



TOWN OF CARRBORO

NORTH CAROLINA

TRANSMITTAL

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

DELIVERED VIA: ☐ HAND ☒ MAIL ☐ FAX ☒ EMAIL

To: David Andrews, Town Manager
Mayor and Board of Aldermen

From: Tina Moon, Planning Administrator

Date: February 21, 2017

Subject: Comprehensive Transportation Plan

CC: Patricia McGuire, Planning Director

SUMMARY

At the January 17, 2017 Board of Aldermen meeting, Julie Bogle with NCDOT, provided the Board with an overview of the Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) draft Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP). The presentation was designed to give the Board an introduction to the plan in concept and an understanding of its relationship to other transportation documents. Sample excerpts from the plan were shown to illustrate particular segments as examples of the type of information included therein. Board members asked questions and requested an opportunity to finalize comments at a later time. The following memorandum outlines the key points described in the presentation, including answers to Board questions, and provides a draft set of comments for the Board's consideration. Comments may be conveyed to the MPO-Board for inclusion in its deliberations on March 8th by way of the Carrboro Board liaisons or may be conveyed to the MPO and NCDOT via staff. Comments from the Transportation Advisory Board are referenced at the end for information. The formal public comment period is open through February 24th.

REVIEW OF COMPREHENSIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

A quick review of the key aspects of the CTP may be helpful. Mandated by the state for metropolitan planning organizations (MPO) and rural planning organizations (RPO), the Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) is a long-range, multi-modal transportation plan, which unlike the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), is not fiscally constrained. The CTP verifies existing transportation facilities and describes future transportation needs--identifying corridor

designs (cross sections) by segment for different modes of travel, highway, transit, bike and pedestrian. Specific transportation improvement projects are then defined for consideration in the MTP, a twenty-year plan and a federal requirement for MPOs. Projects in the MTP may be submitted for consideration in the ten-year State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) by the various jurisdictions and transit agencies. Inclusion in the STIP and the allocation of funding is determined by a data-driven prioritization process with input from the MPO and NCDOT. NCDOT makes the final decision as to which projects are included in the STIP and the timeline (fiscal year) for funding allocation.

Jurisdictions have used long-range transportation plans as an element of comprehensive planning for determining consistency during the development review process for permit applications and petitions for rezonings. If adopted, the CTP will replace the existing Thoroughfare Plan for this purpose (Attachment D), and staff will bring forward draft text amendments to the Land Use Ordinance to change references to the Thoroughfare Plan to the CTP. (Carrboro uses the Thoroughfare Plan as well as other plans for the purposes described above.) While the CTP includes a narrative section, the formal plan adopted by NCDOT consist of only the maps, five total, separated into the following modes: Highways and Intersections, Bus Transit and Rail, Passenger Rail, Bicycle and Multiuse, and Pedestrian and Multiuse. (The draft CTP maps may be found at: https://connect.ncdot.gov/projects/planning/Pages/CTP-Details.aspx?study_id=Durham-Chapel+Hill-Carrboro.)

BOARD QUESTIONS FROM JANUARY 17TH

- Are unpaved paths eligible for funding? What about the proposed unpaved paths north of Hillsborough?

Orange County submitted a conceptual network of unpaved walking trails as part of its section of the CTP Pedestrian and Multiuse map. These walkways include possible historic paths through rural lands, such as segments of the Trading Path, by Hillsborough (<http://tradingpath.org/>), and narrow “goat” paths running parallel along major rural roads which are sometimes used by pedestrians and could collectively form a network. Both corridor systems were included in the CTP, more for the potential to request easements during development proposals than to seek funding through state and federal sources. Julie Bogle indicated at the meeting, that unpaved paths that are not ADA compliant are ineligible for state funding. Staff is awaiting clarification from NCDOT on the potential to use transportation funds for paths of different surfaces for different purposes, e.g. regional greenways, sidepaths, recreation facilities, etc.

- Does the CTP include, or can it include improved bus travel from Carrboro/Chapel Hill to the airport?

Local residents can currently travel to the airport by bus using a combination of Chapel Hill Transit and GoTriangle services but a transfer is necessary at the GoTriangle hub in RTP to complete the trip. GoTriangle is working on expanding bus service in the region from Carrboro to RDU.

- What is the status of the proposed improvements to NC Hwy 54 west of Carrboro?
During the SPOT 4.0 prioritization process, NCDOT submitted a project to improve NC 54 West from the existing two-lane corridor to a four-lane median divided road based on an anticipated need for increased capacity from Alamance County during peak commuting hours (TIP#H1034374). Carrboro MPO Board representatives requested a corridor study to gain a better understanding of the future capacity needs and the most appropriate improvements to address those needs, such as intersection improvements. The DCHC-MPO Long-Range Planning staff, with input from Carrboro and Orange County staff, advertised a Request for Information (RFI) for the corridor study in October 2016, received eight responses and interviewed two firms in early February 2017. Staff anticipates contract execution within the next two months, with the project getting underway shortly thereafter. The timeline for project completion is approximately one year.
- What is meant by the term “managed lanes” as it relates to the proposal to widen sections of I-40?
The U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration describes managed lanes as highway facilities or a set of lanes where operational strategies are proactively implemented and managed in response to changing conditions, and often where a set of lanes within the freeway cross section is separated from the general purpose lanes. Examples include, high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes, value priced lanes, high-occupancy toll (HOT) lanes, or exclusive or special use lanes. Julie Bogle indicated at the meeting that a specific use for managed lanes on I-40 has not been designated at this time.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Comments from the Transportation Advisory Board are included as a separate attachment (Attachment F). The Board may wish to incorporate TAB comments into the formal recommendations; staff have not.