

Federal Highway Administration

and

Federal Transit Administration

Joint Certification Review

of the

Cabarrus Rowan Metropolitan Planning Organization

September 2, 2008

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Glossary of Acronyms

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|--------------|--|
| ADA – | Americans with Disabilities Act |
| BRT - | Bus Rapid Transit |
| CATS - | Charlotte Area Transit System |
| CFR - | Code of Federal Regulations |
| CMP – | Congestion Management Process |
| CMAQ – | Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality |
| CRMPO - | Cabarrus-Rowan Metropolitan Planning Organization |
| CRAFT - | Charlotte Regional Alliance for Transportation |
| EJ – | Environmental Justice |
| EPA - | Environmental Protection Agency |
| FHWA - | Federal Highway Administration |
| FTA - | Federal Transit Administration |
| HOV/HOT - | High Occupancy Vehicle/High Occupancy Toll |
| ITS – | Intelligent Transportation System |
| JARC- | Job Access and Reverse Commute |
| LPA- | Lead Planning Agency |
| LRT - | Light Rail Transit |
| LRTP – | Long Range Transportation Plan |
| MLI - | Minority and Low Income |
| MOE- | Maintenance of Effort |
| MPO – | Metropolitan Planning Organization |
| MUMPO - | Mecklenburg-Union Metropolitan Planning Organization |
| NCAMPO- | North Carolina Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations |
| NCDAQ - | North Carolina Department of Air Quality |
| NCDENR- | North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources |
| NCDOT- | North Carolina Department of Transportation |
| NCTA - | North Carolina Turnpike Authority |
| PL – | Planning Funds |
| RFATS - | Rock Hill-Fort Mill Area Transportation System |
| RPS- | Rapid Performance System |
| RTDM - | Regional Travel Demand Model |
| SAFETEA-LU - | Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act-A Legacy for Users |
| SHSP - | Strategic Highway Safety Plan |
| SIP- | State Implementation Plan |
| SSP - | System Service Plan |
| SSPP- | System Safety Performance Plan |
| STP-DA- | Surface Transportation Program – Direct Apportionment |
| STS- | Special Transportation Service |
| TCC – | Technical Coordinating Committee |
| TDP- | Transit Development Plan |
| TIP – | Transportation Improvement Program |
| TMA - | Transportation Management Area |
| UPWP – | Unified Planning Work Program |
| UZA- | Urbanized Area |

FORWARD

Transportation Management Area (TMA) Certification Review Reports

Pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 134(i)(5) and 49 U.S.C. 1607, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) must jointly certify the metropolitan transportation planning process in Transportation Management Areas (TMAs) at least every four years. A TMA is an urbanized area, as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau, with a population of over 200,000. There are 9 TMAs in North Carolina. In general, certification reviews consist of three primary activities: a review of planning products (in advance of and during the site visit), a site visit, and preparation of a report that summarizes the review and offers findings. The reviews focus on compliance with federal regulations, challenges, successes, and experiences of the cooperative relationship between the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), State Department of Transportation (DOT) and transit operators in the conduct of the metropolitan planning process.

The certification review process is only one of several methods used to assess the quality of a local metropolitan planning process, compliance with applicable statutes and regulations, and the level and type of technical assistance needed to enhance the effectiveness of the planning process. Other activities provide opportunities for this type of assessment, including review and/or approval of the Unified Planning Work Program, the multi-modal long-range transportation plan, the Metropolitan and Statewide Transportation Improvement Programs, transportation conformity determinations (in non-attainment and maintenance areas), as well as a range of other formal and less formal contact provide both FHWA/FTA an opportunity to comment on the planning process. The results of these other activities are considered in the certification review process.

While the Planning Certification Review report itself may not fully document those many intermediate and ongoing checkpoints, the “findings” of certification review, in fact, is based upon the cumulative findings of the entire review effort.

The review process is individually tailored to focus on topics of significance in each metropolitan planning area. Federal reviewers prepare certification reports to document the results of the review process. The reports and final actions are the joint responsibility of the appropriate FHWA and FTA field offices and content will vary to reflect the planning process reviewed, whether or not they relate explicitly to the formal “findings” of the review.

To encourage public understanding and input, FHWA/FTA will continue to improve the clarity of the certification review reports.

Executive Summary

For The Certification Review of the Cabarrus Rowan Transportation Management Area

Pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 134(i)(5) and 49 U.S.C. 1607, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) must jointly certify the metropolitan transportation planning process in Transportation Management Areas at least every four years. Even though the Cabarrus Rowan MPO does not have the population to be classified as a TMA the MPO conducts the planning requirements for areas that are classified and designated in the Mecklenburg Union MPO TMA. The certification review is done to ensure that the MPO is meeting all TMA requirements. In general, certification reviews consist of three primary activities: a review of planning products (in advance of and during the site visit), a site visit, and preparation of a report that summarizes the review and offers findings. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA)-Region 4, conducted a joint certification review of the Cabarrus Rowan Metropolitan Planning Organizations (CRMPO) planning process June 10, 2008.

The Federal Highway Administration North Carolina Division and the Federal Transit Administration-Region 4 conducted the review. Other participants in the review consisted of representatives from the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) Transportation Planning Branch and the Office of Civil Rights & Business Development.

Observed during the review were several noteworthy practices, and recommendations for improving the Cabarrus Rowan Metropolitan Planning Organization planning process. Noteworthy practices include areas where the MPO is doing well. Recommendations are areas where the review team suggests ways to improve the planning process. Corrective actions would be areas where the review team believes the MPO has not done enough to implement a particular planning requirement.

CRMPO has a transportation planning process that addresses local and regional transportation issues facing the area. The review team identified the following Noteworthy efforts and makes recommendations for improving the transportation planning process:

Noteworthy Practices

- The MPO has developed a process to collect and track subdivision growth and compare it to school growth in Cabarrus County. This process will make the socio-economic update process to the long range transportation plan much smoother, since the data can feed into the travel demand model for region.
- The MPO engaged in outreach efforts to the East Spencer low income and minority community as part of the 2035 LRTP update.
- The MPO attended formal Environmental Justice training.
- The MPO will adopt separate goals for Title VI/EJ in the 2035 LRTP update.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the CRMPO:

- The MPO needs to adopt a 2035 LRTP that
 - Takes into account inflation of revenue and project cost.
 - Includes a formal consultation plan that will address how the resource agencies will be involved in the LRTP development process. Include the plan and comments in the LRTP.
 - Includes a separate chapter on Safety in the 2035 LRTP that will address how the Plan will help accomplish the goals of the Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP).
 - Include a qualitative and/or qualitative project ranking process that includes safety as a criterion.
- The MPO should update their Congestion Management Process (CMP) along with the 2035 LRTP update.
- The MPO is encouraged to work with the regional model team to determine if travel time analysis from the travel demand model would be available for the next update of the CMP.
- The MPO is encouraged to attend a Federal Highway Administration hosted workshop on integrating freight into the planning process.
- CRMPO should continue regional coordination and communication efforts with the Metrolina regional partners for modeling, air quality conformity and LRTP updates.
- CRMPO should help lay out the roles and responsibilities for the 2035 LRTP update and for future TIP/LRTP amendments
- The MPO is encouraged to solicit personal information on comment cards to help them better address the needs of their citizens.
- The MPO should ensure that their Public Involvement Plan includes methods for outreach, especially to targeted populations, policy for foreign language translation, method for receiving and the disposition of comments and a monitoring and evaluation process.
- The MPO is encouraged to put more information about their planning activities on the website (individual elements of the LRTP as they are being developed, meeting agendas, opportunities for public comment and involvement, MPO board membership and contact information, etc.).
- The FHWA should provide to the MPO presentation materials that will address the Federal requirements and expectations of an MPO Board.
- Develop an e-mail and mail list of Minority and Low-Income populations to ensure outreach to those populations.
- Continue regional coordination and participation efforts for the 2035 LRTP update.
- Continue working to meet TIP/LRTP transportation conformity deadlines.
- Update the Demographic profile to:
 - Include mapping of past and current projects
 - Combine mapping of minority and low-income (MLI) population information
 - Break out Hispanic populations vs African American populations

