

**Henderson County
TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
August 15, 2018**

The Transportation Advisory Committee held a Regularly Called Meeting on August 15, 2018 at 4:00 p.m. in the King Street Meeting Room at 100 North King Street, Hendersonville. Meeting attendance was as follows:

Voting Member	Present	Not in Attendance
Renee Kumor, Chair at-large	√	
Beau Waddell, Vice-Chair at-large	√	
John Bryant, at-large		√
Joe Sanders, at-large	√	
Mike Edney, Henderson County Commissioner		√
Bill Lapsley, Henderson County Commissioner	√	
Steve Caraker, City of Hendersonville		√
John Dockendorf, Village of Flat Rock		√
Brian Caskey, Town of Mills River	√	
Eddie Henderson, Town of Fletcher		√
George Banta, Town of Laurel Park	√	
Autumn Radcliff, Planning Director (Commissioner's Alternate)	√	
Paige Posey, Council Member (Village of Flat Rock Alternate)	√	
John Connet, City Manager (City of Hendersonville Alternate)	√	
Mark Biberdorf, Town Manager (Town of Fletcher Alternate)	√	

Also present were: Chuck Edwards, State Senator; Brian Burch, Division Engineer; Ted Adams, Division Construction Engineer and Acting NCDOT District Engineer; Janna Peterson, Henderson County Planner III; Lyuba Zuyeva, FBRMPO; and Tristan Winkler, FBRMPO.

Ms. Kumor, Chair at-large, called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

Discussion/Adjustment of Agenda: Mr. Beau Waddell asked the committee to add a discussion item on roundabouts. Mr. Joe Sanders moved to approve the adjusted agenda, which was seconded by Mr. Beau Waddell.

Senator Chuck Edwards: Senator Edwards shared an anecdote about the state legislature's history. During the Reconstruction Era, there was a committee room/make-shift bar coined, the third house of the legislature, that exchanged legislative votes for drinks of whiskey. Senator Edwards noted the past feeling of western North Carolinians that the legislation did not benefit them. Since 2013, new policies were created to distribute highway funds in a fair and data-driven manner. People no longer have to feel like they are trading whiskey for legislation to create roads. Western NC has \$1.2 billion coming in projects for the betterment of the area. He also stated that he will continue to work and to keep money coming to areas west of I-77. Senator Edwards asked for citizens help in making suggestions to improve the programs geared at distributing funds fairly.

Public Comment: Mr. Glenn Engram, representing the "Fix 64-West Community," distributed an email he sent to Renee with questions that he would like answered by NCDOT concerning the widths of the proposed round-a-bouts on Hwy 64.

Mr. John DeGelleke, secretary of the Triple Creek HOA, requested that TAC put an item on next month's agenda to discuss the design of the Hwy 191 road widening project in Mills River. Mr. DeGelleke is concerned

about the land acquisition necessary for the project that will take the neighborhoods privacy wall, entrance signs, and a few homeowners' backyards. Mr. DeGelleke states that since the road widening will stop at Mountain Road due to the City of Hendersonville's opposition and the Balfour Parkway is no longer being built, that there is no purpose for the widening at all. He agrees that safety and traffic improvements are necessary on the roadway, especially in front of Rugby Middle School, but reasonable plans should be made based on a new projected traffic study that is redone without the Balfour Parkway project.

Ms. Jill Schuler, treasurer of the Triple Creek HOA, stated that it is not too late to change the designs for the Hwy 191 project. She stated that project's design was based on projected traffic data that was created with the traffic patterns expected for the Balfour Parkway and so the Hwy 191 designs should be reevaluated now that the Balfour Parkway will no longer be built. She states that the funding amount allocated should not dictate the design. She states that improvements are needed, but residential impact should be considered in the design. She also mentioned that the schools are currently at capacity, so their traffic patterns would not increase in years to come, although that is what is shown in the projected traffic counts.

Ms. Marty Royal also spoke about redesigning/reevaluating the Hwy 191 road widening project. She stated that because the roadway will not be improved past Mountain Rd., the Balfour Parkway is no longer happening, and because there will be significant impacts on residential areas, the Hwy 191 project should be adjusted. A new design should significantly reduce the width of the roadway improvements, so that there is no seizure of residential property.

Balfour Parkway Process – Discussion with NCDOT: Ms. Renee Kumor said the purpose of this agenda item was to understand and figure out a better way to communicate with citizens. She stated that even though the DOT puts ads in the newspapers concerning upcoming projects and TAC writes about current projects in the County newsletter, citizens are still not being reached. Mr. Bill Lapsley asked Mr. Brian Burch for his thoughts on how the Balfour project failed and what TAC and NCDOT could do better. Mr. Burch stated that his department has talked about this as well as other divisions because it's not just a Division 14 problem, DOT across the state is struggling with how they communicate projects and how projects get funded and the process.

For many years, DOT did not contend with social media. In the past, affected citizens would not find out about a project until they received a letter stating that DOT crew would be surveying the land. Historically, it took years for projects to come to fruition. Mr. Burch mentioned Senator Edwards' remarks regarding new legislation that is speeding up the process and project timeframes are compressed, which is new and alarming to citizens. From DOT's perspective, a project is already citizen vetted and local government approved by the time it gets into the SPOT or STIP, but now they know that's not the case. Mr. Burch discussed 'geofencing', which is a social media tool that will put NCDOT information in affected citizens' 'newsfeeds' on social media platforms, as a means for communication to the public prior to SPOT. Ms. Kumor asked if that is a method NCDOT uses, would they be prepared to respond to feedback. Mr. Burch stated yes. Ms. Kumor then posed the dilemma of balancing the identified need for a road and public sentiment. Mr. Burch responded that it would come down to the tiers (for example, statewide tier is mainly data driven and does not consider public input as highly as they do for regional or local tier projects).

Ms. Kumor asked what NCDOT would expect of a body like TAC to help move these processes along. Mr. Burch answered that the department would hope that they have the local governments support and that the citizens have been vetted. He stated that DOT performs feasibility studies and they will do those on the front end and include public participation to know their views ahead of time.

Mr. Bill Lapsley stated that he would like to return to the topic of the Balfour Parkway. Mr. Lapsley feels that the parkway was a different kind of project that created different kinds of reactions. The project was a new road, not a modification of an existing road, which is what area residents are accustomed to. He also stated that public

fear was created by the map that outlined all the possible locations for the road. Mr. Lapsley offered that in the future, perhaps NCDOT will narrow down the alternatives to 2 or 3 and not involve the public earlier to avoid what happened with the Balfour Parkway. Mr. Burch agreed. Mr. Beau Waddell commented that even if NCDOT takes on that new approach, they will still receive negative reactions. He stated that the TAC was unable to do their job as advisers to the County because it never got to that point. Mr. Waddell felt that the County Commissioners did not have the patience to get the project to that point and he wishes that everyone would have more patience and allow the process to work. Mr. George Banta discussed how the project map showing thousands of feet of roadway sent shock waves through the public and he wondered if narrowing down the possibilities will help. Mr. Lapsley made the point that the County would work to communicate better. Mr. Brian Caskey asked Mr. Burch if there is a way to speed up the process of the feasibility studies and decide on the best routes sooner. Mr. Burch responded that the state's studies are some of the quickest in the country, but their goal is to speed up the front-end of projects. Mr. Tristan Winkler stated that the feasibility studies are so important to be thorough processes because it serves as the reasoning for why the state is taking a home and not another home. He stated that he agrees with Mr. Burch in the effort to get ahead of the work, but he contends that it will still be a slow process, especially with some of the larger projects. Ms. Kumor stated that she is excited about what Mr. Lapsley had mentioned about recording the TAC meetings and posting them online. Senator Edwards stated that it matters not just where the information is put, but *when* it is posted and disseminated.

Preliminary Discussion P5.0 Divisional Impact Point Assignments: Mr. Tristan Winkler with the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization requested TAC action to consider cascading projects from the Statewide Mobility tier and Regional Impact tier and to select up to three projects as Henderson County priorities. Projects selected will receive 25 points in the MPO's Prioritization Methodology, which will make the projects more likely to receive MPO Local Input points and thus more likely to be funded. Mr. Winkler reminded the committee that bicycle and pedestrian projects are required to have funding matches at the local level.

Ms. Kumor asked the committee if they would like to further discuss the projects or vote at a later date. Mr. Lapsley agreed and said he would need to speak with his colleagues.

Agenda Adjustment Item: Mr. Beau Waddell asked to move his discussion item to next month's meeting.

Approval of Draft Minutes: Mr. George Banta requested a revision of the minutes to resolve an error. Madam Chair approved this request and the committee approved the minutes as revised.

Routine Updates:

NCDOT: Mr. Ted Adams updated that the new Division Engineer has not been hired, but the position will be filled by the next meeting. Hwy 191 widening project is on schedule and that when school starts, lane closures will happen less and much construction will be done at night. There is a design revision for Howard Gap Rd. in Fletcher that includes a left turn onto Jackson Rd. Hooper Ln. grading and paving project begins on August 20, 2018. The bidding for the Erkwood/Shepherd project will be relet on August 28, 2018. The NC-9 clean-up is delayed due to recent heavy rains. And finally, NCDOT awarded a contract for the James St./Mill St. economic development project and will start on August 20, 2018.

Henderson County: Mr. Lapsley had no updated to share.

Town of Mills River: Mr. Brain Caskey told the committee that the Town chose a name for the Hwy 280 multi-use path: Mills River Valley Trail. He also stated that the pedestrian bridge project listed in the handout Mr. Winkler passed out is of great importance to the Town.

City of Hendersonville: Mr. John Connet had to leave the meeting early and was unable to share updates. Mr. Joe Sanders let the committee know about a campaign that the City is doing to create awareness about bicycle and pedestrian safety.

Town of Laurel Park: Mr. George Banta had no updates to share.

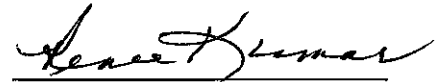
Village of Flat Rock: Ms. Paige Posey had no updates to share.

Town of Fletcher: Mr. Mark Biberdorf stated that the Town's Mayor Pro Tem, Eddie Henderson, would like to attend these meetings in the future. He updated the committee on the Hwy 25 corridor project, which is a streetscaping project, and will begin construction September 10, 2018.

Staff Updates: Mrs. Autumn Radcliff announced that the next TAC meeting is scheduled for September 19, 2018.

Other Updates: Mr. Caskey spoke about the FBR MPO having a vacancy on its Prioritization Subcommittee and asked that TAC endorse Brian Burgess as the person to fill that vacancy at the next TAC meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 5:36 p.m.



Renee Kumor, Chair
Henderson County Transportation Advisory Committee