

MINUTES
Of the
TRANSPORTATION POLICY BOARD
Of the
Nashville Area Metropolitan Planning Organization
March 17, 2021

Attendees: Mayor Rick Bell, Mr. Steve Bland, Mayor Paige Brown, Mayor Mike Callis, Mayor Jamie Clary, Mr. Preston Elliott (for Gov. Bill Lee), Mayor Rick Graham, Mr. Gerald Herman (for Mayor Michael Arnold), Mayor Anthony Holt, Mr. Eddie Hood, Mayor Randall Hutto, Mr. Jim Kerr (for Mayor Shane McFarland), Mayor Bill Ketron, Mayor James Maness, Mayor Chaz Molder, Mayor Ken Moore, Mayor Mary Esther Reed, Mr. Jonathan Russell, Mr. Sean Santalla, Mr. Marty Sewell, Mayor Billy Vogle, Mr. Matt Von Lunen

Call to Order and Approval of Previous Meeting minutes

Mayor Mary Esther Reed, Chair, opened the meeting at 10:15 a.m. The meeting was held via Microsoft Teams.

Mayor Ken Moore moved to approve the February 17, 2021 meeting minutes. Mayor Bill Ketron seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Action Items

a) Public Hearing: Resolution TPB-2021-05 Amending the FYs 2020-23 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Ms. Anna Emerson, Principal Planner, presented Cycle B amendments to the FYs 2020-23 TIP listed below. She said that the amendments have been out for the required public review and comment period and no comments were received.

Mayor Reed opened the public hearing. There was no public comment. Mayor Reed closed the public hearing.

Mayor Billy Vogle moved to approve the TIP amendments with Mayor Ken Moore seconding. The motion passed unanimously.

Amend #	TIP #	RTP #	Project Name	Sponsor	Action
2021-014	2019-32-093	1632-168	I-65 Widening from SR-25 to SR-109	TDOT	Add funds
2021-015	2021-17-114	Multimodal	Charlotte Ave (SR-24/US70)/Dr. MLK Jr. Blvd Connected Transit Technology	Metro Nashville	Add project
2021-016	2021-44-115	Safety	Veterans Pkwy/I-840 Interchange Lighting Project	Murfreesboro	Add project
2021-017	2021-44-116	Safety	Joe B. Jackson Pkwy/I-24 Interchange Lighting	Murfreesboro	Add project
2021-018	2015-111-069	Active Transportation Program	North Nashville Transit Center	Nashville MTA (WeGo)	Add funds
2021-019	2021-811-117	Multimodal	Regional Park & Ride Facility	RTA (WeGo)	Add project

b) Election of Transportation Policy Board Officers

On behalf of the nominating committee made up of Mayor Paige Brown, Mayor Randall Hutto, and Mayor Ken Moore, Mayor Brown presented the slate of candidates for the remainder of the 2021 calendar year. The candidates were Robertson County Mayor Billy Vogle for Chair and Columbia Mayor Chaz Molder for Vice-Chair. There were no nominations from the floor.

Mayor Randall Hutto moved to elect Mayor Vogle as the next Chair. Mayor Brown seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Ken Moore moved to elect Mayor Chaz Molder as Vice-Chair. Mayor Anthony Holt seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Informational Items

a) Amtrak and the Potential for Future Passenger Service

Mr. T.L. Stennis and Ms. Mariah Morales of Amtrak provided a brief history and overview of Amtrak. By federal law, Amtrak is granted access to the entire national rail network. Amtrak partners with 17 states to operate 38 corridor routes based on those states' service plans and policy goals. Routes are generally less than 500 miles and always less than 750 miles. He said that there is potential for growth but often host railroads impede reliable service and future expansion. He also noted that millennials and immigrants are critical to the nation's changing demographics, and they are key to Amtrak's plans as both groups favor living in urban settings and are receptive to train travel.

Ms. Morales said that the proposed service improvements include Nashville-to-Atlanta corridor service with possible extension to Memphis. She said that focused state advocacy for intercity passenger rail and Amtrak is necessary, including 1) stable, reliable Amtrak and intercity passenger rail funding, 2) necessary funding to improve existing routes and to create new ones,

and 3) necessary tools to improve on-time performance and access to host railroad infrastructure.

Mr. Stennis said that Amtrak continues to stay engaged with delegations, mayors and city managers along the proposed routes. He said that the next step is for locals to express support to their state and federal leaders.

For more information, contact Mr. Stennis at stenniT@amtrak.com or Ms. Morales at mariah.morales@amtrak.com

b) Call for Studies and Planning Activities for FYs 2022-23

Mr. Sean Pfalzer, Transportation Planning Manager, presented background information on the FYs 2022-23 Transportation Planning Work Program (also called the UPWP). He noted that there is a dual purpose to the UPWP: 1) to coordinate planning – account for and align activities that have an influence on regionally significant transportation policies, plans, and programs, 2) federal programming – prioritize and program federal planning grants in support of transportation goals across the metropolitan planning area.