- Provide more detailed ranges for better identification of the concentrations of minority populations
- Develop analyses to determine transportation system equity including the identification of both benefits and burdens of transportation projects.
- Identify and consider impacts of transportation projects on minority business communities.
- Include Title VI/EJ as a factor in the LRTP update and TIP development.
- Consider methods to identify the needs of MLI populations.

Certification

The Federal Review Team, consisting of staff from the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration, issues this certification valid for four years from the date of this report.

FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION (FHWA)/FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION (FTA) JOINT CERTIFICATION REVIEW OF THE CABARRUS ROWAN METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (CRMPO)

June 10, 2008

Introduction{tc "Introduction" \f C \l 1}

The North Carolina Division Office of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and the Region 4 Office of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), conducted a joint certification review of the Cabarrus Rowan Metropolitan Planning Organizations (CRMPO) planning process June 10, 2008. The review was conducted in accordance with 23 CFR 450 and 49 CFR 613 which requires FHWA and FTA to jointly review and assess the transportation planning process for all transportation management areas (TMAs) at least once every four years. A transportation management area is defined as an urbanized area with a population of more than 200,000 as defined by the latest decennial census. The CRMPO based on population is not large enough to qualify as a TMA. At the request of the Town of Harrisburg and Cabarrus County and with approval from the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC), the CRMPO elected to retain a portion of its' 1990 planning area boundary, which is identified in the 2000 Census as urbanized area within the Mecklenburg-Union MPO (MUMPO). As a result, the FHWA declared the entire CRMPO a TMA subject to all TMA planning requirements. The last certification review site visit conducted for this area occurred in June 2004.

The purpose of the review is to assess the extent of compliance with the planning requirements, to recognize noteworthy practices, to identify problem areas, and to provide advice and assistance as appropriate. The review consisted of a series of discussions on transportation planning issues with State and local transportation officials directly involved in highway and transit planning activities of the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). In addition, the CRMPO advertised for a 30-day public comment period for the review from May 19 through June 18 and scheduled a meeting to provide the public an opportunity to offer comments in person on the MPOs transportation planning process. This public meeting was held from 5:00 PM to 6:30 PM on June 10, 2008. Both the review and the public meeting were held at the Kannapolis Amtrak Train Station, located at 201 S. Main Street. This report contains the findings and recommendations of the review team.

In preparation for the review, the CRMPO staff made available on the MPOs website packets of information which included TCC/TAC meeting minutes and calendar, MPO goals and objectives in English and Spanish, Transportation Improvement Program, Conformity Analysis and Determination Report, and the 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). The agenda for the review is attached as Appendix A.

Federal Review Team Members and Participants

The Federal review team consisted of the following persons:

Loretta W. Barren, Federal Highway Administration, North Carolina Division
Eddie Dancausse, Federal Highway Administration, North Carolina Division
Lynise DeVance, Federal Highway Administration, North Carolina Division
Keith Melton, Federal Transit Administration, Region IV

Other participants in the review consisted of the following persons:

Phil Conrad, Cabarrus Rowan MPO
Connie Cunningham, Cabarrus Rowan MPO
Linda Dosse, North Carolina Department of Transportation, Transportation Planning Branch
Aketa Emptage, North Carolina Department of Transportation, Civil Rights & Business Development
Joyce Gottlieb, Federal Highway Administration, Professional Development Program
Jadeth Yepley, Federal Highway Administration, Professional Development Program

CRMPO Background

The CRMPO Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) includes the following member jurisdictions with each representative having one vote: the Cities of Concord, Kannapolis, and Salisbury, the Counties of Cabarrus and Rowan, and the Towns of China Grove, Cleveland, East Spencer, Faith, Granite Quarry, Harrisburg, Landis, Midland, Mount Pleasant, Rockwell, Spencer and a member of the North Carolina Board of Transportation. The CRMPO has a Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC) that consists of transportation professionals from the member agencies, the Concord Regional Airport, the Rowan County Airport, Centralina Council of Governments, Rider Transit System, and the Salisbury Transit System. The TCC does not include representation from any other modes of transportation. The TCC reviews materials and forwards recommendations to the CRMPO for action. The City of Concord serves as the Lead Planning Agency (LPA). The MPO is managed by a private consultant firm, Mobility Solutions, LLC.

A desk audit was conducted prior to the on-site visit. It was determined that many planning activities were being conducted in a satisfactory manner and would not be addressed during this on-site quadrennial review.

Summary of Desk Review

The desk audit revealed that the MPO had satisfactorily completed or is in the process of completing the recommendations of the 2004 Certification Review. Since the MPO is in the process of updating the long range transportation plan (LRTP) several items along with new SAFETEA-LU requirements will be discussed during the review. The MPO annually develops and adopts a Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) to guide its' planning activities for the coming year. A member of the Federal Team had the opportunity to review and comment on the UPWP and its development.

The Lead Planning Agency (LPA) uses consultant services to manage the MPO planning process. Due to the large number of member jurisdictions the LPA and the member jurisdictions believe this process works best for them and they are very satisfied with the service the consultant is providing. A member of the Federal Team participated on the consultant selection committee for management of the CRMPO. The Federal Team would agree that this process is working satisfactorily.

The MPO serves a resource for member jurisdictions as they develop bicycle, pedestrian, greenways and land use plans. As a resource they help ensure that adopted plans can be integrated into the LRTP and that recommended improvements in the LRTP can be incorporated into local plans.

On-site Review

Long Range Transportation Plan

The MPO is in the process of updating the LRTP to the horizon year of 2035. As part of this update the MPO is required to meet new mandates in SAFETEA-LU. The MPO has already updated their socio-economic data projections for the plan update. The MPO works with the Cabarrus County Planning Department to obtain and track land development and building demolition data that is pertinent for the development of socio-economic development projections. **The process can track subdivision growth and compare it to school growth and the data can feed into the travel demand model for region. The MPO is commended for developing such an innovative process.**

The MPO is a participant in the 11 county regional travel demand model team. The model team was developed in 2004 in an effort to look a regional approach to transportation planning. The model is used for plan updates, transportation conformity, transit planning and smaller regional corridor analyses. The model has an annual socio economic data update process as well as a process for model updates, improvements and maintenance. The MPO participates financially as well as with data collection and model output reviews. The MPO should continue its' participation with the regional travel demand model, and their modeling coordination and cooperation efforts. These efforts are necessary for the update of the LRTP and future transportation conformity determinations.

