

PROCEEDINGS OF THE TECHNICAL COORDINATING COMMITTEE

Wednesday, February 3, 2016

A regular meeting of the Technical Coordinating Committee was held 3:00 pm Wednesday, February 3, 2016 on the first floor of the Administration Building located at 308 Fountain Circle.

MEMBERS: Les Hopson – ALDOT
Allen Teague – ALDOT
Michelle Jordan – Planning Department
Connie Graham – Planning Department

STAFF PRESENT: Tanjie Kling – Planning Department
James Moore – Planning Department
Thomas Nunez – Planning Department
Ben Ferrill – Planning Department
Tracy Meshberg – Planning Department
Paige Colburn - Planning Department

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Moore. Upon call for the adoption of the minutes from Thursday, August 27, 2015, Ms. Graham made a motion to adopt the minutes. The motion was seconded by Ms. Jordan and approved by all.

Mr. Moore stated that the next item on the agenda was **Resolution 01-16**; adopts a resolution of support for a potential TIGER grant for the City of Huntsville. Mr. Moore asked for an explanation of the item. Ms. Kling stated that this resolution was requested by the City of Huntsville, to show support for a possible TIGER grant that they may apply for in fiscal year 2016 if federal funds are available.

Ms. Kling indicated that “TIGER” stands for Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery. It is a competitive grant program administered by the US Department of Transportation that allows local and federal investments in road, rail, transit, and port projects that promise to achieve national objectives.

Ms. Kling stated that for Huntsville, the project being sponsored is the Huntsville Spring Branch Greenway Phase 1 from Holmes Avenue to Brookside Street at Lowe Mill. The City of Huntsville in conjunction with federal and state funds, has invested around \$28 million toward the project with the construction of bridge replacements along Clinton Avenue and Holmes Avenue, land acquisition, floodway mitigation efforts, and utility relocation.

Ms. Kling stated that this resolution, if approved, will be included in the grant application packet, to show metro-wide support of this project that will provide multi-modal linkages to the current transportation network. She further stated that Dr. Ben Ferrill had been working on this project and was available to answer any questions.

Ms. Kling stated that during a public comment period at the Citizens Advisory Committee meeting, that members asked if the MPO would be spending money on this TIGER grant project. Kling stated that we explained that no MPO funds will be committed to this project. The purpose of the resolution is to support the project, because regional support serves as an endorsement of the grant application and because the FHWA wants to know the MPO will include the project in our planning documents, if funds are awarded.

Ms. Graham made a motion to recommend approval to Resolution 01-16; which was duly seconded by Ms. Jordan and carried unanimously.

Mr. Moore stated that the next item on the agenda was **Resolution 02-16**; amends the Final Year 2040 Transportation Plan to divide the Huntsville Spring Branch Greenway Project into 2 phases of construction. Mr. Moore asked Ms. Kling for an explanation of the item. Ms. Kling stated that Huntsville Spring Branch Greenway is a visionary multi-modal project that has been planned for many years, and had its first appearance in the MPO's long range transportation plans at least 10 years earlier. The project is currently listed in the Year 2040 Transportation Plan; however, it is currently shown as a 10 mile project. Since the City of Huntsville has plans to apply for a TIGER grant for a portion of this project and wishes to improve their opportunities for funding, they have requested that the project be divided into 2 phases. Therefore, the Section 7 narrative (Bike/Ped Element), of the Year 2040 Transportation Plan has been amended to split the project into Phase 1 – being the segment from Holmes Avenue to the Brookside Drive/Lowe Mill area, and Phase 2 – being from the terminus of Phase 1 to the Tennessee River.

