noted this is a 2 State project with the primary benefit to NH with the bulk of the construction mostly in MA. She referred to the study done and added that you could make it happen, but it did not make the TYP this round.

**Wilton - Milford - Amherst - Bedford: NH 101: Widening of NH 101 between west end of bypass and Bedford town line:** 2017 TYP Ranking: 26 out of 32 - Identified as Top Priority at Transportation Workshop held in Wilton. Chizmas commented that pieces have been implemented, but it is not necessarily the will of the people anymore, but still has safety issues with fatalities. She questioned, do we need flyover ramps as originally scoped? She felt maybe a rescale or re-scope of the project. Husband commented that it has environmental and historic impacts to Bedford and tough one if you don't have the will of the people.

Chizmas quickly summarized projects in Amherst, Hollis, Hudson as there were no representatives present to provide input. She commented that some of those projects can be done by TAP, and would just require an application to start the process.

**Daniel Webster Highway: Intersection improvements at Wire Road** - 2017 TYP Ranking: 15 out of 32  
Chizmas noted that this was a fairly new project and she needed more info and if there was a will of the community. Fox said it is very important to the community.

**F.E. Everett Turnpike: Removal of Exit 11 ramp tolls and reconfiguration of ramps:** - 2017 TYP Ranking: 16 out of 32. Fox felt it could be removed, but the town does not want to take over Continental Blvd.

**NH 101: Construct a new full access interchange from NH 101 (Bypass) to the east of the Perry Road underpass:** 2017 TYP Ranking: 32 out of 32. Fournier commented that there were issues with exits into natural areas.

**Broad Street/NH 130: Broad Street reconstruction from Coburn Avenue to Coliseum Avenue including Dublin Avenue:** 2017 TYP Ranking: 25 out of 32. Dookran commented that is still desired by the City and felt it could be re-scoped.

**Broad Street Parkway: Construct an interchange along the Broad Street Parkway that connects to Franklin Street:** 2017 TYP Ranking: 31 out of 32. Vayo commented that there was no way development can bear the cost of construction and development.

**Downtown Nashua West Gateway: Reconfigure the West Gateway of Downtown to improve traffic flow, reduce speeds and improve pedestrian access:** 2017 TYP Ranking: 28 out of 32. Vayo commented on a property owner that has 100,000 sq. ft. of development if parcel can be made available. He felt it aligned logically and should remain.

**Heritage Rail Trail Corridor East: Construct asphalt bike/ped trail east from Main Street following the former rail line to Temple/East Hollis St to Denton St south to the Crown Street Park 'n Ride:** 2017 TYP Ranking: 17 out of 32.

**Main Street: Reconstruction from Hollis Street to Orchard Avenue:** 2017 TYP Ranking: 8 out of 32. Dookran said this was still a high priority for the City.

**Main Street: Reconstruct the Main Street Railroad Crossing (Hillsborough Branch):** 2017 TYP Ranking: 27 out of 32. Macuch felt this could be utilized by another program through RRCS (money comes out of HSIP).

**FE Everett Turnpike SB Exit 5: Reconfigure SB ramp to connect to the traffic signal on Main Dunstable Road instead of EB West Hollis Street:** 2017 TYP Ranking: 1 out of 32

**Pine Hill Road: Intersection modifications to improve traffic flow and safety concerns at the intersection of Pine Hill Road and Indian Rock Road/Coburn Ave:** 2017 TYP Ranking: 30 out of 32. Husband informed Chizmas that improvements have already been made on this project. Dookran said it could be removed.

**Mammoth Road/NH 128: Intersection improvements at NH 128 (Mammoth Road) and Sherburne Road:** 2017 TYP Ranking: 23 out of 32. Gowan said this was still a priority for Pelham.

Chizmas concluded her review of the projects and informed the group that she would be looking for adoption of the projects at the December meeting.

#### **STAFF UPDATES:**

- 2016 Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) Applications Submitted by:
  - Brookline: Sidewalk and Pedestrian Bridge Construction (\$725,000)
  - Merrimack: Sidewalk Construction (\$650,000)
  - Milford: Pedestrian “Swing Bridge” repair and reconstruction (\$564,500)
  - Nashua: Cantilevered Walkway Construction (\$860,000)
  
- 47 Applications submitted with 5.4 mil to distribute Statewide
- Applicant presentations before the TTAC at **October 12<sup>th</sup>** meeting
- NRPC to review and rank projects and submit to TAP Scoring Committee by **October 28<sup>th</sup>** (Same criteria as in 2014 round and similar to DOT scoring)
- Scoring Committee to rank projects and submit to Commissioner by **December 2<sup>nd</sup>**
- Commissioner to review and approve projects by **December 19<sup>th</sup>** (The DOT Commissioner will make the final approval of TAP awards - not the scoring committee)
- TAP Award letters to be sent out **December 20<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> (LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS TO SIT ON THE NRPC TAP SCORING COMMITTEE)**

Lastly, FREE Pavement Management Quarterly Webinars, hosted by FHWA, AASHTO and TRB Pavement Management Committees with a purpose to provide a forum for education and communication for pavement management practitioners. Kickoff webinar is October 20, 2016 from 2:00 – 3:30 pm. More information, including registration details at: <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/pavement/mana.cfm>

Motion to adjourn came from Putney with a second from Husband. The meeting ended at 1:38pm.