The MPO has developed draft revenue projections and funding options for all three MPOs in the region for the 2035 LRTP updates. The draft projections consider inflation and how to best address inflation over the life of the LRTP. **To be SAFETEA-LU compliant the MPO will need to adopt a LRTP that takes into account inflation in revenue and project cost.** The revenue projections will be available for public review and MPO discussion during the summer. The MPO indicated the following differences from their current plan; no changes anticipated in the equity formula, possible toll funding, and more funds from the reduction of transfers from the Highway Trust Fund. The MPO has been discussing the potential benefits of tolling I-85 in Rowan County to widening and improve the bridge over the Yadkin River and increase capacity of the interstate. There have been numerous newspaper articles and discussions by local interests groups and persons regarding tolling this portion of I-85. The communities desires to construct the project sooner versus whether or not the citizens in that area should have to pay for such a short section of the Interstate system is still being discussed. The NC Legislature will need to give official approval for the NCTA to study this portion of I-85 as a toll facility. The plan will also include anticipated funds for maintenance and operation of the system.

Even while funding options are being discussed the MPO staff is working on a draft list of highway projects. The MPO does not anticipate many changes, if any, from the jurisdictions and the public. Not many projects have been funded recently, so the MPO still has many of their top priorities remaining to fund. The MPO solicits projects from local jurisdictions and the public. The projects proposed for inclusion in the LRTP are not ranked in any official quantitative or qualitative process. **It is recommended that the MPO consider developing and documenting a project ranking process.** The MPO uses the NCDOTs cost estimating tool to apply cost to projects in the LRTP. The MPO has found the costs developed by the tool to be relatively accurate when projects are constructed on schedule. The tool accounts for inflation, cost overruns and contingences. The MPO anticipates using a 5% inflation factor for all projects for all horizon years.

The MPO has invited the resources agencies to participate in the LRTP update process via public meetings, the MPOs website and e-mail. This is a first attempt to meet the environmental consultation requirement in SAFETEA-LU. **The MPO needs to document the consultation process and include it in the plan.** This will clarify expectation for the MPO as well as the environmental resource agencies. The MPO and the environmental resource agencies will need to examine the entire transportation plan and list of project to determine appropriate system level responses for potential impacts, mitigation opportunities and or avoidance measures.

In order to comply with SAFETEA-LU the MPO needs to put more emphasis on safety. North Carolina is a focus state for safety and planning done at the MPO should reflect how transportation projects, preservation and maintenance of the system will help improve the safety of the infrastructure. The MPO will need compare the LRTP to the Strategic Highway Safety Plan to determine what goals, objectives, policies and/or projects will help improve the safety of the highway system. It was noted that the MPOs

project selection process does not have a means to address safety. **The MPO is encouraged to consider how the MPO can consider safety in their project selection process. The MPO needs to develop a separate chapter in the LRTP and address safety. It is recommended that the MPO review the North Carolina Department of Transportation's Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) and outline ways that the LRTP can help the DOT achieve the goals of the SHSP.**

The MPO should update their Congestion Management Process (CMP) along with their LRTP update. 23 CFR 450.320 (d) states that "in a TMA designated as non-attainment area for ozone or carbon monoxide pursuant to the Clean Air Act, Federal funds may not be programmed for any project that will result in a significant increase in the carrying capacity for SOVs (i.e., a new general purpose highway on a new location or adding general purpose lanes, with the exception of safety improvements or the elimination of bottlenecks), unless the project is addressed through a congestion management process meeting the requirements of this section", therefore MPOs are encouraged to evaluate projects based on the horizon years in the LRTP to ensure that all projects have been evaluated in the CMP prior to their inclusion in the TIP and STIP. **The MPO has not considered using any measure other than volume over capacity to determine the level of congestion, but they are encouraged to work with the regional model team to determine if travel time analysis from the travel demand would be available for the next update of the CMP.**

For development of the 2030 LRTP the MPO made direct contact with local businesses and trucking groups to address freight considerations in the area. The results of the meeting yielded a request to establish dedicated truck routes and to make some smaller intersection improvements. **The MPO is encouraged to attend a Federal Highway Administration hosted workshop on integrating freight into the planning process to enhance the presence of freight in the planning process.** The North Carolina Division Office will provide the training.

Noteworthy Practice

- The MPO has developed a process to collect and track subdivision growth and compare it to school growth in Cabarrus County. This process will make the socio-economic update process to the long range transportation plan much smoother, since the data can feed into the travel demand model for region.

Recommendations

- The MPO needs to adopt a 2035 LRTP that
 - Takes into account inflation of revenue and project cost.
 - Includes a formal consultation plan that will address how the resource agencies will be involved in the LRTP development process. Include the plan and comments in the LRTP.
 - Includes a separate chapter on Safety in the 2035 LRTP that will address how the LRTP will help accomplish the goals of the Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP).

- Include a quantitative and/or qualitative ranking process that includes safety as a criterion.
- The MPO should update their Congestion Management Process (CMP) along with their LRTP update.
- The MPO is encouraged to work with the regional model team to determine if travel time analysis from the travel demand model would be available for the next update of the CMP.
- The MPO is encouraged to attend a Federal Highway Administration hosted workshop on integrating freight into the planning process.

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

The MPO is satisfied with the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and TIP process. As stated in their last review the MPO likes the 2-year STIP/TIP process and the one-on-one sessions the NCDOT offers the MPOs. The working relationship with the NCDOT Program Unit has improved over the last several years. The Program Unit Coordinator has attended MPO meetings and made presentation at several of those meetings.

The CRMPO develops to project selection lists for the NCDOT because they are in two funding regions. The MPO representatives within each funding region are very satisfied with the way the process is working, but all would be happier with more funding or more funded projects in the region.

The MPO is extremely supportive of the Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) funding process which imitates the STIP 7-year programming process. CMAQ funds were allocated to the MPOs and they programmed the funds over 7-year period. The CRMPO would like for this process to continue.

Air Quality

The CRMPO currently has a conforming 2030 LRTP (*The USDOT LRTP approval date is May 3, 2005*) and a Fiscal Year (FY) 2007-2013 TIP. The USDOT transportation conformity determinations were made on both the CRMPO amended 2030 LRTP and the FY 2007-2013 TIP on June 29, 2007. The USDOT made the transportation conformity determination on the FY 2009-2015 TIP on July 11, 2008 and the TIP will be effective when USDOT approves the STIP on October 1, 2008.

CRMPO is currently working on their SAFETEA-LU compliant 2035 LRTP update. The kick-off transportation conformity interagency consultation meeting for the conformity work on the 2035 LRTP update was held April 16, 2008. The MPO is in the process of extending the horizon year to 2035 and selecting projects for inclusion in the LRTP update.

