

GREATER HICKORY METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (MPO)

1880 2nd Avenue NW, PO Box 9026

Hickory, NC 28603

MINUTES

GREATER HICKORY METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (GHMPO)

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TAC)

Wednesday, July 23rd, 2025 @ 2:30 PM In-person meeting and via Zoom

Present			**Absent**		
First Name	**Last Name**	**Representing**	**First Name**	**Last Name**	**Representing**
Hank	Guess	City of Hickory	Larry	Yoder	Alexander County
Martin	Townsend	Town of Granite Falls	Genita	Hill	Town of Long View
Barbara	Beatty	Catawba County	Ike	Perkins	City of Lenoir
Jill	Patton	City of Hickory	Richard	Andrews	Town of Cajah's Mountain
Mike	Stroud	Burke County	Beth	Rudisill	Town of Maiden
Barry	Mitchell	Town of Hudson	Donna	Price	Town of Rhodhiss
Mark	Canrobert	City of Conover	Mary	Furtado	Catawba County
Les	Morrow	City of Claremont	Donald	Robinson	Town of Catawba
Jody	York	Town of Hildebran	Glen	Harvey	Town of Valdese
Roy	Johnson	City Newton	Wendy	Cato	City of Morganton
Holly	Crafton-Lay	Town of Maiden	Jack	Simms	Town of Taylorsville
			VACANT		Glen Alpine
			VACANT		Alexander County
			VACANT		Long View
			VACANT		Brookford
			VACANT		Caldwell County

			VACANT		Cedar Rock
			VACANT		Connelly Springs
			VACANT		Sawmills
			VACANT		Rutherford College
			VACANT		Drexel
			VACANT		Gamewell
			VACANT		Glen Alpine

WPCOG, FHWA & GUEST	**NC DOT STAFF**
Anthony Star – WPCOG	Dean Ledbetter – Div 11 & 12
Alison Alexander – WPCOG	Ruben Crummy – NC DOT TPD
Averi Ritchie – WPCOG	Sean Sizemore – Div 11
Daniel Odom – WPCOG	Michael Poe – Div 11
Casey Fullbright – WPCOG	Kenny Heavner – Div 11
Duncan Cavana – WPCOG	Travis Jordan – Div 12
Melani Harrel - WPCOG	Anil Panicker – Div 12
	Stephen Sparks – Div 13
	Dough Phillips – Div 13
	Brad Lail - BOT
	John Hunter - NCDOT
	Luke Bender - NCDOT

Call to Order/Ethics Awareness/ and Introductions: Chairman Guess called the meeting to order at 2:30 PM and welcomed all present. Introductions were conducted, followed by the Introduction of online viewers.

Approval of Remote Participation: Online attendees were Duncan Cavana, Stephen Sparks and Holly Crafton-Lay. Chairman Guess canvassed the committee for any objections to online participants. Upon a motion made by Chairman Guess and seconded by Mr. Johnson, online participation was approved.

Action Items:

I. **Approval of Consent Agenda:** Chairman Guess called for a motion to approve the consent agenda. Upon a motion made by Mrs. Patton and a second by Mr. Morrow, the board unanimously approved the consent agenda.

II. **Transportation Improvement Program for Release**: Ms. Ritchie presented the Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program for release, outlining the 2026–2035 MTIP as a fiscally constrained, ten-year plan developed in coordination with NCDOT and regional stakeholders. The MTIP includes all local projects from the state's STIP, aligns with federal requirements, and highlights regional priorities in infrastructure, transit, and multimodal transportation. It plays a key role in funding authorization, with only listed projects eligible to receive federal dollars, and only the first five years (2026–2030) scheduled for delivery. Public engagement is central to the process, with the draft MTIP being released for comment ahead of planned adoption on August 27, 2025. Upon a motion made by Mrs. Patton and a second by Mr. Townsend, the board unanimously approved the Transportation Improvement Program for public comment.

III. **Regional Bike and Pedestrian Plan—Interactive Tool Update:** Mr. Fullbright and Mr. Odom presented the Regional Bike and Pedestrian Plan Interactive Tool Update, highlighting enhancements to the online viewer that allows users to explore active transportation projects and planning efforts across the region. The tool integrates GIS data to visualize existing and proposed bicycle and pedestrian facilities, safety concerns, and local priorities. They demonstrated how stakeholders can filter data by county, project status, and facility type, improving transparency and accessibility for both planners and the public. The presenters emphasized that the tool supports regional collaboration and decision-making by helping identify connectivity gaps and investment opportunities. Committee members expressed appreciation for the update and discussed ways the tool could be further utilized for future planning initiatives.

NCDOT Update –

- **NCDOT BOT-** Mr. Lail reported that the Board of Transportation met virtually in July and approved both the 2026–2035 STIP and Prioritization 8 (P8), which includes updates to the project scoring process. While the number of projects submitted remains consistent with Prioritization 7, P8 will see a 30% reduction in submissions,

with the current submittal window now open; projects in Prioritization 9 (P9) are expected to include at least 10 express designs, and all projects in Prioritization 10 (P10) will require them. Additionally, in response to hurricane damage, approximately $1 billion has been spent on infrastructure repairs, including the replacement of 149 bridges, 50 culverts, and thousands of pipes, with $182 million in federal aid providing only a 20% reimbursement rate.

- **Division 11:** Mr. Poe discussed project updates including, The US 321 Sawmills project is scheduled to begin in October. Additional reduced conflict intersection (RCI) projects are planned in Hudson and on Pine Mountain Rd.
- **Division 12:** Mr. Stafford provided updates in the packet, which now features a revised format. All projects listed in the adopted STIP are included, even if not yet started, to reflect all major construction activity within Division 12.
- **Division 13:** Mr. Phillips discussed project updates including, the completion of Bridge projects in Burke County. A new access road in a Burke construction park has been let and awarded. A multi-county striping contract is expected to begin by August. A resurfacing contract has been approved, but no work has started yet. Project R-3430 is scheduled to be let in August.
- **NCDOT-TPD:** Mr. Crummy stated that there are no new traffic forecasts at this time. The Integrated Mobility Division (IMD) quarterly update will be released on the 17th. Members were encouraged to review the latest TPD newsletter and review the IMD webinar. The Community Data Explorer (CDE) tool will be transitioning to TPD management.

- **NCDOT-IMD:** No updates

Reminders: Ms. Ritchie reminded members that Prioritization 8 (P8) workshops are upcoming, with opportunities to attend drop-in sessions or schedule separate meetings. Staff are reviewing both carryover and new project selections for P8. Public meetings related to the regional Bike and Pedestrian Plan are also being planned.

Public Comment/Announcements: None

Adjournment: Chairman Guess adjourned the meeting at 3:32 p.m. The next meeting will be Wednesday, August 27th, 2025.

Respectfully Submitted,

Hank Guess, TAC Chairman

Averi Ritchie, TAC Secretary