

RURAL PLANNING RURAL ORGANIZATION

RPO Technical Coordinating Committee

February 9, 2017 – 10:00 A.M., Land of Sky Regional Council

Minutes

Attendance:

Mark Burrows	Vicki Eastland	Zia Rifkin	Sara Nichols
Josh Freeman	Charlie Landreth	Daniel Cobb	Denise Braine
Kris Boyd	Cory Osborne	Brian Burch	Rick Tipton
Erica Anderson	Karen Kiehna	Aaron Bland	Kyle Guie
Daniel Sellers			

WELCOME AND HOUSEKEEPING

Chairman Freeman called the meeting to order at approximately 10:00am; he welcomed everyone in attendance and introductions followed. He communicated that the Agenda needed approval with one modification requested- to move Item C (Continuation of LOSRC Project for CMAQ Funds) to the last item of business.

Mark Burrows moved to approve the Agenda with the requested modification. Denise Braine seconded and the motion carried without further discussion.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No one made any public comments.

CONSENT AGENDA

Kris Boyd moved to approve the Consent Agenda consisting of the minutes of the October 12, 2016 meeting. Brian Burch seconded and as all were in favor, the motion carried.

RPO BUSINESS

Approval of LOSRPO FY 2018 Draft STIP: Vicki Eastland shared that NCDOT released the Draft 2018-2027 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) in December 2016. The full document is on the Land of Sky RPO website, along with the LOSRPO specific pages (<http://www.landofsky.org/rpo.html>). The draft STIP is now out for review and public comment will begin in the spring (dates not yet released).

Vicki Eastland explained that the STIP is a ten-year document, committed projects are those that have funding committed in the first five years (FY2018-FY2022) of the STIP. The developmental part of the STIP envelopes the years (FY2023-FY2027) following the fifth year; projects in those years will go through the prioritization process again. Vicki Eastland reviewed the committed projects that are in the draft STIP for the LOSRPO region.

Chairman Freeman thanked the staff members of NCDOT and LOSRPO who have put so much time into the process as a lot of work is involved to get a project into the STIP and to have those be competitive.

No action required at this time.

Approval of LOSRPO FY 2018 PWP: Vicki Eastland shared that the DRAFT Planning Work Program (PWP) complete and is in many ways, this is a continuation of ongoing RPO projects. She explained that with the FBRMPO's and Transylvania County's CTP updates have been delayed, a large percentage of planning funds are in the CTP category, SPOT 5.0 is beginning, so a significant amount of funding is allocated to Prioritization. General Transportation and Administration make up the bulk of the remaining funding. Vicki Eastland shared that this is probably the last time this format of the PWP will be used as NCDOT plans to simplify the document.

Mark Burrows moved to recommend that the TAC approve the LOSRPO FY2018 PWP at their meeting on February 22, 2017. Kris Boyd seconded and the motion carried without further discussion.

Election of LOSRPO TCC Officers: Vicki Eastland shared that the LOSRPO TCC held officer elections at the May 2014 meeting. At that meeting, Josh Freeman was elected as the Chair and Martha Ramsey was elected as the Vice Chair. After Martha retired, Mark Burrows was elected Vice Chair. Elections should have taken place last fall, but with meeting cancelations, elections were pushed to the first meeting of this calendar year. The term for officers is two years and officers are eligible for more than one term. Chairman Freeman shared that he is honored to have served in the leadership position. He opened the floor for nominations and he nominated Mark Burrows for the Chair position.

Denise Braine suggested that a Vice Chair be nominated from one of the more rural counties in the LOSRPO region and she nominated Daniel Cobb for the Vice Chair position. Additional nominations were called for and none was heard.

Chairman Freeman formally confirmed with Mark Burrows and Daniel Cobb that they were willing and available to serve in their nominated roles. Both responded in the affirmative that they were willing and available to serve as nominated.

Karen Kiehna moved to accept the nomination of Officers. Brian Burch seconded and the motion carried without further discussion.

