



Legislation Text

File #: 14-0016, **Version:** 1

TITLE:

Statewide Transportation Improvement Program and STP-DA and TAP Funding

PURPOSE: The Board of Aldermen received information on, and adopted resolutions relating to, the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and Surface Transportation Program-Direct Apportionment (STP-DA) and Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funding, during its November 12 and November 19, 2013, meetings. This item follows up on these topics and requests further action from the Board.

DEPARTMENT: Planning

CONTACT INFORMATION: Jeff Brubaker - 918-7329

INFORMATION: Background agenda items:

- Consent agenda informational item: November 12, 2013 - Link in Attachment B
- Regular item: November 19, 2013 - Link in Attachment C

The Board adopted several resolutions at the November 19, 2013, meeting. In summary, the Board:

- Approved three highway projects to be included in the SPOT process
- Approved four bicycle and pedestrian projects to be included in the SPOT process
- Approved requesting that the MPO transfer STP-DA funding from existing project allocations to the Rogers Road sidewalk project
- Approved a preliminary list of three projects to be considered for STP-DA funding for FY15 and FY16

Since that meeting, the following MPO actions have taken place:

- The MPO Transportation Advisory Committee received SPOT and STP-DA updates at its December 11, 2013, meeting. Residents of S. Greensboro St. provided comments at this meeting in support of a sidewalk on S. Greensboro St.
- The MPO Technical Coordinating Committee (staff-level) met on December 18, 2013, and:
 - recommended that the TAC approve list of highway, bicycle and pedestrian, and rail projects for submission to SPOT 3.0.
 - The list included the three highway projects approved by the Board of Aldermen - which were already in the SPOT database because they had been submitted for previous prioritizations - plus a list of 17 new highway projects that could be submitted, none of which are in Carrboro. It also includes projects near Carrboro on Eubanks Rd. (widen outside lanes), Seawell School Rd. (bike/ped/transit/safety), and Old Greensboro Rd. (add 4-ft. shoulders).

- The bicycle and pedestrian list, a total of 20 projects, included the four Carrboro projects, with the following rankings (abbreviated descriptions used):
 - Morgan Creek Greenway: 1
 - NC-54 Sidepath (James St. to Anderson Park): 5
 - Estes Dr. bike lanes, sidewalk, transit: 6
 - S. Greensboro St. sidewalk: 18
- Since only 20 projects could be submitted to SPOT, but MPO jurisdictions submitted 32 projects total, 12 projects were screened out. (None of the Carrboro projects were screened out.) However, any bicycle and pedestrian projects could still be submitted by the NCDOT Division office.
- Be aware that it is very unlikely that more than a small number of these projects, at most, will be scheduled for construction, due to limited funding and statutory restrictions on bicycle and pedestrian project selection.
- No rail projects were submitted within Carrboro. More information can be provided at the meeting if Board members have questions about these projects.
 - recommended approval of revisions to MPO Policy #3: Policy Framework for DCHC MPO Federal Funds, including revisions setting the parameters for the next STP-DA Call for Projects.
- The MPO TAC met on January 8, 2014, approving the highway and bicycle/pedestrian lists with some changes, and approving the MPO Policy #3 revisions. In February, the TAC will take up the current STP-DA funding amendment and may approve, or progress toward the approval of, the funding for the FY 15 and FY 16 projects.
- The TCC met on January 22, discussing further the SPOT 3.0 list, recommending a list of rail projects for TAC approval, and referring STP-DA / TAP funding to a TCC subcommittee.

With the upcoming MPO actions, and MPO staff preferring to receive specifics on STP-DA / TAP projects by January 29, the Board has the opportunity to provide further direction on FY15 and 16 STP-DA / TAP projects. The Board's preliminary list adopted on November 19, 2013, included three projects:

- S. Greensboro St. - north end of Old Pittsboro Rd. to Public Works Driveway - construct sidewalk on the west side of the road
- Morgan Creek Greenway - provide additional funding for the construction of the greenway. [Future needs include design of Phases 3 and 4 and construction of Phases 2, 3, and 4.]
- Jones Creek Greenway - provide additional funding for the construction of the greenway, extending the Twin Creeks Greenway south and west (supplementing currently allocated Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality funds) as planned for Phase 2 of the Bolin Creek Greenway

Expected STP-DA and TAP funding levels for FY 15 and FY 16 - combined - are based on the parameters in MPO Policy #3 (Attachment D). Specifically:

- The Town is projected to receive \$479,361 in the Local Discretionary category for FY15 and FY16 combined.
- \$2,976,863 is projected to be available to the MPO in the Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Category for FY 15 and FY 16 combined. This category applies to projects of regional scale that span or connect multiple jurisdictions, with a minimum construction cost of \$1,000,000. All TAP funding is applied to this category. Since TAP funding is federally required to be distributed through a competitive process, funds are allocated from the Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Category through the competitive process

described on p. 5 of Policy #3. A Morgan Creek Greenway project that includes the development of segments of the greenway in both Carrboro and Chapel Hill, and costs over \$1,000,000 total, would be eligible to utilize this funding category. Additionally, if a preliminary-engineering-only phase is proposed, the funding amount could be less than \$1,000,000.

- The funding for the Local Discretionary and Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian projects can be distributed in any manner over the two fiscal years. For example, it could be frontloaded in FY 15 or backloaded in FY 16 depending on the recipient's expected project schedule.
- The Transit category is available for funding Chapel Hill Transit and DATA capital projects.
- The Special Requests category is available for MPO members, such as the counties and Triangle Transit, who do not otherwise have a sub-allocation, like the municipalities do for Local Discretionary.
- Staff and Routine Planning and Extra Planning categories are allocated through the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) process.

Considering together the November 19 list and Policy #3, the strategy in the table in Attachment G is offered for applying STP-DA and TAP funding to the Board's stated needs.

Given the limits on Local Discretionary funding compared with the cost estimate for the entire length of the S. Greensboro St. sidewalk (\$1,051,300), it is necessary, absent another significant funding source, to phase the construction; the northern segment, between the two Old Pittsboro intersections, is proposed here as the first phase, to be constructed in 2016.

Seeking additional funding for the Morgan Creek Greenway attempts to respond to Board priorities (March 16, 2010 - concept plan approval) and Greenways Commission discussions about pursuing additional funding for the Morgan Creek Greenway. It is noted that for most additional federal transportation funding, the Board should be prepared to make a local commitment, unless external (private, other public) funding can be identified.

Given the current Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funding already available for the area of the Jones Creek Greenway (Bolin Creek Greenway Phase 2), providing Twin Creeks Greenway access to northern neighborhoods, it is not shown as receiving additional STP-DA funding in these two fiscal years. However, future STP-DA allocations or other funding could serve to extend the greenway along the full length of Bolin Creek Greenway Phase 2.

SPOT 3.0

The following lists of projects were voted on by the TAC at their January 8, 2014, meeting. Keep in mind some smaller changes were made to the lists, but the minutes of the meeting have not yet been approved.

- Highway: Attachment E
- Bicycle and Pedestrian: Attachment F

Recall that the projects will be / are being evaluated by both NCDOT and the MPO. It still remains to be seen how the projects will fare in final SPOT rankings, and if/when they would make it into the STIP and be scheduled for construction.

FISCAL & STAFF IMPACT: There is no fiscal or staff impact to receiving an update on the SPOT 3.0 prioritization.

The fiscal impacts of the STP-DA projects are shown in the above tables.

- S. Greensboro St. sidewalk: Total non-federal match needed for STP-DA funding: \$119,840.
 - If half-cent sales tax revenues for improving access to transit are secured as the non-federal match, they represent a new revenue source.
- Morgan Creek Greenway: The fiscal impact depends on the level of allocation from Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian funds, as well as potential coordination with the Town of Chapel Hill.
- The need for a non-federal match for the existing CMAQ grant for the Jones Creek Greenway connection is \$69,991.

At least 0.25 FTE is required to manage a federally-funded, locally-managed project, such as would be the case for the Greensboro St. sidewalk project. Additional funding for the Morgan Creek or Jones Creek Greenway would not have the same incremental staff impact, insofar as they are already existing or proposed projects, not entirely new projects.

Background on Board action on projects for which to seek half-cent sales tax funding

On September 17, 2013, the Carrboro Board of Aldermen adopted a resolution prioritizing four sidewalk projects providing direct access to transit stops.

The four prioritized projects are, in order of priority:

1. South Greensboro Street
2. Estes Drive Extension
3. West Main Street
4. Old Fayetteville Road

The Board resolution requested that half-cent sales tax revenues allocated for bus capital projects be allocated to at least one of these projects. Together, these projects improve pedestrian access within a half-mile (network distance) of nine Chapel Hill Transit routes, plus a potential future extension of the Triangle Transit 405 route.

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommend that the Board of Aldermen consider the resolution in Attachment A.