Ms. Kling said that additionally, Section 10: Financial Section, of the plan was amended. The narrative was modified to include language indicating that federal competitive grant programs may be available to fund major transportation projects of interest to the MPO's jurisdictions. Table 10.5, the visionary financial table, was amended to show the Huntsville Spring Branch Greenway, Phase 1 as possible being funded with a TIGER grant or other eligible grant funding, for a total amount of \$25 million, with the proposed federal portion being \$10 million and the City of Huntsville's proposed portion being \$15 million. The Huntsville Spring Branch Greenway, Phase 2 remains in the same location within the table with a potential funding source through the Transportation Alternatives Program. Approval of this resolution paves the way for the Phase 1 project to be potentially funded through a federal grant program. Ms. Kling stated that the cost of the project was a rough estimate, and may cost as low as \$10 million.

Ms. Kling stated that public comments were made at the Citizens Advisory Committee meeting. It was asked if the Huntsville Housing Authority (HHA) residents would be affected. Ms. Kling said that they were informed that the project will eventually go through Brahan Spring Park from Lowe Mill. Questions were also asked about the funding & Dr. Ferrill explained that the finances have not been-worked out just yet. He mentioned that it may not cost \$25 million.

Ms. Graham made a motion to recommend approval of Resolution 02-16; which was duly seconded by Ms. Jordan and carried unanimously.

Mr. Moore stated that the next item on the agenda was **Resolution 03-16**; amends the narrative portions of the adopted FY 2016-2019 TIP to add the possibility of grant funds for

projects, as a funding source. Mr. Moore asked Ms. Kling for an explanation of the item. Ms. Kling explained that if the proposed TIGER grant is awarded to the City of Huntsville, the project will need to be added to the Transportation Improvement Program. The purpose of this resolution is to amend the narrative of the TIP to indicate that an alternative funding source for projects may be through grants. Additionally, the text was amended to indicate that the MPO is committed to include eligible grant-funded projects in the TIP when awarded. This was an oversight when writing the narrative of the final document, and provides information regarding another source of federal funds that may be tapped for projects.

Ms. Graham made a motion to recommend approval to Resolution 03-16; which was duly seconded by Ms. Jordan and carried unanimously.

Mr. Moore stated that the next item on the agenda was **Resolution 04-16**; amends the adopted Final Year 2040 Transportation Plan to accommodate the changes in the timeline and the cost of the Northern Bypass and Slaughter Road for the City of Huntsville. Mr. Moore asked Ms. Kling for an explanation of the item. Ms. Kling stated that the Northern Bypass is a project of regional significance, and appears in the Year 2040 Transportation Plan as a multi-phase project. At the present time, the City of Huntsville is working with the State, and expending Restore our Roads money for the Northern Bypass segment from Pulaski Pike to US 231/431. This project is already programmed and funding is committed towards it. To complete and extend this project, and enhance mobility in North Huntsville and North Madison County, the City of Huntsville is using its capital funds for the engineering design and environmental assessment for the next segment of Northern Bypass from 1500 feet east of US 231/431 to Winchester Road. These activities are in progress.

Ms. Kling said the City of Huntsville met with FHWA officials to review the environmental documents for the segment from US 231/431 to Winchester Road. The FHWA requires that before this design work and environmental assessment progress any further and before they can approve any of the work done by Huntsville, that the next steps toward the construction of this segment of the Northern Bypass project be programmed in the FY 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program. For this to occur, the Year 2040 Transportation Plan must be amended, first. Otherwise the project will be suspended.

Ms. Kling also stated that an assessment of federal funds and projects that are scheduled using MPO discretionary money for the next 25 years was accomplished, and the rescheduling of projects can be done. The City of Huntsville is requesting that the Northern Bypass from US 231/431 to Winchester Road be moved up in the schedule, and that the Slaughter Road project from Old Madison Pike to State Route 20 or Highway 20 be deferred. Huntsville is pleading that this be done so that the next section of the Northern Bypass project may be scheduled in the plan, so that the work being done on the corridor will not stall.