NCDOT Presentation- "So Your Project is in the STIP Now What?"- Brian Burch shared about how Division 14 manages its projects and he shared a brief overview of the LOSRPO projects in the STIP at this time and the estimated costs of those projects. He informed the TCC that the STIP has 17 new projects that are bike/ped, and in total, 46 bike/ped projects in the planning region when counting the ones that came into the STIP from the previous round of prioritization. He shared that as a Division Project Engineer, he is one of a group of transportation folks that have familiarity with the projects. The Division holds meetings with governmental staff throughout the LOSRPO region and it is important for staff to review and ensure that the projects that will be prioritized are the ones that are needed by the local jurisdictions. He shared that authorization has been provided from the state to move projects along as quickly as possible as NCDOT has a \$2.1 Billion cash balance and needs to spend \$900 Million this year through acceleration of projects into construction.

Discussion occurred regarding what can be done at the local level to speed project development along and it was shared that local projects should be reviewed at the local level to assure that the project scope is what is needed for the locality. Brian Burch noted that NCDOT is currently reviewing CTP's to determine those projects whose schedules can be accelerated. He used, as an example, a project in Waynesville that is

in the deliverable STIP and which can be pursued through construction- the project has a \$44 Million price tag. He shared that as part of the process, meetings have happened with the Town of Waynesville- jurisdictions must look at SPOT summaries to make sure that projects have all the elements wanted by the jurisdiction. When a local jurisdiction decides that a SPOT project does not have all of the elements necessary then the project has to be updated and go through the prioritization process again.

Brian Burch shared that in order for NCDOT to accelerate projects, a private engineering firm (PEF) will be hired to develop project schedules after reviewing available documentation related to the projects. Brian Burch shared that it is important for jurisdictions to scope their projects correctly in order to have the prioritization process move as smoothly as possible. Many projects take 5-10 years from concept to let (construction). The NCDOT presentation can be found on the LOSRPO website:

http://www.landofsky.org/pdf/LGS/RPO/DivisionSTIP_Project_Delivery.pdf

Discussion occurred regarding Division 13 and if the same process for project development was used. Rick Tipton shared that Division 13 follows the same process; however, projects within the Division are usually bigger, more expensive projects –it is important to start the process especially for those projects that develop at the local level (Regional Tier). NCDOT Divisions submit projects to the Statewide Tier and he shared that it is important for project sponsors to work with Division staff to develop projects that are the right size for the area.

Discussion occurred regarding the Caldwell project that is already under construction. NCDOT staff shared that it is not possible to speed up a project but it is possible to incentivize the construction so that it can safely be completed ahead of schedule. It was also discussed that the acceleration of projects in the STIP would be within the confines of what is already there, as projects are not being added to the plan. Rick Tipton shared that the Divisions will most likely have to look in the STIP at those projects scheduled for 2018 to determine how those can be accelerated to begin in 2017.

Information only.

Continuation of LOSRC Project for CMAQ Funds: Bill Eaker shared that there is \$100000 in Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funds available from NCDOT to the LOS and Southwestern RPO's combined for FY 18 and 19 (\$50000 each year). LOS staff has consulted with staff of the Great Smoky Mountain National Park (GSMNP) and Southwestern Commission about the availability and potential uses of these funds. The National Park's education and outreach staff is requesting \$20000 to continue its air quality education and outreach work within the Park for two years. The LOS Clean Air Campaign and LOS Clean Vehicles Coalition request \$40000 for two years (\$20000 each). LOS' work includes public education and outreach on reducing emissions from mobile sources, one-on-one technical assistance to fleets in the region on alternative fueled and advanced technology vehicle options, and assistance securing grant funding for green fleet projects. These ongoing programs have been operating for some time. Local matches are required for these funds. Applications are due to the NCDOT by March 15, 2017. A resolution is required from the LOSRPO TAC supporting the funding for the requested CMAQ projects.

Kris Boyd moved to recommend a resolution supporting the funding for these projects and to forward the recommendation to the LOSRPO TAC for final approval at the February 22 meeting. Mark Burrows seconded and the motion carried without further discussion.

REGULAR UPDATES

NCDOT Division 13 and Division 14 updates
Transportation Planning Branch Updates.
Legislative Updates
Staff Updates and Housekeeping

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Freeman adjourned the meeting with no further business before the group.