The NCDAQ submitted an attainment demonstration State Implementation Plan (SIP) for the 8-hour ozone standard to EPA on June 15, 2007. The North Carolina Division of Air Quality submitted a SIP to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) with separate

county-level budgets for the 7-non-attainment counties. If the EPA approves the SIP as submitted the CRMPO would be able to approve their future LRTPs and TIPs without being dependent of the remaining 6 counties (assuming the other counties are in conformity). However, since that SIP submittal there have been significant improvements to the Metrolina Regional Model and its associated model inputs. The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) requested that NCDAQ consider revised data to be included in the Metrolina 8-hour ozone SIP. The NCDAQ reviewed the proposed new data submitted by the regional partners, and developed new budget numbers based on the new data. The NCDAQ submitted a letter to the Metrolina regional partners on May 15, 2008, notifying them of their decision not to recommend changes to the 8-hour ozone SIP. Over the next several months the Metrolina regional partners will need to work closely together as they map out their next steps, since it is predicted that several of the Metrolina area counties may not be able to pass the early budget years in the 8-hour SIP. **Process roles and responsibilities should be determined to ensure a smooth process for future LRTP and TIP updates.**

The CRMPO will be relying on the Regional Travel Demand Model (RTDM) for future LRTP and TIP updates. The CRMPO is currently working on updating their socioeconomic data and project lists for use in the model by July 2008. The 2035 LRTP and transportation conformity determination is due May 3, 2009.

The certification review team emphasized to CRMPO the importance of regional coordination not only for the modeling work, but also for the transportation conformity process. Communication is vital not only with the Federal and State interagency consultation partners, but also with the transportation partners with in the Metrolina Area.

Recommendations

- CRMPO should continue coordination and communication efforts with the Metrolina regional partners for modeling and transportation conformity.
- CRMPO should help define the roles and responsibilities for the 2035 LRTP update and for future TIP/LRTP amendments.

Transit

The City of Concord provides transit service (aka the "RIDER" Transit System) in Cabarrus-Rowan counties to the east of Charlotte, NC. Ridership is approximately 1,200 persons per day, and the system provides about 379,000 trips per annum. The system provides transit service six days a week to many destinations in Concord and Kannapolis, the largest cities in the MPO. According to the MPO, the buses are clean and the city receives many compliments on the system and service. In fact, patrons want more stops and extended hours of service. The city shares in the cost of express/commuter service to Charlotte and has the highest ridership of any express route to the Center City of Charlotte. RIDER charges \$1 for regular fare and half price for students, senior citizens, and the disabled. Fares are evaluated periodically by the Transit Commission. RIDER is part of the regional Metrolina ITS architecture that was

developed by ITRE. RIDER is currently designing and building a new multi-modal center for Concord and Kannapolis that will require a reconfiguration of routes.

Ridership Trends

Ridership is reportedly growing and has more than doubled since the April 2004 startup. Ridership increased 10 percent between 2006 and 2007 and 29 percent between 2005 and 2006. The Concord Express ridership has grown 43 percent between 2005 and 2007. April 2008 was the highest month on record with almost 9,000 patrons. The city of Concord is paying to add another bus to the current routes beginning June 2008, because there are too many riders on the existing buses.

Funding

All of the federal funds come to the City of Concord for the RIDER Transit System. The MPO works cooperatively with the City as the lead agency to identify long term capital needs and then place these projects in the LRTP and TIP. The City of Salisbury receives their transit operating funds from NCDOT. Local funding comes from other sources, including a \$5 motor vehicle registration fee in Concord and Kannapolis that is used to subsidize the system. This revenue source works fairly well and should continue in the future. The MPO also evaluates the financial resources available to the system, primarily the Section 5307 funds, and program capital needs according to the resources available.

EJ Communities

EJ populations have been mapped and the transit system targets those communities for service since they are the most likely to use it. The biggest benefit for these communities is access to goods and services, whether it is the hospital, government offices, jobs, etc. The city and MPO receive regular inquiries by people looking to get from their communities to other places in the community and they have no other affordable means but a taxicab. The MPO uses a multi-pronged approach to get the EJ communities involved in planning with direct mail/ads in utility bills, newspaper, and website. The MPO has also done presentations on the RIDER system in EJ communities to explain route and service changes.

Public Involvement

Customer Care cards are provided on each bus/route for citizen feedback. The RIDER Customer Service phone line operates daily and provides the majority of all customer service. The website (www.ckrider.com) also provides a tool for public involvement. The public is generally supportive of the RIDER system.

Para-transit Service & Coordinated Mobility

Door to door service is provided for those disabled persons within three quarters mile distance of a fixed route. They also offer a 50 percent discount for disabled passengers. Public Involvement efforts also help target the elderly, disabled or special populations. This service is integrated contract with the Cabarrus County Transportation Service (CCTS) – and advertised with both RIDER and CCTS materials. The MPO works closely with Cabarrus County to provide ADA para-transit service and to coordinate with

their human service needs. Rider will be providing expanded service this fall to southern Rowan residents who desire a connection to the Rowan County human services in Salisbury. The city of Charlotte receives the JARC and New Freedom funds for the region.

Security

RIDER has a Transit Safety Security & Emergency Preparedness Program (TSSEPP). A Threat and Vulnerability assessment has been completed for explosives. The initial bus purchase included camera security systems that fulfilled this requirement. The FFY07 budget included a Transit Watch Program, but was not implemented until FFY08. There is a 1% budgeted for the FFY08 for new bus purchase. All Supervisors are required to complete a Safety Leadership Program (SLP) which addresses the importance of safety in the work place. The Operations Supervisor is responsible for training any non-maintenance employee in a safety sensitive position. The SLP program was developed to insure that all front line supervisors are equipped to address safety issues using the 300-29-1 rule. RIDER also has cameras on the buses and will also have cameras in the new Transit Center. Dispatchers can access the police directly through their radio system if there is an accident.

Service Deficiencies and Challenges

RIDER does not presently provide Sunday service. RIDER frequently receives calls for transit service to outlying areas including Mt. Pleasant, Harrisburg, and Salisbury. Beginning in the fall, RIDER will begin providing service between Kannapolis and Salisbury thru a CMAQ grant. We would like to offer expanded service to surrounding communities in the near future. Equipment costs and operating expenses are the key considerations for the timing of the expansion. Staff is investigating methods to increase frequency to existing routes if possible (peak hour, etc.). Monthly and annual reporting is conducted, which is reviewed by staff and the members of the Concord-Kannapolis Transit Commission (CKTC). RIDER does not now need nor have "Smart Card" technology or Wi Fi connectivity.

Light Rail

The MPO is beginning discussions to evaluate the extension of Light Rail service from Charlotte's proposed Northeast line (Lynx Blue Line extension) into Cabarrus County. This work will require close coordination of land use planning with this possible fixed guideway investment. Transit staff is actively participating in local land use plan initiatives by our MPO members. A corridor analysis is underway which would consider options from I-485 northeast into and through Cabarrus County. Such a line would boost choice ridership and save energy and reduce congestion during peak hours from Concord and Kannapolis into Charlotte.

MPO and Transit Working Relationship

The MPO works in tandem with transit planning staff to ensure that the MPO plans for their short and long term needs. The MPO staff attends transit commission meetings along with NCDOT. The City of Concord also meets with CATS over the express routes and provides regular reports to the MPO staff and TCC. The next LRTP update is

scheduled to be complete by May 2009. The MPO is participating in the interagency process for refining the Travel Model and developing the conforming document. They will be modeling the current service and routes as well as any expansions for this LRTP update. There is a Transit Implementation Plan that includes capital facility planning. The Transit Commission is currently building a multi-million dollar intermodal facility between Concord and Kannapolis. Parsons Brinckerhoff developed the transit development plan (TDP).

