

Henderson County
TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
February 20, 2019

The Transportation Advisory Committee held a Regularly Called Meeting on February 20, 2019 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		√
Bill Lapsley, Henderson County	√	
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 (Henderson County's Alternate)	√	
Paige Posey (Village of Flat Rock's Alternate)	√	

Also present were: Wanda Austin, NCDOT; Troy Wilson, NCDOT; Tristan Winkler, FBRMPO; Janna Peterson, Planner III, and Steve Williams, NCDOT.

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

Discussion/Adjustment of Agenda:

There were none.

Public Comment:

Two members of the public gave comment; Phil Rasmussen and Ken Fitch. Phil Rasmussen opposed the widening project scheduled for Hwy 191 due to the cancellation of the Balfour Parkway. Mr. Rasmussen believes that a 3-lane highway will be sufficient to alleviate the current problems and that the proposed 4-lane highway would encourage speeding and commercial development. He also mentioned that the City of Hendersonville has opposed the widening in their jurisdiction and that the other jurisdictions should follow suit.

Ken Fitch spoke to the news presented at the January TAC meeting including the delay of projects and the defunding of the I-26 corridor south of US 64. He called upon Wanda Austin to give insight on how to limit traffic buildup at the US 64 interchange where the road will transition from 6 lanes to 4 lanes.

Approval of Draft Minutes:

Mr. Joe Sanders moved that the minutes be approved and Mr. Brian Caskey seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Hwy 191 Project Discussion:

Chairwoman Renee Kumor presented to the TAC that much public comment concerns the project and the differences in project scope among the three jurisdictions. Mr. Brian Caskey stated that Mills River has opted for a 5-lane design from NC 280 to Mills River town limits (Schoolhouse Rd). Mrs. Kumor asked Mr. Bill

Lapsley to explain the County's design. Mr. Lapsley stated that at that interchange, the road changes to a 4-lane design with a grass median and various turn lanes and traffic lights at several locations. He further responded that the plan is endorsed by the County Board of Commissioners. The plan also includes a multi-use path between the two schools, which could potentially be expanded in the future. Steve Williams shared that the right-of-way process is set to begin in October of 2019 and construction is scheduled for June 2021. Mr. Lapsley continued stating that the existing right-of-way on that portion of the road is approximately 100 feet and so NCDOT is not needing an extensive amount of additional right-of-way. Mrs. Kumor asked if the full 100-foot ROW would be utilized. Mrs. Wanda Austin explained that some areas of the road made it difficult to widen symmetrically, so the road had to be shifted one way or the other to lessen the impact on surrounding properties. Mrs. Kumor asked, based on public comment, if there is still demand for this design even with the new traffic demand model. Mrs. Austin stated that, yes, the new forecast shows less demand based on the omission of the Balfour Parkway, but that the model still indicates the road is overcapacity and still warrants the widening. Mrs. Kumor asked for an update on the safety project at Rugby Road. Mr. Williams responded that the project is about 55% complete and should be finished in June, weather permitting. The project focused solely on extending the turn lanes at the school and widening the shoulder and does not address the overall traffic issues. Mr. Caskey stated that the multi-use path project for NC 280 could theoretically connect to the one proposed for Hwy 191.

I-26 Discussion of Bridge Replacements:

Mrs. Austin updated the TAC on the dates of the widening project. The I-26 project is funded and slated to be let this June. The two sections of the Henderson County portion will be let together and will be on schedule as one project. Mr. Bill Lapsley expressed that the project is finally here and that there will be frustrations during the construction period, but there is a light at the end of the tunnel. In response to Mrs. Kumor's question, Mrs. Austin explained that construction will be phased to keep traffic flowing. In addition, there is a traffic management team that will meet regularly to ensure that entities like emergency management are able to get around. Mrs. Austin stated that the project is only allowing full road closures on I-26 in 15 min. rolling blocks between midnight and 5:00 AM.

Mrs. Kumor asked Mrs. Austin to address the rumors that the bridges that cross I-26 will be shut down during the process. Mrs. Austin stated that Butler Bridge Rd is the only bridge that cannot be accessed during reconstruction. There were no viable alternatives for the bridge replacement and the closure is the only possible way to accomplish the task. All other bridges are being replaced to the east or west of the existing bridge, so access will be maintained. There is a detour route in place for the Butler Bridge closure. NCDOT plans to minimize the closure (estimated 9 months) by giving contractors incentives for completing it quickly. Mr. Lapsley praised NCDOT for being proactive and organizing discussions with government, emergency services, schools, etc. to help manage the impending traffic issues.

Mrs. Kumor asked Mr. Troy Wilson about the web-based tools for traffic monitoring that he had shared at the last meeting. Mr. Wilson shared that there is the Traffic Information Management System (TIMS), which can be found on the County [website](#), and two Twitter accounts, one dedicated to I-40 and the other I-26, to help the public plan their travels accordingly.

Mr. Caskey asked Mrs. Austin about the construction timeline. Mrs. Austin said NCDOT is projecting a completion time of 4 years to 5 years. The first phase, which includes the bridge replacements is scheduled to be completed in 18 months likely in 2020.

Routine Updates:

NCDOT:

Mr. Steve Williams gave an update on NCDOT Division 14 projects. Old Airport Rd did let and construction will begin soon. The Broadpointe Drive bridge replacement is 33% complete. Howard Gap Rd is about 70% complete. Erkwood/Shepherd St is about 8% complete due to multiple utility relocations. It is scheduled to be complete by the middle of 2020 but that may be pushed out because the weather has not allowed for the utility relocations to be completed in the timeframe. No shutdowns are planned during the construction. US 64 from Blythe St to White Pine is scheduled for construction in June 2021. Kanuga Rd is delayed due to the redesign requested by the County and construction is now scheduled for October 2022. White St and Main St project as well as Highland Lake Rd project are scheduled for construction in October 2021. NC 280 is scheduled for construction in 2025. The Grove St sidewalks project does not yet have dates set at this time but is expected to be constructed in 2023.

Mr. Williams addressed the room that he read an article in a local paper that alluded that there are few transportation projects occurring in Henderson County. He continued that there are 10 highway projects and 2 bike/ped projects, which is a lot of projects.

Town of Laurel Park:

Mr. George Banta stated that Laurel Park owns approximately 32 miles of roadway and the excessive rain has caused damage and slides that are contracted for repair.

Town of Mills River:

Mr. Brian Caskey did not have updates to share.

Henderson County:

Mr. Lapsley updated the TAC of the discussion that occurred earlier in the day at the BOC meeting. The BOC received feedback concerning safety on Berkeley Hill Rd and Duncan Hill Rd, which are both curvy and have nonsymmetrical intersections. Mr. Lapsley stated that a fellow commissioner brought up the concern with the new emergency services be located near there and ambulances needing to use that route. Mr. Lapsley also explained there is heavy truck traffic on that road stemming from the County owned solid waste facility and tractor trailers that may be avoiding I-26 or Main Street. Mr. Lapsley explained that the TAC has been aware of this issue and had the solution, Balfour Parkway, which when it was defunded, the TAC prioritized that area in the SPOT, but it did not have the points to be funded. He continued that the TAC should continue to prioritize that project and get the funding via SPOT. In the meantime, Mr. Lapsley relayed that a solution was raised to redirect the truck traffic. He stated that he does not know if that is legal, but asked NCDOT to research it and present their findings at the next TAC meeting in March.

Mrs. Kumor also suggested using safety money, which Mrs. Austin responded that the money for those projects is a very small pot and is meant to be utilized for smaller projects like installing traffic signals. Mrs. Austin also stated that the City of Hendersonville is doing a feasibility on that area. Mr. Tristan Winkler reminded the TAC that the Duncan Hill/Signal Hill/Main project only missed funding by 1.7 points. This is very few points when considering the other project that the TAC put forth, Fanning Bridge Rd, which missed funding by 53 points.

Staff Updates:

There were none.

Other Updates:

Mr. Joe Sanders notified the TAC of a NCDOT training on Complete Streets that is scheduled for Friday, May 31 from 10AM to 4PM in Sylva.

Next Meeting:

The next TAC meeting was scheduled for March 20, 2019.

The meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m.

Renee Kumor, Chair
Henderson County Transportation Advisory Committee