Information on the current UPWP and ongoing studies can be found at www.gnrc.org/UPWP

Despite the recent completion of the 2045 Regional Transportation Plan, there is more work to be done to solve the regional transportation issues and it will require more collaboration, more innovation, and more revenue. TPB input is necessary to document relevant local or subregional planning efforts and to identify regional priorities that should be examined as part of the upcoming work program. He requested that members complete the UPWP survey at www.gnrc.org/survey/UPWP by March 24th. Based on the development timeline, adoption of the new UPWP is scheduled for August 18, 2021.

c) Update on Status of Transportation Improvements

Ms. Emerson provided an overview of the TIP Project Tracker that contains projects within the FYs 2020-23 TIP and noted that she has been working with TCC members to gather updates on projects to support project tracking and ensure the timely implementation of projects.

Ms. Emerson gave an overview of the Advance Construction and TDOT projects utilizing that funding strategy. She said that advance construction (AC) is a project authorization technique that allows the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to authorize a project without obligating federal funds. It is not a funding category and does not provide additional federal funding. The primary benefit of AC is that it allows states to accelerate transportation projects using non-federal funds while maintaining eligibility to be reimbursed with the federal-aid funds at a later date.

Mayor Reed said that the Board needs to continue to have dialogue with TDOT about AC projects.

d) Recommendations for the Use of COVID-Relief Funds

Mr. Pfalzer said that the COVID Relief Funding was appropriated through HIP-CRRSAA (Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplement Appropriations Act) 2021. The purpose is to provide funding to address coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) impacts related to HIP. He said that there is no federal match required and that eligibility is similar to the Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) program.

Mr. Pfalzer said that the TPB adopted Resolution TPB-2020-03 in May 2020 to guide the regional programming of federal highway infrastructure program (HIP) funds. He said that the policy authorizes existing TIP projects with immediate need of additional funding for right-of-way or construction are eligible.

Given that funding is available for existing TIP projects with additional funding needs for right-of-way or construction and the obligation deadline for CRRSAA funds, GNRC staff recommends that a more suitable approach for programming relief funds is to lower cost projects that can be implemented quickly. Higher priority projects include sidewalk connectivity and pedestrian improvements, transportation technology upgrades, roadway safety improvements, and ADA-related improvements.

Please provide your input on prioritizing these relief funds by March 24th at www.gnrc.org/survey/relief-priorities

Mr. Preston Elliott added that the bill specified that MPOs of 200,000+ population (like the Nashville Area MPO) to get funding which was \$7.9 million for the Nashville Area MPO. He noted that TDOT has decided to also provide funds to smaller urbanized areas (UZAs) across the state. Given the Murfreesboro UZA is located within the Nashville Area MPO, the region will receive an additional \$774,171. The funding suballocated to the Murfreesboro UZA must be obligated by December 31, 2022.

Regular Reports

a) FHWA and FTA Report

Mr. Sean Santalla congratulated Mayor Vogle and Mayor Molder on their election as Chair and Vice-Chair. He thanked Mayor Reed for her service as chair.

He said that the latest COVID Relief Bill does not have funding for FHWA but does for transit and rail. The CHRSSA-issued guidance is contained in a memo that has been shared with GNRC staff.

The USDOT has issued a notice of opportunity for Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) grant program. The grant program makes nearly \$900 million available for infrastructure

projects based on criteria that include climate change, environmental justice, and racial equity. Applications are due March 19, 2021.

He said that following the adoption of the RTP, FHWA sent a letter to close out the last remaining corrective action related to the Congestion Management Process (CMP).

Mayor Reed thanked Mr. Santalla for working closely with the staff during the RTP update.

b) TDOT Report

Mr. Elliott thanked Mayor Reed for her leadership.

Last month there was a question as to whether money from sports wagering in the state can be used to fund transportation. He said no it is not possible to use this money for transportation.

He reminded the members to look closely at the projects they have in the TIP to check their status.

Mr. Matt Meservy congratulated the new chair and vice-chair and thanked Mayor Reed for her service.

Mr. Meservy said that the Urban Transportation Planning Grant was awarded to Sumner County for their Active Transportation plan. The project is expected to receive a notice to proceed in mid-April.

c) Chair's Report

Mayor Reed thanked each member of the Board and the staff for all of the hard work during the update to the RTP. She also thanked the planning partners. A special thanks went out to her Smyrna staff who supported her during her time as chair.

She said that the members need to understand how important the Board is and that we need to develop a shared vision not only for each jurisdiction but regionally.

She said that in October 2017 the MPO program became part of the GNRC. She said the issue was studied for over a year and this integration aligned us with the majority of regions across the country with a million people or more. She said that this helps us work as a region on economic development, infrastructure and ensure that it is in sync with transportation planning. This also helps build better partnership with each other and state officials. She said that we have to collaborate to move projects forward.

She congratulated the new officers and offered her help wherever needed.

Mayor Vogle agreed that we are all in this together. He thanked Mayor Reed for her service.

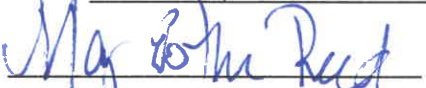
d) Staff Report

Mr. Pfalzer said that he echoed all of the comments about Mayor Reed. He said that the staff appreciates all of her input and hard work.

He announced that there will be a two-day workshop with FHWA on pedestrian safety as part of its Safe Transportation for Every Pedestrian (STEP) program. It is scheduled for April 27-28, from 11am-1pm.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:44 a.m.

Date: 6/16/21



The Honorable Mary Esther Reed
Chairman, MPO Transportation Policy Board



Sean Pfalzer, Transportation Planning Manager
Secretary, Transportation Policy Board