Public Participation

The CRMPO is in the process of updating their Public Involvement Plan to meet SAFETEA-LU and Title VI. The MPO began the process by surveying the public. A summary of the survey results is attached in the Appendix B. **It was noted that there was no attempt to collect on a voluntary basis information regarding race, income or other personal information and the MPO is encouraged to ask these questions in the future.** Personal information will allow the MPO to evaluate what populations, income groups, etc., they are reaching and which groups could use more targeted outreach from the MPO. The MPO is aware of the need to address new SAFETEA-LU requirements (visualization techniques, meeting times and locations, outreach methods for low-income and minority populations, elderly and disabled, freight shippers and providers, public transportation providers and representatives, bicycle and pedestrian interest groups, etc.) with this update. Outreach to minority populations has increased since the first certification review. The CRMPO has begun meeting with a minority-low income focus group in the Town of East Spencer on the development of our 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan. The first meeting was held on February 18, 2008 at East Spencer Town Hall (which is accessible by public transit) to review the LRTP schedule, Goals and Objectives, and the MPO's list of TIP priority projects. Participants gave staff feedback on projects and ask questions about I-85 widening construction at exit 79. The second meeting was held on June 16, 2008 at East Spencer Town Hall to review the SE Projections, Financial Assumptions, and list of fiscally constrained LRTP projects. Participants gave staff feedback on financial revenue projections and taxes/fees/tolls and ask questions about the Yadkin River bridge replacement project. MPO staff plans to continue meeting with the focus group in 2008-09 with the next meeting date to be determined by the release of Travel Model results by the MPO. **The MPO is commended for these outreach efforts to the East Spencer community.** Since 2004, some information on the website has been translated in Spanish and the MPO regularly works with and through the Hispanic Training Center to reach the Hispanic population. The MPO does not know of any minority newspaper in the area.

The public involvement plan should include methods for outreach, especially to targeted populations, policy for foreign language translation, method for receiving and the disposition of comments and a monitoring and evaluation process. The MPO has an effective website that they believe most of their citizens get their information. The website has the ability to provide the MPO with the number of hits to the site which can be used as they evaluate the benefit of the website. **The MPO is encouraged to put more information about their planning activities on the website (individual elements of the LRTP as they are being developed, meeting**

agendas, opportunities for public comment and involvement, MPO board membership and contact information, etc.).

The Technical Coordinating (TCC) and Transportation Advisory Committee's (TAC) for the CRMPO are advertised in the local newspaper, posted on the MPOs website and open to the public. The public is given an opportunity to address the TAC at the start of each meeting. With so many new members on the TAC the MPO is considering preparing an MPO orientation presentation. **The FHWA agreed to provide the MPO with some presentation materials that will address the Federal requirements and expectations of an MPO Board.** Additionally, the MPO advertises all other meetings in newspapers, and makes contact with neighborhood associations in Cabarrus County and with the Cabarrus County school system, and other interest and neighborhood groups. The MPO has used a citizen's advisory committee for implementation of the Rider transit system, but for any other transportation related initiatives. The Town of East Spencer is a prominently African American community that with MPO will be working closely with as nearby transportation projects advance in the planning process. The MPO believes that most citizens have specific concerns or project related issues and are not usually very interested in the long range planning process.

Noteworthy Practices

- The MPO is commended for its' efforts to engage the East Spencer low income and minority community in the 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan update process.

Recommendations

- The MPO is encouraged to solicit personal information on comment cards to help them better address the needs of their citizens.
- The MPO should ensure that their Public Involvement Plan includes methods for outreach, especially to targeted populations, policy for foreign language translation, method for receiving and the disposition of comments and a monitoring and evaluation process.
- The MPO is encouraged to put more information about their planning activities on the website (individual elements of the LRTP as they are being developed, meeting agendas, opportunities for public comment and involvement, MPO board membership and contact information, etc.).
- The FHWA should provide to the MPO presentation materials that will address the Federal requirements and expectations of an MPO Board.

Title VI/EJ

The CRMPO has developed a demographic profile for the entire planning area. CRMPO used census data based on census block groups to identify all minority and low income populations within the metropolitan area boundaries. This data was then mapped based upon the degree to which minorities and low income populations were present. **The review team suggested that CRMPO refine the ranges used to identify minority concentrations to provide greater detail of those areas.** CRMPO chose to map low income populations separate from minority populations. **It was**

suggested by the review team that the MPO also develop a map reflecting both minority and low income areas. It was also noted that the African Americans are the largest minority present; however, **because there has been a large influx of Hispanics, it would be prudent for the MPO to separately identify these two largest minority groups.** The review team also suggested that **CRMPO be aware of any minority business communities that may be present in the planning area.**

The next step that CRMPO took was to overlay all future projects onto both maps in an effort to identify which projects will potentially impact minority and low income areas. **The review team recommended that CRMPO also overlay past and current projects, in addition to future projects, to ensure that possible cumulative effects are considered.** With regard to determining potential impacts on minority and low income populations caused by transportation projects, CRMPO has not yet developed any measures or quantitative analyses to accomplish this. Title VI law requires non-discrimination in all federally funded or assisted programs, policies, and activities. Additionally, USDOT environmental justice (EJ) guidance further clarifies Title VI and requests MPO's to address the service equity of its transportation investments on minority and low income communities. **The review team recommended that both benefits and burdens identified and comparisons made between minority/low income populations and non-minority/non low income populations.**

CRMPO currently does not specifically consider EJ in its planning process. The MPO does not have an EJ policy, and the planning process does not have a method to identify the needs of low income and minority populations. **The review team commends the MPO, because staff did indicate that as part of the long range plan update, CRMPO will include a goal and objectives that specifically address Title VI and EJ.** It was noted that the modeling process used by CRMPO includes median income as derived from the Census information; however, the MPO does not use that information for any EJ analyses. When asked if EJ was considered during the MTIP development process, staff indicated that the process is quite static and leaves little room for the MPO to negotiate. However, the MPO indicated that with regard to the timing or scheduling of projects, it would consider EJ as a factor in the future.

Overall, CRMPO is headed in the right direction with regard to addressing Title VI and environmental justice.

Noteworthy Practice

- The CRMPO is commended for agreeing to include a goal and objectives in the 2035 LRTP that specifically addresses Title VI and EJ.

Recommendations

- CRMPO should improve its demographic profile by taking the following steps
 - Include an overlay of past and current projects in addition to future projects to ensure that cumulative effects are considered.
 - Combine the mapping of low income and minority populations.

- Provide a further breakdown of minority populations by mapping Hispanics and African Americans separately.
- Provide more detailed ranges for the identification of minority populations.
- Develop analyses to determine transportation system equity. Both benefits and burdens are to be identified and comparisons are to be made between minority/low income populations and non-minority/ non low income populations.
- Include Title VI and EJ considerations in the LRTP update and the development of the TIP.
- Conduct a needs analysis of minority and low income populations.
- Identify and consider impacts on minority business communities.

Statewide/Regional Coordination

The MPO participates in regional planning and modeling efforts with the Mecklenburg Union, Gaston and Rock Hill Fort Mill Area Transportation System MPOs, Rocky River and Lake Norman Rural Planning Organizations (RPO) and the States of North and South Carolina. The MPO coordinator believes that it is a very cooperative process even if he isn't in 100% agreement with everything that done. The MPO is very appreciative of the work being done by the NCDOT and other MPOs in the conformity and modeling efforts. The presence of the Transportation Planning Branch coordinator is very appreciated by the MPO. They would like to see the NCDOT participate in more NC Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (NCAMPO) meetings. Having the Charlotte Regional Alliance for Transportation (CRAFT) and the NCAMPO meetings is very beneficial to the MPOs. The CRMPO believes that being a smaller MPO adjoining a larger MPO has some advantages in that they have learned a lot from MUMPO and Charlotte Department of Transportation's experiences.

MPO Issues/Concerns

- The MPO listed the following as areas of interest and concern for the future:
- The proposed Ozone Standard – The MPO has attempted to influence the proposed standard.
 - Funding especially for the widening of I-85 in Rowan County.
 - Light Rail – Studies are being discussed, but when it could happen and when is the question.
 - Complying with all the new SAFETEA-LU requirements.

Conclusion

Overall the CRMPO has a transportation planning process that adequately addresses local and regional transportation issues facing the area. The review team identified the following noteworthy practices and make the following recommendations for improving the transportation planning process:

Noteworthy Practices

- The MPO has developed a process to collect and track subdivision growth and compare it to school growth in Cabarrus County. This process will make the socio-economic update process to the long range transportation plan much smoother, since the data can feed into the travel demand model for region.
- The MPO engaged in outreach efforts to the East Spencer low income and minority community as part of the 2035 LRTP update.
- The MPO attended formal Environmental Justice training.
- The MPO has agreed to adopt separate goals for Title VI/EJ in the 2035 LRTP update.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the CRMPO:

- The MPO needs to adopt a 2035 LRTP that
 - Takes into account inflation of revenue and project cost.
 - Includes a formal consultation plan that will address how the resource agencies will be involved in the LRTP development process. Include the plan and comments in the LRTP.
 - Includes a separate chapter on Safety in the 2035 LRTP that will address how the Plan will help accomplish the goals of the Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP).
 - Include a qualitative and/or qualitative project ranking process that includes safety as a criterion.
- The MPO should update their Congestion Management Process (CMP) along with the 2035 LRTP update.
- The MPO is encouraged to work with the regional model team to determine if travel time analysis from the travel demand model would be available for the next update of the CMP.
- The MPO is encouraged to attend a Federal Highway Administration hosted workshop on integrating freight into the planning process.
- CRMPO should continue regional coordination and communication efforts with the Metrolina regional partners for modeling, air quality conformity and LRTP updates.
- CRMPO should help lay out the roles and responsibilities for the 2035 LRTP update and for future TIP/LRTP amendments
- The MPO is encouraged to solicit personal information on comment cards to help them better address the needs of their citizens.
- The MPO should ensure that their Public Involvement Plan includes methods for outreach, especially to targeted populations, policy for foreign language translation, method for receiving and the disposition of comments and a monitoring and evaluation process.
- The MPO is encouraged to put more information about their planning activities on the website (individual elements of the LRTP as they are being developed, meeting agendas, opportunities for public comment and involvement, MPO board membership and contact information, etc.).

- The FHWA should provide to the MPO presentation materials that will address the Federal requirements and expectations of an MPO Board.
- Develop an e-mail and mail list of Minority and Low-Income populations to ensure outreach to those populations.
- Continue regional coordination and participation efforts for the 2035 LRTP update.
- Continue working to meet TIP/LRTP conformity deadlines.
- Improve its demographic profile by taking the following steps
 - Include an overlay of past and current projects in addition to future projects to ensure that cumulative effects are considered.
 - Combine the mapping of low income and minority populations.
 - Provide a further breakdown of minority populations by mapping Hispanics and African Americans separately.
 - Provide more detailed ranges for the identification of minority populations.
- Develop analyses to determine transportation system equity. Both benefits and burdens are to be identified and comparisons are to be made between minority/low income populations and non-minority/ non low income populations.
- Include Title VI and EJ considerations in the LRTP update and the development of the TIP.
- Conduct a needs analysis of minority and low income populations.
- Identify and consider impacts on minority business communities.
- Include Title VI/EJ as a factor in the LRTP update and TIP development.

Certification

The Federal Review Team, consisting of staff from the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration, certifies the Cabarrus Rowan MPO planning process for 4 years from the date this report.

Appendix A - Agenda

CRMPO Certification Review

Agenda

Tuesday, June 10, 2008

Amtrak Train Station – 201 South Main St. – Kannapolis - NC

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| 8:15 am to 8:45 am | Introduction and Overview |
| 8:45 am to 9:15 am | MPO Overview – Accomplishments/Future Outlook/Issues/Concerns |
| 9:15 am to 10:15 am | Transit Planning |
| 10:15 am to 10:30 am | Break |
| 10:30 am to 11:30 am | Public Involvement/EJ |
| 11:30 am to 12:45 pm | Lunch |
| 12:45 pm to 2:00 pm | LRTP Update, SAFETEA-LU, Congestion Management |
| 2:00 pm to 2:45 pm | Modeling and Conformity |
| 2:45 pm to 3:00 pm | Break |
| 3:00 pm to 4:00 pm | Regional and Statewide Coordination Transit Planning |
| 4:00 pm to 4:30 pm | FHWA Team Review Meeting |
| 4:30 pm to 5:00 pm | FHWA Team Report Out |
| 5:00 pm to 6:30 pm | Public Meeting – Kannapolis Train Station |

Appendix B - Public Involvement

Item 1: Certification Review Advertising

Item 2: Public Involvement Survey Results

NOTICE

Federal Certification Review of the Cabarrus-Rowan Metropolitan Planning Organization

The Cabarrus-Rowan Metropolitan Planning Organization (CR MPO) is seeking public comment and review of the planning activities and procedures. Every four years, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) conduct a certification review to determine whether the CR MPO follows a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive transportation planning process.

A 30 day public comment period will begin in Monday, May 19 and conclude on Wednesday, June 18. Anyone wishing to provide written comment should send them to Loretta Barren of the FHWA at Loretta.Barren@fhwa.dot.gov

A public meeting regarding the certification review is scheduled for: Tuesday, June 10, from 5:00 to 6:30 PM at the Amtrak Train Station, 201 South Main Street, Kannapolis, NC.

Additional information can be obtained by contacting CR MPO staff at 704-795-7528, or by email at pconrad@mblsolution.com.

CABARRUS-ROWAN METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

October 2007: Cabarrus-Rowan Metropolitan Planning Organization (CR MPO) is seeking input on Public Involvement from Cabarrus and Rowan County citizens. The survey will be used to determine the best methods for CR MPO to effectively share information and consult with the public. The information from this survey will be used in modifying the comprehensive Public Involvement Policy for citizens throughout the Cabarrus-Rowan Metropolitan Area.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT SURVEY RESULTS

AS OF 2/27/2008

1. What portions of transportation planning interest you?

Check as many as apply.

| | |
|---|---------------------------|
| 16 Roads and Highways | 0 Trucking and Freight |
| 16 Traffic Congestion | 7 Railroad |
| 5 Public Transportation or Transit | 10 Environmental Concerns |
| 4 Bicycle and Pedestrian | 3 Aviation |
| Other: <u>Accessible transportation for persons with disabilities 1</u> | |

2. Have you participated in transportation planning public meetings in the past?

| | |
|-------|-------|
| 2 Yes | 16 No |
|-------|-------|

3. When do you tend to become involved in transportation-related issues?

| | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 3 I am never involved | 8 When the project affects me |
| 12 When the project interests me | 2 I am highly involved |

4. Which of the following affects your level of participation?

| | |
|---|---|
| 2 I regularly participate | 2 The times are inconvenient |
| 11 I do not receive enough information to participate | 0 I do not think participation is Useful. |
| 1 The events are not accessible | |
| Other: <u>Don't have the time 1</u> | |
| <u>This Survey 1</u> | |

5. How do you find out about public meetings and workshops?

Check as many as apply.

| | |
|-------------------|-------------|
| 15 Newspaper | 4 Internet |
| 3 Direct mailing | 7 E-mail |
| 1 Poster or Flyer | 1 Telephone |

Other: Word of mouth 1

Meetings in the community 1

6. How much time is necessary for public review and comment for updates and major amendments to all primary transportation plans/programs for which the MPO is responsible?

| | |
|-----------|-----------|
| 0 7 days | 3 45 days |
| 3 15 days | 5 60 days |
| 7 30 days | |

Other: 90 days 1

CABARRUS-ROWAN METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

7. Please select your preferred method of communicating with CR MPO.
- | | | | |
|-----------------|-----------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|
| 2 | Phone a CR MPO employee | 2 | Mail a letter to CR MPO |
| 2 | Meet with a CR MPO employee | 8 | Comment at public hearing or meeting |
| 10 | E-mail CR MPO | | |
| Other: <u>0</u> | | | |
8. Are you satisfied with CRMPO's efforts to solicit public participation?
- | | | | |
|---|----------------|---|------------------|
| 2 | Very Satisfied | 1 | Very Unsatisfied |
| 6 | Satisfied | 7 | Don't Know |
| 2 | Unsatisfied | | |
9. Should public comments be included in the final plan document?
- | | | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|---|---------|
| 6 | As written with the name of submitter | 3 | Both |
| 8 | Summarized with no names included | 1 | Neither |
10. How should the Cabarrus-Rowan MPO release public comments (Mark all that apply)?
- | | |
|---|---|
| 12 | In public comment section of Final Plans/programs/projects |
| 10 | Available at MPO meetings |
| 12 | Available on the MPO web site |
| 8 | Available at public meetings |
| 1 | Documented and available for review as requested, but not included in final plans |
| Other: <u>Email to interested parties 1</u> | |
| <u>Newspapers 1</u> | |

Appendix C - Desk Review

CRMPO Desk Review

Follow-up from previous review

Recommendations

1. Continue cooperative regional planning efforts – MPO has continued to participate in CRAFT meetings, regional modeling, LRTP updates elements, ongoing corridor and regional studies. Based on the MUMPO Certification Review we contacted all Metrolina partners to encourage continued cooperative efforts. *We will discuss this further during the review.*
2. The UPWP allocation process was examined and found to be developed on target to meeting program needs as allocated. The current prospectus was developed and adopted in 2003 and is adequately addressing the planning functions for the MPO. The UPWP is developed on an annual basis.
3. The MPO annually approves the self-certification based on the checklist that was recommended by the FHWA NC Division Office. The MPO approved its' self certification March 2008.
4. The MPO has been working to involve the freight industry in the planning through their web site, mailing list and media advertising. The MPO has made contact with various industry representatives to discuss transportation in the MPO area. Major trucking routes as well as short and long term improvements were identified. The MPO has plans to continue this type of involvement in the future. There is a separate section on freight in the MPOs current 2030 LRTP and it will be updated as needed with the development of the 2035.
5. The MPO is currently updating the 2030 LRTP with a new horizon year of 2035. The MPO continues to use the plan its' source for project selection. *(This item will be discussed further during the onsite review)*
6. Section 5.4 of the 2030 LRTP includes Public Transportation service within the MPO area. The section covers both short and long term plans for expansion, improvement and operation of the system.
7. The MPO will establish a process for publishing the annual listing of projects in the update of its' Public Involvement Process (PIP). The MPO has advertised the availability of the annual listing of projects in the print media and the web site, and it will be included in the updated PIP. This is sufficient to meet federal requirements.
8. With the update of the PIP the MPO will cover public involvement for transit related planning activities.
9. As stated in No. 1 above, the MPO continues to be an active participant in the maintenance and update of the Regional Travel Demand Model (RTDM). *We will discuss this further during the onsite visit.*
- 10.-12. The MPO is designated non-attainment for the 8 hour Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards in the Metrolina region included a portion of South Carolina. The MPO along with other MPO and non-MPO areas are active participants in the conformity processes for the long range plans and transportation improvement program amendments. *We will discuss this item further during the onsite visit.*
13. The MPO participates in SICM meetings as time allows. He is also on the mailing list, so he is kept informed of SICM meeting discussion.

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14. The MPO participated in EJ/Title VI training with other regional partners and will use information learned during training and since to better update this section of the 2035 Plan, this includes items referenced in # 15-20 in the 2004 certification review. *We will discuss this item further during our onsite visit.*

15. The MPO has developed a CMS/CMP that will be evaluated for the 2035 plan update. *We will discuss this further during the onsite visit.*

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SAFETEA-LU Review (New items to be discussed)

Address the 8 Metropolitan Planning Factors

1. Increase the Safety of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized user.
Increase the Security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized user.

The 2030 LRTP addresses 7-Planning Factors as was required under TEA-21. To be in compliance with SAFETEA-LU the MPO will need to separate safety and security and provide separate analysis of how the LRTP addresses these factors.

2. Plan should promote consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns.

CRMPO should continue to work with area planning departments and economic development agencies in developing socio-economic data projections, and when making plan and project amendments to remain in compliance.

L RTP Provisions

3. 4-year update cycle in non-attainment areas w/conformity

CRMPO is aware of the update cycle and is taking necessary steps to begin the update process.

We will discuss this further during the review.

4. Include operational and management strategies to improve performance of the existing system to relieve congestion and maximize mobility for people and goods.

- a. ITS,
- b. Travel Demand Management

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The 2030 plan identifies ITS strategies in the Congestion Management Process.

5. Consult, as appropriate with State and local agencies responsible for land use management, natural resources, environmental protection, conservation, and historic preservation concerning the development of the LRTP. Consultation shall involve:
 - a. Comparison of LRTP with State conservation plans and map, if available, and/or
 - b. Comparison of LRTP to inventories of natural resources or historic resources, if available.

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CRMPO should work with the North Carolina Department of Transportation-Transportation Planning Branch (NCDOT-TPB), North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources (NCDENR), State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), North Carolina Department of Commerce (DOC), and other agencies as necessary to collect needed plans for this review.

We will discuss this further during the site visit.

6. Environmental Element

The 2035 plan will need to include an environmental element that describes transportation related impacts on the environmental. There should be a systems level discussion that includes:

- a. Assessment of system wide impacts of implementing the plan
- b. Possible minimization and/or avoidance measures
- c. This element should be developed with input from governmental and environmental resource agencies.

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We will discuss this further during the site visit.

7. Include a safety element that incorporates or summarizes the priorities, goals, countermeasures or projects in the LRTP to the Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP).

A separate Safety chapter should be developed to integrate goals, objectives, and strategies in the SHSP that are pertinent to the area.

8. Develop a documented consultation process that outlines roles, responsibilities and key decision points for consulting with other governments and agencies that are affected by transportation (State and local planned growth, economic development, environmental protection, airport operations, or freight movements, Indian Tribal Lands or Federal land management agencies).

CRMPO should work with governmental and environmental resource agencies to develop a documented consultation process. Use FHWA guidance as a starting point.

We will discuss this further during the site visit.

9. Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning

The 2030 LRTP currently includes a Bicycle and Pedestrian element. The bike and pedestrian plan, The Livable Community Blueprint (LCB) completed in 2002 identifies over 200 individual destinations and over 200 miles of on and off road facilities. The MPO is using this plan to guide their planning process.

The MPO should review this element and make updates as appropriate.

10. Financial Plan:

a. May include additional projects that would be included in the LRTP, if reasonable additional resources (beyond those already identified) were available.

b. Effective December 11, 2007, revenue and cost estimates must use and inflation rate(s) to reflect year of expenditure dollars based on reasonable financial principles and information, developed cooperatively by the MPO, State DOT and public transportation operator.

c. For the outer year of the plan (beyond first 10yrs) the outer years may reflect aggregate cost ranges/cost bands, as long as the future funding sources is reasonably expected to be available.

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CRMPO worked with area MPOs/RPOs to develop a regional financial plan with individual MPO elements for the 2030 plan update. CRMPO is leading the effort to update this financial element for the Metrolina region MPOs 2035 LRTP update. The NCDOT has also provided the MPOs with their long range forecast review table to assist the MPOs with this effort.

We will discuss this further during the site visit.

11. Public Participation Plan (PPP):

a. MPO shall develop a documented participation plan that defines the process for providing everyone (see item 11b for list) with reasonable opportunities to be involved in the planning process.

b. The PPP shall be developed in consultation with the interested parties and shall at a minimum, describe explicit procedures, strategies, and desired outcomes.

c. Provide adequate public notice of public participation activities and time for public review and comment at key decision points.

d. Provide timely notice and reasonable access to information about transportation issues and processes.

e. Employ visualization techniques to describe plans and TIP.

f. Make public information (technical information and meeting notices) available in electronically accessible formats and means, such as the

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Web.

- g. Hold any public meeting(s) at convenient and accessible locations and times.
- h. Demonstrate explicit consideration and response to public input received during development of the plan and TIP.
- i. Seek out and consider the needs of those traditionally under-served by existing transportation systems, such as low-income and minority households.
- j. Provide additional opportunities for public comment, if the final plan and/or TIP differ significantly from the version that was made available for public comment and raises new material issues...
- k. Coordinate with the statewide transportation plan public involvement and consultation processes
- l. Periodically review the effectiveness of the procedures and strategies in the PPP to ensure a full and open process.
- m. Provide citizens, affected public agencies, representatives' of public transportation employees, freight shippers and providers, private providers of transportation, representatives of users of: public transportation, bicycle transportation facilities, pedestrian walkways, disabled, and other interested parties with a reasonable opportunity to comment on the plan and TIP, based on the PPP plan.
- n. The LRTP shall be published or otherwise made readily available for public review including in electronically accessible formats and means, such as the web.
- o. When significant comments are received on the draft plan and TIP as a result of the PPP process or the interagency consultation process, a summary, analysis and report on the disposition of comments shall be made part of the final plan and/or TIP.

CRMPO is in the process of developing SAFETEA-LU compliant PPP. Draft efforts have been reviewed by the Division Office and are acceptable.

12. Title VI and EJ

The 2030 LRTP has a Social and Environmental Issues element that covers Title VI and EJ.

This element in the 2035 plan should more thoroughly address Title VI. The EJ component of the plan should:

- a. Define the EJ communities
- b. Identify measures/methods to determine service equity
- c. Map communities
- d. Overlay proposed transportation system over mapped communities, this could be done by horizon year
- e. Analyze impacts
- f. Identify negative and positive impacts
- g. Identify any recommended avoidance and/or minimization measures, if

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appropriate

We will discuss this further during the site visit.

13. Congestion Management Process (formerly congestion management system) continuation of the requirement:

- a. LRTPs in a TMA shall address congestion
- b. Develop a congestion management process that defines congestion, identifies performance measures, and methods to monitor and evaluate the performance of the system based on established performance measures.
- c. Develop an implementation schedule, implementation responsibilities and funding sources, as well as, a schedule for assessment of the implemented strategies.
- d. In TMAs designated as non-attainment for ozone or carbon monoxide, Federal funds may not be programmed for any project that will result in a significant increase (SOV) (a new general purpose highway on new location or adding general purpose lanes) in carrying capacity for single occupant vehicles unless the project is address through a CMP.

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CRMPO has a CMP that is included in the 2030 LRTP. The CMP needs to be reviewed and updated, if necessary, with the long range plan. The CMP should ensure that all capacity adding projects within the first ten years of the LRTP are included.

We will discuss this further during the site visit.

14. Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

- a. All future TIPs will be developed and approved for 4-yrs.
- b. Effective December 11, 2007, revenue and cost estimates must use an inflation rate(s) to reflect year of expenditure dollars based on reasonable financial principles and information, developed cooperatively by the MPO, State DOT and public transportation operator. The NCDOT will supply revenue and cost estimates that reflect inflated dollars for the year of expenditure for the 2009-2013 STIP/TIP and for future STIP/TIPs.

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See comments in item #10.

We will discuss this further during the site visit.

15. Transit Planning (New Items to be Discussed)

- a. Human Service Coordinated Planning (the process of coordinating stakeholders and the MPO's role with the transit provider(s) in developing the coordinated plan for human service transportation) and documentation of coordinated planning (for example, the Job Access Reverse Commute, Elderly/Disabled and New Freedom Programs of FTA require coordinated

planning). This should include both Concord and Rowan Counties.

- b. LRTP and fiscal constraint for future capital investments for transit (based on “reasonable” funding sources and analysis).
- c. Public Involvement compliance per SAFETEA-LU
- d. Coordinated service with Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS) and future transit plans.
- e. Examples of safety and security planning associated with the local transit service/system to be noted as relevant (cameras on buses/trains/in stations, security and police coordination, etc.)
- f. New/revised Statewide/Metropolitan regulations (joint FTA/FHWA)...checks and balances on compliance, etc.

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CRMPO does the does the transit service planning. They implemented the current transit system for Kannapolis and Concord, RIDER.

We will discuss this further during the site visit.