Ms. Kling said more specifically, Huntsville is proposing that Section 10, Table 10.4 of the 2040 Transportation Plan be amended to change the Northern Bypass' right of way acquisition as scheduled for fiscal year 2017, utility relocation scheduled for 2019, a re-evaluation of the environmental assessment scheduled for fiscal year 2021, and construction scheduled for fiscal year 2022. Additionally, the construction cost is estimated to be a total of

\$25 million; a decrease of \$794,825. For this change in schedule to occur, and so that the next segment of the Northern Bypass can be programmed as requested by FHWA, the City of Huntsville is requesting that the Slaughter Road project from Old Madison Pike to State Route 20 or Highway 20, be moved out to the year 2026 through 2028, with design scheduled in FY 2026, right of way and utility relocation scheduled for FY 2027, and construction scheduled for 2028.

Ms. Kling stated that the adoption of these changes and this resolution will allow the City of Huntsville to continue its work toward the construction of the next segment of the Northern Bypass, and to complete the corridor from Pulaski Pike all the way to Winchester Road.

Ms. Kling said that the public commenters at the Citizens Advisory Committee asked about the relationship between the Northern Bypass and the Southern Bypass, and if it is one big project. The MPO staff said that the Northern Bypass and Southern Bypass are not one big project; that only the Northern Bypass is funded and is currently in process. Also, a Citizens Advisory Committee member asked when the other portion of Slaughter Road, from Old Madison Pike to US 72, is scheduled to be built. The MPO staff told them that portion of Slaughter Road is scheduled for the years 2031-2036.

Ms. Graham made a motion to recommend approval of Resolution 04-16; which was duly seconded by Ms. Jordan and carried unanimously.

Mr. Moore stated that the next item on the agenda was **Resolution 05-16**; amends the adopted Final Year 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program and the State's Comprehensive Project Management System to accommodate the changes in the timeline and the cost of construction for the Northern Bypass and Slaughter Road for the City of Huntsville. Mr. Moore asked Ms. Kling for an explanation. Ms. Kling stated that this resolution reprograms the projects that were just voted upon, and makes the changes in the Year 2016-2019 TIP and in the State's Comprehensive Project Management System, per the City of Huntsville's request.

Ms. Kling said that the schedule appears the same as previously presented, and the funding has been shown in the text of the resolution. She noted that the only funding change from the original TIP and the original allocations in Comprehensive Project Management System is the Northern Bypass construction cost of \$25 million; a decrease of over \$794,000.

Ms. Graham made a motion to recommend approval of Resolution 05-16; which was duly seconded by Ms. Jordan and carried unanimously.

Mr. Moore stated that the next item on the agenda was **Resolution 06-16**; amends the National Highway System/Interstate Maintenance/National Highway System Bridge Projects Sections in the adopted FY 2016-2019 TIP add funds for resurfacing US 72 for Limestone County. Mr. Moore asked Ms. Kling for an explanation of this item. Ms. Kling stated that the Alabama Department of Transportation requested that the TIP be amended to add a resurfacing project for Limestone County for fiscal year 2016. The project is on US 72 from near Jefferson Street to near McCulley Mill Road. The cost of the project is estimated to be \$4,832,862, with the Federal amount being \$3,866,290 and the State amount being \$966,572.

Ms. Kling said that the public asked, at the Citizens Advisory Committee meeting, if Limestone County is in the MPO's jurisdiction and if any MPO discretionary money would be spent on this project. The MPO staff stated that a portion of Limestone County is in the MPO study area & discretionary money would not be used.

Ms. Graham made a motion to recommend approval of Resolution 06-16; which was duly seconded by Ms. Jordan and carried unanimously.

Mr. Moore stated the next item on the agenda was the election of officers.

Mr. Graham made a motion to table the election of officers until the next TCC meeting, so we can have more members. It was duly seconded by Ms. Jordan and carried unanimously.

Mr. Moore asked if there was any other business to be discussed. Mr. Houston Matthews of Madison County Engineering requested that the meeting minutes of the August 27 meeting be amended to show that Mr. Richard Grace was in attendance at that meeting.

Being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned.